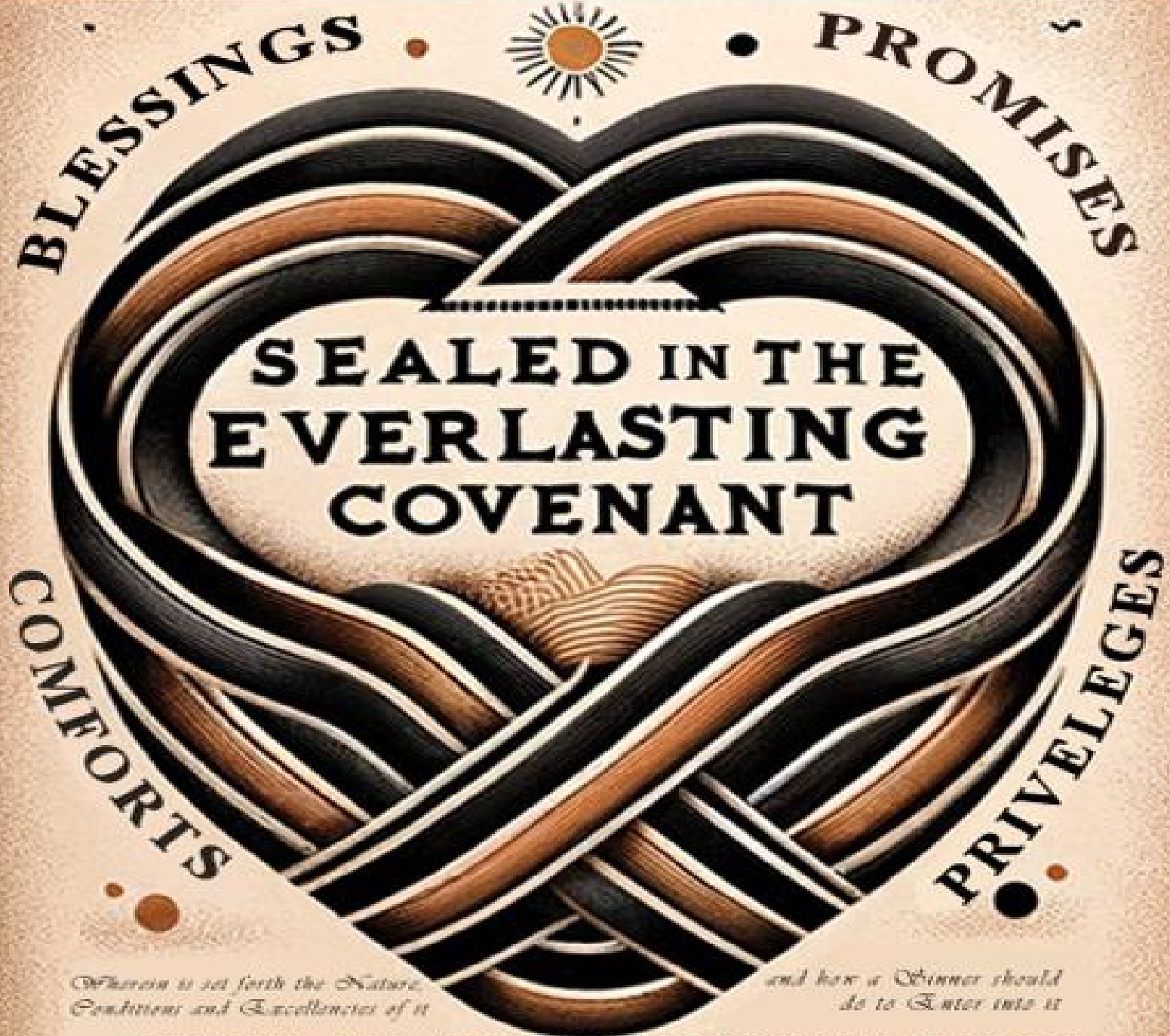


THE  
**BOWELS OF  
TENDER MERCY**



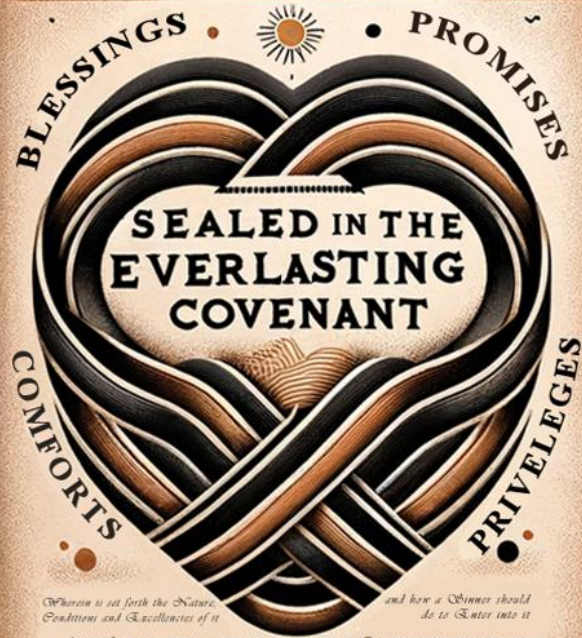
*Whereto is set forth the Nature,  
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*and how a Christian should  
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AND I WILL MAKE AN EVERLASTING COVENANT WITH YOU,  
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# **THE BOWELS OF TENDER MERCY**

## **SEALED IN THE EVERLASTING COVENANT**

Wherein is set forth the Nature, Conditions and Excellencies of it, and how a Sinner should do to Enter into it, and the Danger of Refusing this Covenant-Relation. Also, the Treasures of Grace, Blessings, Comforts, Promises and Privileges that are comprised in the Covenant of God's Free and Rich Mercy made in Jesus Christ with Believers.

By Mr. Obadiah Sedgwick B.D.

That Faithful and Reverend Divine & late Minister of the Gospel in Covent-Garden, London.

Perfected and intended for the Press, therefore corrected and lately revised by himself, and published by his own Manuscript, allowed by himself in his life-time, by those whom he entrusted with this work for that purpose.

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## **TO THE READER.**

Good Reader,

Had not the Reverend Author of this Book requested our Attestation unto all the Pieces which after his death should be printed in his Name, there would not have been any need to preface this Treatise with an Epistle. The Title Page suggesting the subject matter of the ensuing Discourse, may be sufficient to encourage the real self-studying Christian to peruse it; especially such who have been experimentally acquainted with the many practical Pieces, which have been heretofore sent unto the Press from the same hand. The Bowels of Tender Mercy sealed in the Everlasting Covenant; How full of sweetness is this one short Sentence! Every word hath its weight

and worth. When aged, dying David, upon the Review of his own Condition and Relations, had mentioned the Everlasting Covenant made with himself, ordered in all things and sure: He addeth, This is all my salvation and all my desire, 2 Sam. 23:5. Who knoweth all the Treasures of Grace and Comforts, which are comprised in the Covenant of God's free and rich Mercy, made in Jesus Christ? Is there any spiritual want, which may not be supplied, or any soul-discouragement, which may not be conquered, yea, or any concernment, wherein the humble, believing Christian may not be much advantaged by the improvement of this Covenant, thus grounded and thus confirmed? As nothing is so sweet, as God's tender mercy unto a sin-sick soul, so there can be no such confirmation unto feeble faith, as the unchangeable engagements of the Almighty, through Jesus Christ. Therefore prize with thanks, and improve with diligence, this and such-like holy helps, which Divine Providence putteth into thine hand. By so doing, thou shalt glorify the Everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ, and advance the power of Godliness, with peace and joy in thine own heart, through him, in whom we are

Thy Friends and Servants,

Humphrey Chambers, D. D.

Edmund Calamy.

Simeon Ash.

Adoniram Byfield.

# **PART. I.**

## **CHAP. I.**

And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. - Isaiah 55:3.

These words are the last and most weighty argument to persuade sinners to come to Christ, to receive him, or to believe on him, or as it is expressed before, to hearken to him; If you do so, not only your souls shall live, but I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David; as if God had said, These are indeed great things which I have propounded to encourage you, and you need not question the Security; I will give you my Bond for all this, which shall be as surely made good unto you, as the mercies which I performed to my servant David.

In the words, you have two things considerable.

1. The matter of the encouragement propounded [And I will make a Covenant with you.]
2. The Amplification of that Covenant, or if you please, the qualification of that Covenant [An everlasting Covenant, The sure mercies of David.]

You see the words give me occasion to speak of the great mystery of godliness, wrapped up in the Everlasting Covenant, the nature whereof I shall especially apply myself to open to you.

This Proposition or Doctrine lies clear and full in the Text.

That there is a Covenant which God makes between himself and all who believe in Christ. I will make a Covenant with you.

For the explication of this, I shall speak;

1. Of a Covenant in general. 2. In special.

1. Of a Covenant in general, where I will show you First, What it is.

Secondly, That there is a Covenant betwixt God and Believers.

Thirdly, Why God makes such a Covenant with them.

## SECT. I.

Quest. 1. What a Covenant is.

Answ. 1. A Covenant in General, is a compact or mutual agreement betwixt parties, in which they bind each other to the performance of what they do (by agreement) promise to each other. Conference, and conference, proposals and proposals, offers and offers, arguing's and arguing's (simply) do not constitute a Covenant: Things may be propounded, and yet rejected. Nor doth the liking of what is propounded do it; Approbation and consent of one party, no nor yet his obligation, can (formally) make up a Covenant, but there must be actus mutuus, a mutual consent, a mutual promise, a mutual agreement, a mutual engagement or obligation, and this makes up a Covenant, as to the substance of it. As to the Covenant of Marriage, it is not speaking, nor liking, not promise by one party, but the liking,

and consent, and promise must be mutual, else it makes not up the Covenant of Marriage; so it is in this.

2. Covenants, are either,

1. Sinful. They have made a Covenant with death and hell, Isa. 28:18. How do they make a Covenant together? They engage themselves in the service of sin, and expect to be as secure from death and hell as if they had made a formal Covenant and Agreement with them.

2. Civil. Which are the binding arguments betwixt man and man, in matters of a worldly consideration for goods, wares, lands, peace, or the like; as the Covenant betwixt Abraham and Abimelech, and betwixt Ahab and Benhadad, &c.

3. Sacred. As the Covenant betwixt God and man.

It is observable that there was no state in which man was at any time, but God made a Covenant with him; as soon as he was created, and as soon as he fell, God made a Covenant with him.

And God's Covenant with man (I speak only in the general) doth consist in a free promise on God's part, with a stipulation of duty on man's part. There is a Susception on God's part, and an engagement on man's part; God promiseth some good, and man promiseth obedience; Their concurrence in these, or their obliging Agreement in these make up the Covenant. God promiseth life and all good to man, and man promiseth all obedience to God; God promiseth what he pleaseth, and requireth what he pleaseth, and man promiseth unto God what God requireth.



And here by the way note, that in every Covenant betwixt God and man, the whole draught of it depends upon the Sovereign will and pleasure of God, who proposeth what rewards he pleaseth, and imposeth what terms he pleaseth, and draws up the Covenant in what terms he pleaseth. And the reason hereof lies in the absolute power and authority of God over man, who is infinitely inferior to God, and wholly subordinate to him; and therefore man may not indent with him, by proposing Articles of Agreement, but he must accept what the Lord is pleased to propose, either by way of duty on man's part, or by way of promise on God's part. And well he may do so, in respect of that Infinite Goodness and Wisdom in God, who knows much better how to lay the frame of a Covenant betwixt himself and man, than man can know how to draw a Covenant betwixt himself and God.

## SECT. II.

2. That there is a Covenant which God makes betwixt himself and believers: So you have it often expressed in Scripture, Gen. 17:2. I will make my Covenant betwixt me and thee, verse 7. I will establish my Covenant betwixt me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations after thee, to be good unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Deut. 4:23. Take heed unto yourselves lest you forget the Covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you. 2 Sam. 23:5. He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Psal. 50:5. Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice. Jer. 31:31. Behold, the days come (saith the Lord) I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, which is repeated by

the Apostle, Heb. 8:8, all which places do manifestly prove that there is a Covenant betwixt God and Believers.

Against this a great objection will lie; There are some who argue, that there is no Covenant made betwixt God and us; there is only a Covenant betwixt God and Christ, by virtue of which all Good is derived unto us: The ground of this opinion is drawn from Gal. 3:16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made; he saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Whence they infer, there is no Covenant at all made to us, but only with Christ, or to Christ.

I desire not to make rents, but where I find them I would willingly make them up again; but of necessity I must consider this present opinion; for if this were true, how can this Text I am now upon be true? Which saith, I will make an everlasting Covenant, not only for you, but with you. For the better stating and clearing of this doubt and difficulty, I will deliver myself in these Propositions.

1. That there is a Covenant made betwixt God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.
2. That there is a Covenant made betwixt God and every believing person.
3. That the place alleged doth not infringe this truth.

1. That there is a Covenant made betwixt God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, touching the whole business of man's salvation. Hence it is, that Christ is called the Covenant; I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, saith the Lord, speaking of Christ, Isa. 49:8. In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began, Tit. 1:2. This promise, which was ante tempora seculorum,

was made to Christ. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, Joh. 17:6.

All that makes up a Covenant, passed betwixt the Father and the Son.

1. On the Fathers part.

1. He designed his Son unto the office of Mediator; him hath God the Father sealed, John 6:27. Set apart, marked out for that work; and the Apostle Peter speaking of our Redemption by the precious blood of Christ, saith, that Christ was fore-ordained (thereunto) before the foundation of the world, 1 Pet. 1:20.

And hereunto did Christ consent and agree, Heb. 10:7. Then said I, lo I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to do thy will O God; and again, ver. 9, lo I come to do thy will O God.

2. He promised to give him the Spirit in abundant measure. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, Isa. 11:2. I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, Isa. 42:1. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Isa. 61:1. God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, Joh. 3:34.

3. He promised to assist him in that great work: I the Lord have called thee in Righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, Isa. 42:6. What is that holding of Christ by the hand, but his effectual supporting and strengthening of him to finish the work which he agreed to undertake?

4. He promised a blessed success to this undertaking; he shall see his seed, and he shall see the travail of his soul, Isa. 53:10.

Nations that know thee not, shall run unto thee, Isa. 55:5.

5. He promised him Dominion and Sovereignty. His arm shall rule for him, Isa. 40:10. He shall sit in judgment in the earth, and the Isles shall wait for his Law, Isa. 42:4. He shall judge amongst many Nations, Mic. 4:3.

6. He promised to glorify him after all, Joh. 17:5. Now Father, glorify thou me.

2. Christ on his part consents to the Father; undertakes the will and work of his Father; Depends on his Father, Trusts on him for help; The Lord will help me, Isa. 50:7,9. My God shall be my strength, Isa. 49:5. And he dischargeth all the work agreed on for the Redemption and salvation of the elect. I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; And expects the glory promised by the Father. I would be tedious to speak all that might be said concerning this high Covenant betwixt God the Father, and Christ, touching the elect, and all that concerns them.

I might add, that as there is a Covenant betwixt God and Christ personally considered, so also betwixt God and Christ mystically considered; Take him as the Head of the Church, his body, the Covenant principally looks at Christ, I will be your God; this principally looks at Christ, and I will be your Father; this principally looks at Christ, and so the main promises, as those of Life, of Grace, of Justification, so they principally look at Christ. As there was a respect to the people of God in the Covenant betwixt the Father and Jesus Christ, so there was a respect to Christ in the Covenant betwixt God and his people.

2. Nevertheless, though there be such a Covenant betwixt God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; yet there is a Covenant made betwixt God and his people.

The places above mentioned, do expressly prove it when God saith, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will marry you unto myself, and I will bring you into the bond of my Covenant, Isa. 20:37, and we are said to enter into Covenant with the Lord, Deut. 29:12. These expressions plainly prove a Covenant betwixt God and us. And truly, unanswerable Arguments evince this Truth.

1. Christ is said to be the Mediator of this Covenant, Heb. 9:15. Now he could not be the Mediator of this Covenant betwixt God and himself, but of the Covenant betwixt God and us.

2. To whom the seals of the Covenant are given, with them is the Covenant made; the seals of the Covenant and the Covenant (go to the same persons) but the seals of the Covenant are for and to believers. Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. 4:11.

3. How can we plead the Covenant betwixt God and us, if there were no such Covenant? Remember thy Covenant; Oh how can God be said to remember his Covenant, and to do us good for and according to his Covenant with us, if there were not a Covenant betwixt God and us?

Lastly, How is God said to be faithful in Covenant with us? And how are we said to be faithful in Covenant with God? And why are we exhorted to be so? And how can there be such a sin as breach of Covenant, for which God will be avenged, if there were no Covenant betwixt God and us?

3. The place mentioned in Gal. 3:16, doth not contradict this truth, where it is said, The promises are made to Abraham, and to his seed, not seeds, as speaking of many, but seed, as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ.

This place surely will not carry it out, that there is no Covenant with us but with Christ. For,

1. How do you read in this place of Promises made to Abraham, (the promises were made to Abraham;) if there were no promises but to Christ; or how can the promises be made only to Christ, and yet to Abraham?

2. The promises were made to Abraham, and then to his seed which is Christ; if Christ here should be understood personally, the order here mentioned could not hold; for then Christ should come to claim the promises in Abraham's right, and not Abraham in his.

3. By Christ in this place, is not meant Christ personally, but Christ mystically considered, the Church of Christ, the company of believers, and those are the seed of Abraham, who is styled The father of the faithful. And truly, I know not why men do so wrest this Text, which the Apostle only mentions to prove that all that are justified, are justified not by works, but by faith; forasmuch as the promise of Grace to this purpose was made to Abraham and his seed, to all Believers; as ver. 29. If ye be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.

### SECT. III.

4. Before I pass from the general consideration of a Covenant, made betwixt God and us, it may be demanded why the Lord is pleased to make a Covenant betwixt himself and his people.

The causes thereof amongst many others may be these.

1. To put an honor upon his people. Some do derive the word Berith, (which signifies the Covenant) from a root which signifies to purify, and to separate, and to select; and verily, the Lord when he makes a Covenant with any, he doth separate them from others, looks on them, takes them and owns them for his peculiar people, and agrees with them as the chosen and choicest of all others. The first staff in Zach. 11:10, is called beauty, and this was the Covenant: And indeed it is a high honor to be in Covenant with God, there is a fourfold honor to us in this.

1. One in that God in this becomes ours, and we are made nigh unto him.

2. A second in that God is ours, and we his in a very peculiar way of relation.

3. In that God in Covenant, opens his love, and all his treasures to us, tells us of his special grace and love, and great intentions of good to us.

4. In that he obligeth himself to us in his faithfulness, to perform all his Covenant. In all this there is a great favor done unto, and a great honor put upon us. Hence when the Lord told Abraham, that he would make a Covenant with him, Abraham fell upon his face, Gen. 17:2,3, he was amazed at so great a love and honor; and why? It is a special favor for God to make a Covenant with us; hence that of David, Who am I, O Lord? &c. 2 Sam. 7:18.

2. That we might know what to expect from God, and upon what terms; for the Covenant, as it is a Declaration of all the good which God will bestow upon us, so it is also a Rule or Direction what we are to be and to do; here you may see all that we need, and all that God requires.

3. That we might be encouraged in our whole course of obedience; there being sufficiency promised, and security enough given by God in this Covenant for all good, unto all such who are faithful in Covenant with him. Walk before me and be thou perfect, and I will be a God all-sufficient unto thee, Gen. 17:1. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that keep his Covenant, Psal. 25:10.

4. That we might be bound fast unto himself; the Covenant binds fast on both parts; God binds himself to us, and we also are bound by it to him, Jer. 13:11. As the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord, that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory.

Thus you have heard in the general what a Covenant is, and that there is such a Covenant betwixt God and believers, and Reasons also in the General, why God makes a Covenant with them.

## **CHAP. II.**

Of the Covenant in special.

I Shall now descend to something more special, to show unto you, what that Covenant is which God makes between himself and his



people.

There are who do distinguish of a twofold Covenant.

1. There is *Foedus absolutum*, which is such a promise of God, as takes in no stipulation or condition at all, that runs altogether upon absolute terms; such a Covenant was that which God made with Noah, that he would never drown the world anymore, Gen. 9:11, and such a kind of Covenant is that, when God promiseth to give faith and perseverance unto his elect, Heb. 8:10, &c. Both these Covenants are absolute, and without any condition; there is nothing in them but what is folded up in the promises themselves.

2. *Foedus Hypotheticum*, which is a gracious promise on God's part, with an obligation to duty on our part; for although it be natural to God, to recompense any good, as it is to punish any evil; And although man doth owe unto God whatsoever God covenanteth with him for; yet it so pleaseth his Divine Will thus to deal with us, that in binding of us to duty unto himself, he binds himself in reward unto us, and promiseth such and such a recompense, upon the condition of such and such a performance.

Now this kind of Covenant is twofold.

1. *Foedus Naturae*, (as some style it) or *Foedus operum*, the Covenant of works as we usually call it; the Apostle calls it the Law of works, Rom. 3:27. This is the Covenant which God made with man in the state of innocence before the fall; wherein God promised unto man life and happiness, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience; and it is summed up by the Apostle, Gal. 3:12. Do this and live. God having created man upright after his own Image, and so having furnished him with all abilities sufficient for obedience, thereupon he made a Covenant with him for life upon the condition

of obedience; I say, he made such a Covenant with Adam as a public person; and as he promised life to him and his posterity, in case of obedience, so he threatened death and a curse unto him and his posterity in case of disobedience. In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. 2:17. Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them, Gal. 3:10.

2. *Faedus Gratiae*, the Covenant of Grace, the Apostle calls it the law of faith, Rom. 3:27, and it is especially expressed thus, He that believes shall be saved, Mark 16:16. The just shall live by faith, Gal. 3:11.

This is that Covenant of which the Text speaks, and of which (by God's assistance) I intend to discourse.

This Covenant, which is sometimes styled the Covenant of life; life is restored, and life is promised, and life is settled by the Covenant; no life for a sinner out of it.

And sometimes it is styled a Covenant of peace; Numb. 25:12. Behold I give unto him my Covenant of Peace. Peace is the comprehension of all blessings and prosperity; our good is in this good Covenant of grace; and all peace flows out of it, peace with God, and peace of conscience.

And sometimes it is called a Covenant of salt, Num. 18:19, 2 Chron. 13:5. A firm, sure, uncorruptible Covenant which lasts forever.

Sometimes it is styled the promise, Psal. 105:42. He remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.

It is called the promise by way of eminency; it is made up altogether of promises; all on God's part, which he will do, is under promise;

and all on our part which we are to do, is likewise under promise.

Sometimes it is called the mercy and the truth, Mic. 7:20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham.

The Covenant is called mercy, because mercy only drew this Covenant; It was mere mercy which moved God to make new bonds with us, yea all mercy is wrapped up in it. And it is called Truth, because the Lord God who makes this Covenant, will certainly and truly perform all that good and mercy, which (in it) he makes over unto his people.

Hence also it is called the oath, Luke 2:73. The oath which he swore unto our father Abraham. You do not read of God's Oath in the Covenant of works (that Covenant wanted a Mediator, and was not sealed with an oath) but in this Covenant of grace there is the oath of God, to declare unto us, and to confirm us, as touching the immutability of his will and purpose, for the accomplishment of all that good mentioned in this Covenant.

And it is called a Testament, and a New Testament, Matth. 26:28. My blood of the New Testament, Heb. 9:15. He is the Mediator of the New Testament. A Testament is, Testatio mentis, that which we commonly call a man's Will, about the bestowing of his estate amongst his children, &c. The new Covenant is called a Testament, because it is ratified and confirmed by the death of the Testator, and because it is as it were his last Will written down. There are precious Legacies bestowed and settled by God the Father in this Covenant upon all his children, and all of them are confirmed and ratified to them by the death of Christ.

This Covenant of grace (thus gloriously set out in the Scripture) wherein God proclaims all his goodness to us, which is the

foundation of all our lives and comforts, hopes and happiness, which is the foundation of all godliness and holy walking, which is a sure and our only anchor, I am now in a more distinct way to discourse of.

In the handling whereof, I shall confine myself to these six particulars.

1. The differences of this Covenant of grace from the Covenant of works.
2. The proper nature of this Covenant in the absolute consideration of it.
3. The adjuncts and properties of this Covenant.
4. The condition of the Covenant of grace.
5. The Mediator of this Covenant.
6. The special gifts and legacies that are bequeathed in this Testament.

## **CHAP. III**

Differences of the Covenant of grace, from the Covenant of works.

The differences of this Covenant of grace from that Covenant of works. Although there are some things wherein both these Covenants agree; As,

1. In the general end, which is the glory of God.

2. In the persons contracting and covenanting, which are God and man.

3. In the intrinsical form, there is a condition and restipulation in both.

4. In some things promised in them both, and required (as to the matter of them) in both.

5. In the Author, God is the Author of them both.

6. In the form of inscription; as in that, the Law of works was written in the heart of Adam; so in this, the Law of grace is written in the heart of everyone confederated.

7. In the unchangeableness, both of the one and of the other; both of them are immutable. Although that Covenant of works (as it is a Covenant for life) ceaseth unto believers, yet it stands in force, upon and against all unbelievers.

I say, notwithstanding all these general concordancies, correspondencies, and agreements between them, they do yet differ in nine particulars; which I shall the rather mention, that you may understand the infinite goodness of God in making this Covenant of grace; and his infinite mercy in it, and your own happiness by it, if any of you be brought into the Covenant.

And also to affect your hearts, that you may press the more after a personal interest therein.

Thus then the Covenant of works and of grace do differ.

1. In their special end. The end which God aimed at in the Covenant of works, was, the declaration and magnifying of his justice; and his

end in making the Covenant of grace, is the declaration and magnifying of his mercy. In the Covenant of works, it is, Do this and live; if you sin, you die for it: Here is no place for Repentance, no place for mercy. In the Covenant of works, when Adam had sinned, there was no commission of enquiry, whether he repented or not of what he had done; the enquiry was only of the fact, What hast thou done? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I said unto thee, Thou shalt not eat? And being found guilty, death and curse are pronounced against him, Gen. 3:11,19. Thus it is in the Covenant of works. The soul that sins shall die, Isa. 18:4. In this, God reveals his wrath from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, Rom. 1:18. And thus he makes his power and justice known in that Covenant. But in the Covenant of grace, his intention and purpose is to glorify his mercy, to proclaim his glory. The Lord, The Lord merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, Exod. 34:6,7. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, &c. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more, Heb. 8:10,12.

In this Covenant, there is place for repentance, and mercy for the penitent. Repent, that your sins may be blotted out, Acts 3:19. He that forsakes his sins shall have mercy, Prov. 28:13. So that as to the Covenant of works, you must be altogether perfect, and always so; if you sin at all, you are cast and condemned; But as to the Covenant of grace, the sinner being penitent, is received to mercy, and spared. This is one great difference betwixt the Covenant of Works and of Grace.

2. In the condition of man, with whom God doth Covenant. The Covenant of works was made with man as perfect, upright, innocent, and then sinless; and therefore it is called by some, Pactum

Amicitiae, a Covenant of friendship: because before the fall, there was nothing of variance or enmity betwixt God and man; that estate was an estate of love and kindness, and friendship; God was Adams friend, and Adam was a friend to God; they agreed together, and conversed as loving friends. But the Covenant of grace, was made with man as breaking friendship, as fallen off by sin; as under the estate of enmity, when his sins had separated betwixt him and his God; and therefore this Covenant is called Pactum Reconciliationis, a Covenant of Reconciliation, an agreement made betwixt parties who had fallen out. The Lord was pleased to look after man again, and to take pity on him, and to propose new Articles of life unto him.

3. In their foundations. The Covenant of works (as to our part) was founded upon the strength of that righteous nature which God gave unto Adam, and in him unto us: so that his standing was upon his own bottom, upon the sufficiency of his own power and will, with which he was created. But the foundation of the Covenant of grace is Jesus Christ, not our own strength, but the strength of Christ who is the Rock, the Corner-stone, the foundation-stone, upon which you are built. And this is one reason why Adam fell, and lost that life promised in the Covenant of works; and why such as are brought into the Covenant of grace fall not, so as to lose that blessed life promised unto them. Adam had more inherent strength of grace than we have; he at his first creation was without all sin, yet he being left to the strength of his own will, willingly brake with God, willingly transgressed, and lost all; But we, though weaker in ourselves than he, yet being brought into this Covenant of grace, though we meet with as great temptations as he, yet fall not as he did, because the foundation of our strength is greater than his. Jesus Christ holds us in his own hands, Joh. 10:28. And we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1:5.

4. The Covenant of works was made without a Mediator. There was no days-man betwixt God and man, none to stand between them; There was none, and needed none, because there was no difference then betwixt God and man; Man was then righteous, perfectly righteous; A Mediator is a third person betwixt two different parties, to make up the breach which ariseth betwixt them; but when the Covenant of works was made betwixt God and man, all was righteousness; and therefore all was peace; there was no use of a Mediator to bring them into peace, and set them at one, who were hitherto in perfect love and union. But in the Covenant of grace there is a Mediator; Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, Heb. 12:24. Man being fallen, there is now a necessity of a Mediator to satisfy God's Justice, to destroy enmity, to make peace, to bring us near to God again, and to gain us confidence and acceptance with God. The Covenant of grace, could not have been drawn up without a Mediator; God would never have treated with sinners but by a Mediator, who should satisfy him for the wrong and injury done unto him, and who should set mercy (as it were) at liberty, to shower and fall down on sinful man, and who should undertake to see all Articles performed.

**Objection. It may be objected, that the Law given at Mount Sinai, was a Covenant of works, and yet that was delivered by the hand of a Mediator, Gal. 3:19.**

Sol. I shall say no more to this at present, but that the Law given on Mount Sinai, though materially it respected works, yet formally and intentionally, it was not then given and established as a Covenant of works, by which we should be justified and live; this I shall afterwards make evident, and therefore shall say no more unto it at the present.



5. The Covenant of works, and the Covenant of grace, do differ in the condition of life promised in both. Life is promised in both Covenants, but upon different conditions. Do this and live, saith the Covenant of works; Believe on Jesus Christ and live, saith the Covenant of grace. The condition of the one, consists in giving; The condition of the other, consists in receiving; The condition of the one, is to give in a perfect righteousness of our own unto God; and the condition of the other is, by faith to receive a perfect righteousness from Christ. In the Covenant of nature or of works, there is *forum justitiae*, where the sentence of absolution passeth if we be found righteous; and the sentence of condemnation, if we be found unrighteous; the question is not then about faith, but love; not whether you believed, but whether you obeyed. But in the Covenant of grace, there is *forum misericordiae*; and the sentence of absolution, passeth not upon our doing, but upon our believing; and the sentence of condemnation passeth upon all unbelievers.

Now here fall in two notable questions.

**1. Question. Whither faith were not required in the Covenant of works?**

Sol. To this I answer three things.

1. Faith was required in the Covenant of works, as Faith may be taken, either for a dependence on God the only Author of being and blessing, or for an expectation of that good of life, which God promised with a reliance upon God for it; or for a persuasion of God's love to him, and acceptance of his obedience whilst continuing upright with God. As to these considerations of faith, Adam (who lived under the Covenant of works) had faith, and did exercise it: for he was bound to acknowledge God as the only fountain of his good, and to depend upon him as so: And he was bound to believe the

possession of that life which God promised to him, whilst he should continue perfectly obedient: and likewise he was bound to be persuaded of the love of God unto him in that course of obedience, and also the acceptance of his obediencial services unto God.

2. But that faith which respected the Covenant of works, was different from that faith which respects the Covenant of grace, and is now required. For, 1. That faith was such as looked on a promise of life made by God to a perfect creature, and as so continuing; but that faith which respects the Covenant of grace, looks upon the promise of God in Christ, made in respect to us sinners, and lost in ourselves.

2. That faith looked on God as a creator, and preserver, but this faith looks on God as a Redeemer, and merciful Father.

3. That faith was natural, concreated with Adam, not raised, nor infused in a Gospel-way: but this faith is now promised, and infused in a supernatural way, by the Spirit of Christ, through the dispensation of the Gospel.

4. That faith could not be at all in any, but so long as he was perfectly righteous; and therefore it ceased upon the cessation of that righteousness; it was principally grounded upon inherent Righteousness. But, this faith is in a sinner, who hath no righteousness of his own, but relies upon the righteousness of another, even the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

3. Although there was a kind of faith in Adam under the Covenant of works, yet that faith was not for this end and purpose, to be the condition of that Covenant. There it was a part of his righteousness, but was not stipulated as the condition of life, as that upon which his life and justification did depend. But the faith required in the

Covenant of grace, comes in purposely as the condition of life, and justification for the sinner.

**2. Quest. Whither the Covenant of grace doth not require works, as well as the Covenant of nature or of works; If so, what difference is there then between them as to doing?**

Sol. Questionless, the Covenant of grace requires good works. This is a faithful saying (saith Paul, Tit. 3:8) and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which believe in God, might be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable unto men. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, Matth. 5:16. But yet there is a vast difference betwixt the good works as required in the Covenant of works, and as required in the Covenant of grace.

They differ in their spring and fountain, and they differ in their manner of working; but herein especially they differ as to these Covenants; that in the one, they are a condition of life; but in the other, Testimonies and Evidences of life; in the one, they are the matter of life and justification; in the other, they are nothing at all; they are no part, no reason, they have no interest or hand at all in the justification of a sinner; Faith (therein) wholly excludes them, and fixeth only on the righteousness of Christ. Although they are always present in the justified man, yet they are never present in his justification before God.

6. The Covenant of works, and the Covenant of grace do differ thus; The least sin undoes the sinner under the Covenant of works, but it doth not so in the Covenant of grace. The Covenant of works passeth sentence against you, upon the least obliquity; Cursed is everyone that continueth not in everything to do it; and you have no remedy against this sentence in the Covenant of works: But it is not so in the

Covenant of grace. This is a Remedy, and a Sanctuary, and a City of Refuge, against the sentence passed in the Covenant of works. If the condemned and distressed sinner, can fly unto, and reach to the Covenant of grace, Christ will satisfy for him, and make his peace, and procure mercy for him. Nay, the Covenant of grace deals more favorably with us; It doth not cast us out for every transgression, but as a father pities his child that serves him, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him, Psal. 103:13. Unless we utterly violate the Covenant of grace, we may yet find grace and mercy. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, 1 John 2:1,2.

7. The Covenant of works, if we could attain unto it, would now be matter of glorying in ourselves; If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, Rom. 4:2. The elder brother (who represented these work-men) how did he boast himself? These many years did I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy Commandment, &c. Luke 15:29. I am not as other men, said that proud Pharisee; you might have challenged life by a debt, by the Covenant of works; To him that worketh, is the Reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt, Rom. 4:4. You might have earned happiness, if I may so speak, at your fingers ends, and might have demanded your wages after you had done your work; But, the Covenant of grace cuts off all boasting, and glorying in ourselves. Where is boasting then? It is excluded; by what Law? Of works; nay, but by the Law of faith, Rom. 3:27. And Jesus Christ is made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption; That according as it is written, he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord, 1 Cor. 1:30,31. You cannot glory in your wisdom, for that you have from Christ; nor in your sanctification, for that you have from Christ, &c. you have all from Christ, therefore all your glorying must be in Christ.

There is a twofold glorying, one in the Testimony of conscience; this you may have who are under the Covenant of grace, 2 Cor. 1:12. Another is in the confidence of our own works. This the Covenant of grace doth utterly exclude. God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; Gal. 6:14. All is of grace; by the Covenant of grace, all is given, and freely given. Christ is given, and grace is given, and mercy is given, and life is given, and salvation is given; and therefore all boasting and glorying in ourselves, is excluded by the Covenant of grace.

8. They differ thus; The Covenant of works breeds terrors and fear, and despair; If a man expect life by it, his heart must sink within him, considering how short he is of that righteousness therein required for life, as also that abundance of unrighteousness in himself, exposing him to wrath, from a just God.

But the Covenant of grace, is a ministration of life and peace, and joy, and boldness; you have here a sure refuge to fly unto, a sure Rock to stand upon, and a sure Anchor to trust unto.

9. There are many other differences between them; as the impossibility of life by the one, as the case now stands; and the certainty of life by the other; and the diversity of life promised in the one, from that in the other; and a difference in respect of the seals for the one, and for the other; And a difference in respect of extent. The Covenant of works was with all men, but this with believers only. And a difference in respect of Appeals; though you may appeal from the Covenant of works to the Covenant of grace, yet there is no appeal from the Covenant of grace, &c. But I shall not stay any longer upon this first particular, only by the way make some few Uses from the consideration of both these Covenants.

1. Use. In what a miserable condition are all unbelievers, and impenitent persons, who are strangers and foreigners to the Covenant of grace, enemies to Christ, and therefore utterly disinterested in the Covenant of grace. Surely, mercy is not to be found in any other Covenant but in this. In the Covenant of works you are condemned and accursed, by reason of transgression; your lives are forfeited, you are under the curse (cursed is everyone, &c.) Neither doth the Covenant of works mitigate or reverse, or alter the sentence: It admits of no mercy at all. Mercy which is the only remedy against it, is found only in the Covenant of grace. There is the Throne of grace set up, and there is the Mercy-seat to be found. But unbelievers, because they refuse Christ; and impenitent sinners because they choose their sins, exclude themselves from Christ and from this Covenant of grace; and therefore they shall live and die accursed and condemned men.

2. Use. See and admire the infinite goodness of God in making this Covenant of grace, not insisting on the other Covenant of works, not holding us unto it; to take us as it were out of the hand of justice, and to put us into the hand of mercy; not to sue the old bond, but to make a new treaty, that so he might pardon our former transgressions; What infinite goodness was this! Oh! This was exceeding pity, and exceeding kindness, and exceeding goodness, to take off the yoke of bondage, and to bring us into the bond of a new Covenant; to set up a Mediator, to make another Covenant where we might yet find life, mercy, and peace; not to deal with us in justice, but in mercy; not according to the desert of our doings, but according to the riches of his grace in Christ.

3. Use. Here is singular support unto troubled consciences: unto all who are wounded with the sense of their sins, and of their own inability to satisfy God's justice; and of their utter unworthiness of

mercy; Indeed if you look into the Covenant of works in this condition, there is no comfort for you, no help for you, no hope for you; That Covenant speaks not one word of grace, of mercy, of peace, of hope at all; but if it sends you sinners, it pronounceth you cursed. Yet in this case, if you look to the Covenant of grace, there is hope and help: The Covenant of grace looks not at the righteous, but at sinners; and it holds out a satisfaction made by Christ, which could never be made by the sinner; and as it hath mercy for sinners, so it communicates that mercy freely unto every mourning, broken-hearted, penitent, and believing sinner; yea, it doth not only comprehend mercy, but every grace which makes us capable of mercy, and that to be freely given by God to them that seek him.

4. Use. Take heed of resting upon your own works, of seeking life and justification from them, and for them; this is to set up the Covenant of works, and this is to seek life and justification in a way where it is impossible for a sinner to find it, and you utterly overthrow the Covenant of grace by it. The Covenant of works (by which if you will be justified) supposeth personal, perfect and steadfast righteousness; neither admits it of any repentance, nor will it make a new composition with you after your sinning's; but as it will clear and acquit you upon perfect and steadfast righteousness, so it will unalterably condemn you for any unrighteousness.

5. Use. By no means sleight nor neglect Christ any longer, but hearken to his voice, consider and embrace his offers; he is the door at which you must first enter, if you would be interested in the Covenant, and by him you must be delivered from the Covenant of works. Grace and truth, mercy and peace, love and life are by Jesus Christ.

## CHAP. IV

The proper nature of the Covenant.

The proper nature of the Covenant of grace, in the absolute consideration thereof; this I shall lay down in this description of it.

The Covenant of grace is a new compact or agreement, which God made with sinful man, out of his own mere mercy and grace, wherein he promiseth that he will be our God, and that we shall be his people; and undertakes to give everlasting life, and all that conduceth thereunto, unto all who believe in Christ.

There are divers things considerable in this description, which I desire to open.

1. This Covenant is a new compact and agreement betwixt God and man; There was another agreement before this; a Covenant of another nature, and upon other terms and considerations, and for another end: But man stood not to that agreement, he did voluntarily transgress it, and thereby deprived himself of all the benefits promised in that Covenant, and fell under that death and curse, which God had threatened for the breach and transgression of it: Now the new Covenant is (as it were) a plank after that ship-wrack; It is another Indenture for life: it is not the same agreement renewed, nor the former Lease or Bond renewed, but a new one, of another kind and nature, made with man in another condition and capacity, and upon another condition.

God (presently) made a new Covenant, or agreement with fallen man, different from the former made with created righteous man. If



he had not done so,

1. All man-kind had been eternally lost: Sinful man could never have been recovered, never have been restored to life, but by a Covenant of grace; nothing but grace can recover the lost sinner. Rom. 3:19. Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. Ver. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the Law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.

2. The Lord had lost all the glory of his mercy, if he had left us to the sentence of the first Covenant. Indeed there his justice, and wrath, and severity had been exceedingly magnified, but his mercy had not risen and appeared at all unto us, had not God made this new Covenant with us, being become sinners, and so fit objects of his mercy.

Now the intent of God was to exalt his mercy, and that man should know the greatness and exceeding riches of it; and therefore God was pleased to make a new treaty, this Covenant of grace.

3. There had been no news of a Christ, nor thought of him else. As Christ is never effectually given unto any, but unto the lost; so he was never made known until the fall of man. And remember it, That as Christ was not, so he could not be revealed in a Covenant of works, whilst life was held by that tenure. Christ is not to be found there, where life is claimed by a righteousness of our own; he is only to be found in a Covenant of grace, which gives life unto sinners upon the righteousness of another. Rom. 3:21. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested. Ver. 22. Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe.

These are the principal reasons, why God made a new Agreement, another Covenant, a Covenant of grace with sinful man; namely, because he would not lose all man-kind, nor leave them despairing; and, Because he would exalt his own mercy, and likewise give his Son Jesus Christ, and lay upon his shoulders, the Redemption and salvation of his people.

2. This Covenant is such an agreement with sinful man, as springeth and riseth from the mercy and the grace of God; Hence you have these expressions; According to his mercy he saved us, Tit. 3:6. By grace ye are saved, Eph. 2:5. That in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ, ver. 7. This Covenant may be considered several ways, and in all of them, you may see the mere mercy and grace of God.

1. In respect of the constitution of it: Nothing out of God, and nothing in God but his mere mercy and his own grace, laid out and appointed this Covenant of grace with sinners: Grace was the foundation of it.

2. In respect of admission: It is the mere mercy and grace of God which opens the door, and takes in the sinner into this Covenant with himself. I will love them freely, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.

3. In respect of dispensation. All the communications from it, and all the imparting's of the treasures of it, are the flowing's of mercy, and the overflowing's of the grace of God.

But I am now only to speak of the mercy and grace of God, as the foundation, the *causa impulsiva*; these alone are the moving cause, why God made this new Covenant. For,

1. There could be no cause or reason in us: we were become sinners, we were become miserable. Ezek. 16:6. When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live: yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. Ver. 8. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, Behold, thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine, saith the Lord. This was our condition, a sinful, polluted, loathsome condition, when God set his love upon us, and entered into a Covenant with us.

2. There was sufficient and pregnant cause on our part, why the Lord should never have looked after us, or accepted of us anymore. Jer. 3:7. They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? Surely, if a woman commit adultery, it is a mere act of favor, if her husband accepts of her again: We brake the Covenant of our God, and therefore the Lord might have given us a bill of divorce for that transgression; but instead thereof to offer terms of life and love, oh, this was this very mercy, and this very grace!

3. Nay, more than this; when we had thus sinned, and injured God, and forfeited all, deserving nothing but rejection and curse, then for God to draw a Covenant which continued a better estate for us, and upon better terms for us; what is mercy? And what is grace, if this be not!

## SECT. I.

3. This Covenant of grace, is such a compact wherein God promiseth, That he will be our God, and that we shall be his people.

Here are three things observable.

1. That this Covenant is a Covenant of promise, altogether of promise; God therein promiseth all that doth concern himself or us. There are many things in it which do concern himself, and many things which do concern us, and they are all of them under promise. The rewards (if I may so call them) on his part, of life, and mercy, and grace, and salvation, they are all promised; and the services, qualities, duties, on our part, in reference unto him as our God, are also promised by him. What he will perform, and what we are to perform, although they be different things, yet in this Covenant both of them are promised; He promiseth to love us, and he promiseth that we shall love him; He promiseth, that he will forgive our sins; and he promiseth, that we shall repent of our sins; He promiseth that he will help us; and he promiseth, that we shall walk in his Statutes; He promiseth that he will save us; and he promiseth that we shall believe to the saving of our souls.

In the other Covenant of works, there God promiseth life, and man promiseth obedience; God was to perform his part, and man was to perform his part, and man's performance depended upon his own strength: But in this Covenant, God promiseth all, and he undertakes all; He undertakes to give all that he promiseth, and promiseth to give all that he requireth. I will give a new heart; I will cause you to pass into the band of the Covenant; I will cause you to know me, to trust in my Name, to love me, to seat me, to walk in my Statutes, and to do them: He will subdue our iniquities, &c.

2. In this Covenant, he promiseth that he will be our God. I will establish my Covenant betwixt me and thee, and thy seed after thee, to be God unto thee and to thy seed after thee, Gen. 17:7. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, &c. I will be their

God, &c. Jer. 31:33. And I will be their God, Isa. 11:20. They shall say, The Lord is my God, Zachariah 13:9.

This one thing which God promiseth (I will be your God) it is as one rightly speaks, *Anima foederis*, the very soul of all the Covenant: It is *summa Foederis*, the excellency, the very quintessence of it. It is far more than that, I will pardon you; than that, I will help you, I will bless you; or that, I will save you. As Christ spake concerning that command of loving the Lord with all thy heart, this is the great Commandment; So may we say of this part of the Covenant of this promise, I will be your God; it is the great part of the Covenant, it is the great promise of the Covenant of grace: Indeed it is the sum of all; All is contained in it; and therefore David said, Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord, Psal. 144:15.

**Quest. But some may demand, What great matter is comprehended in this, when God saith in the Covenant, I will be your God? I will be a God to you: Is he not the God of the whole world? Is he not a God to all the people of the earth.**

Sol. I answer, That he is so, he is the God of the whole earth, and there is no God besides him; He is a God to all the creatures, in respect of their production, they were all made and formed by him, they are the work of his hands; And in respect of preservation, In him we live, and move, and have our being, Act. 17:28. There is a Relation betwixt him and all creatures: But this is inconsiderable in comparison of this Covenant-relation unto his people, wherein he saith, I will be a God to you, or your God. This relation is of all other the highest, and nearest; as when a man promiseth unto a woman, I will be a husband unto you; this takes in love, and nearness, and care, and maintenance.

There are four things comprehended in this.

1. Reconciliation unto you. I will be your God i.e. I will be reconciled to you, I will never be an enemy to you; All enmity betwixt you and me is at an end, I accept of you into a state of love, my love is towards you, you have found grace in my sight, I will marry you unto myself in loving kindnesses; my love shall rest upon you.

2. Donation of himself. I will be your God, i.e. I will bestow myself upon you: you shall have a propriety in me; I am God, even thy God, Psal. 50:7. This God is our God, Psal. 48:14. He gives himself (as it were) into your possession, into your hands: As when the Indenture is drawn and sealed, the land falls into your pocket: and therefore, whensoever you find him covenanting, you find him (as it were) giving away himself, granting a right unto himself, and a possession and enjoyment of himself. After the Lord had made a Covenant with Abraham, he thereupon stiles himself the God of Abraham, and so the God of Isaac, and of Jacob, and of Israel; and thus making a Covenant with all the faithful, he thereupon is theirs, their God, and their Father. They have as much right unto him, and propriety in him, as the wife in and to the husband, who becomes hers by a Covenant of Marriage. My Beloved is mine, and I am his. This is a wonderful truth, that God (in the Covenant of grace) gives himself: Consider God,

1. Either Essentially, in his eternal, self-sufficient, holy, blessed, infinite, glorious Being and Attributes: as thus considered he is yours, makes all over unto you really.

2. Or, Personally, as a Father; He is your Father, John 20:17. I am a Father to Israel, Jer. 31:9. As the Son, as God manifested in the flesh, he is your Christ; Christ gives himself to be yours. And as the holy Ghost, so also he is yours. Oh what a Covenant is

this, wherein the covenanted have such a propriety. The eternal God is my God; The All-sufficient God is my God; The holy Ghost is my God; The merciful God is my God; The omnipotent, loving, gracious God is my God; and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is my Father; and Jesus Christ, God the Son is my God; and God the holy Ghost is mine. I have an interest in him and them, and I have a communion and fellowship with them.

3. Engagement of himself, with all that he hath, and all that he can do. What a God can be or can do for your good; Thus far doth God engage unto his people when he makes a Covenant with them to be their God; he makes over himself, and all, by bond unto you: what I am, I am to you, and for you; and what I have or can do, it shall be for you. I am the holy God, I will be Holiness to you; I am the merciful God, I will be merciful to your transgressions; I am the gracious God, I will show favor to you, and will freely love and bless you; I am the All-sufficient God, and I will be a Sun and a Shield unto you; I am the Omnipotent God, I will uphold you by the right hand of my power; I am All, and will be All in All unto you; I am God blessed forever; and I will be Blessedness to you; for my Covenant with you, is the engagement of myself, and of all good unto you.

4. Perpetuity. I will be a God unto you, or I will be your God in a Covenant of Grace; it is as if he should say, I will be a God unto you, as long as I am God; I am God forever; and I will be your God forever. This God is our God forever and ever, Psal. 48:14. I will love you and bless you forever. Did I not say aright, when I told you, that God's engaging of himself to be our God in the Covenant, was the soul, the life, the sum of the Covenant? What can we have more, or desire more? A God to be our God, a merciful, gracious, blessed, blessing God, to be our merciful,

gracious, our blessed, our blessing God, and all this as long as he is God, forever, and forever.

3. In this Covenant he promiseth, that we shall be his people, Jer. 31:33. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. So Ezek. 11:20. They shall be my people, and I will be their God. Zach. 13.9. I will say It is my people, and they shall say The Lord is my God. This is the Covenant; This mutual engagement on either side is it, I will be your God, and you shall be my people. This is a Marriage, I will be your Husband, and you shall be my wife: I take you to be my Husband; and I take you to be my wife; This Reciprocal consent, and this Reciprocal agreement, Thou shalt be mine, and I will be thine; Thou shalt be for me, and I will be for thee, Hos. 3:3, this makes the marriage: So the Reciprocal acceptance, consent, and agreement betwixt God and us makes up the Covenant between us, in the very formal and vital nature of it.

Here are two questions unto which I would speak a few things.

What this expression of the Covenant imports, you shall be my people; or what it is to be a people in Covenant with God.

As there is some singular thing in that Covenant expression, I will be your God, or I will be a God to you; So there is some special thing in that Covenant expression likewise, you shall be my people, or you shall be to me for a people: And if I mistake not, there are three things in it.

1. A Separation; you shall not be any others, nor for any other but for myself; and this is expressly declared, Deut. 29:12,13. That thou shouldest enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God—That he may establish thee today for a people unto himself: and chap. 7:6. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself;



and chap. 16:6. The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself. 2 Cor. 6:17,18. Come out from amongst them, and be ye separate saith the Lord—And I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.

2. A dedication of ourselves to God. A kind of consecration, wherein we choose him to be our God, and bind ourselves to him to be his. A willing choice, Deut. 26:17. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God— verse 18. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people. Isa. 63:19. We are thine, thou never barest rule over them, they were not called by thy name. Isa. 64:9. Behold, see we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Psal. 116:16. Oh Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant. Psal. 119:94. I am thine, save me, &c.

3. An obligation to hearken unto him, to obey him, and to walk with him. Deut. 27:9,10. Take heed and hearken O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God, Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments, and his statutes which I command thee this day. Jos. 24:22. Ye are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord to serve him; and they said, we are witnesses.

How we come to be his people, whether by any voluntary act of our own, or by the sole effect of his grace, because he saith, ye shall be my people.

For the resolution of this, know, that the Covenant may be considered two ways.

1. As to the Platform of its constitution: which shows of what form the contracting is, when God declares that he as a God makes over

himself unto his people and his people make over themselves unto him.

2. As to the real and effectual execution of this, in an actual and mutual acceptation of each other, and obligation of themselves to each other. Thus considered, you must distinguish betwixt the act of voluntary consent in the people or persons covenanting with God, and betwixt the cause of that willing consent, election and estimation; There is a voluntary consent in all the people of the Covenant, They do take the Lord to be their God, and they do resign, surrender up, and give themselves to be his people, and agree to walk with him; But then this ariseth not from their own power and ability, but only from the love and power of the Grace of God, who in effectual vocation, doth not only say You shall be my people, but also makes them so to be; They become his people, but he makes them willing to be so; They agree to all that he requires, but it is because he enables them so to do.

Before I pass from this, I shall make some Use of it.

Use 1. Is this the New Covenant, That God is to us a God, and that we are to him a people? That he promiseth that he will be our God, and we promise that we will be his people? And is this the vital and chief part of the Covenant, that God is, and will be our God? Oh then, what matter of admiration is this? What wonders of love and kindness are manifested in this! Judas (not Iscariot) wondered at the peculiar manifestations of Christ unto the Disciples, John 14:22. What is the cause that thou wilt show thyself to us, and not unto the world! And David wondered at God's Promise to establish his house and throne forever before him, 2 Sam. 7:16. Then went King David and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I O Lord God! And what is my house that thou hast brought me hitherto! Verse 18. And this was yet

a small thing in thy sight Oh Lord God, but thou hast spoken of thy servants house for a great while to come; and is this the manner of man Oh Lord God! Verse 19. And Moses wondered at the great work of Providence in the deliverance of Israel, and drowning of Pharaoh, Who is like unto thee O Lord amongst the gods, who is like thee! Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders, Exod. 15:11. All these things, and many more there are, which afford wonder and admiration to us; But this one thing, that God is our God, and that he promiseth in the Covenant to be our God, and that we shall be his people, is of all other the most amazing truth, and the most wonderful goodness; Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, 1 John 3:1. This is most wonderful, whether you consider, 1. God himself. 2. Or ourselves. Or, 3ly. The comprehensive efficacy of this. Or, 4ly. Other things in comparison with this. Or, 5ly. The fullness of it.

1. If you consider God himself. In himself, he is the Almighty God, the great possessor of heaven and earth, the eternal God, infinite in holiness, and wisdom, and power, there is no end of his greatness: He is the Lord, the Lord merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, a God high above all gods.

Now what wonder is it, that this God will so far abase himself as to become our God, to give himself, and to bestow himself upon us, and to own us for his people, his peculiar, his choice treasure.

2. If you consider us in ourselves: What is man that thou art mindful of him! Or the son of man that thou visitest him! Saith David, Psal. 8:4. Much more wonderful is it to say, What is sinful man, that thou regardest him! Or what is fallen man, that thou shouldest enter into Covenant with him! It was much that the great God should make a

Covenant with man in the state of innocence; it is much more that he should renew a Covenant with him in the state of enmity: for the righteous God to covenant with righteous man, is not so wonderful, as for the holy God to make a Covenant with unholy man: To be a friend unto a friend is much less than to be a friend unto an enemy: To show favor to one who never deserved wrath, is inferior to this, viz. to show the greatest kindness to one who deserves the greatest wrath, and utter rejection. As to requite evil for good, is the greatest ingratitude; so to return good for evil, is the greatest kindness.

3. If you consider the comprehensive efficacy of this, that God is to us a God in Covenant. This comprehends in it, all good, all love, all mercy, all blessings whatsoever. If God be our God, all good must be our good: heaven and earth are settled upon you: all is given unto you, when God gives himself unto you: He is your Sun, and your Shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold. How wonderful is this, that God should be our God in a Covenant of grace! We wonder at Adams interests, and possessions: But the interests and enjoyments of the sinner, being brought into this Covenant with God, as they are more certain and stable, so they are more high and full. You are now interested in such mercies, and in such fruitions which Adam never did, or could taste of in his original state of righteousness.

4. If you consider all other gifts in comparison with this gift, I will be your God. The gifts which God bestows upon his people, are very many, and very rich, yet none of them is comparable unto this gift of himself in Covenant. None of his earthly and temporal gifts; these are lower than his spiritual and eternal gifts: they are far short of them, and therefore far short of God. The least spiritual gift transcends all earthly and temporal gifts. And none of his spiritual gifts, I say none of these is to be matched or compared with himself.

Grace is not such a gift as the God of grace: Mercy is not such a gift as the God of mercy: Peace is not such a gift as the God of peace: Nor holiness, as is the God of holiness: Nor happiness, as is the God of happiness: No, nor Christ himself; for the end of giving of Christ is to bring us unto God, to the enjoyment of him; and surely the end for which anything is given, is above the means for which it is given.

5. If you consider the fullness of this, That God gives himself unto us to be our God. It is the uppermost, and it is the utmost of all Donations: As there is nothing better, so there is nothing more to be given. God cannot give you a greater, nor a better, nor any more good, when he hath given unto you himself. It is as much as you must, and as much as you can expect and desire; you cannot have more on earth, and you cannot have more in heaven. The enjoyment of God himself for our God, is All. And now tell me whether this be not-wonderful and amazing, that such a God should give himself to such miserable, poor, loathsome and unworthy sinners in such a gracious Covenant.

Use. 2. Is this the Covenant of grace (at least the most noble and vital part of it) that God is our God, and that we are his people? Then let us try ourselves whether we be within this Covenant of grace, yea or no. Can you (upon good grounds) say, This God is our God, or the Lord is my God; My God, and my Lord, and my Father. Laban could say, the God of your Father, Gen. 31:29, and Pharaoh could say, entreat the Lord your God, Exod. 10:17, but neither of these could say, the Lord my God. You read of some to whom the Lord speaks, Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God, Hos. 1:9, and the Apostle speaks of some, who were strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, Ephes. 2:12. This is one difference betwixt the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace, that the one is universal, extending to all

mankind, but the other is particular, and is restrained only to Believers: There is no distinction of persons in the one, but there is a limitation of persons in the other. God is not a God (in a Covenant of grace) unto all, nor can all look on him and own him as their God in Covenant.

Now because this is a very weighty business, I shall therefore propound four things to discourse upon.

1. Some clear characters of such people who (as yet) have not the Lord to be their God in Covenant.
2. The extreme misery and infelicity of such persons.
3. The infallible evidences by which you may know that the Lord is your God in the Covenant of grace.
4. The admirable comforts proper to those who can (upon that account) say, that God is to them a God, and that the Lord is their God in Covenant.

## SECT. II

1. The Characters of such a people, who as yet have not the Lord to be their God in Covenant. I shall present unto you four of them, viz universal absence. 2. Special disagreement. 3. A contrary league. 4. Positive unbelief.

1. Universal absence of all those covenant-tokens which God always bestows on them with whom he is a God in Covenant: God is never a God in Covenant to any, but some new and excellent qualities are derived from God; even the excellencies expressed in his Covenant

are imprinted in all with whom God is a God in Covenant. God is a God of the living, and not of the dead: If God be your God, you are a changed people, another kind of people than in times past you were. You have new hearts and a new spirit: And an heart is given unto you to know the Lord, and to love the Lord, and to fear the Lord your God, as he promiseth to all with whom he is a God in Covenant: And therefore if no Covenant grace is to be found in a man's heart, if no change, if no knowledge, if no love of God, no fear of God, this man cannot say God is my God; he cannot say God hath covenanted with me to be my God. Hence it is that the Apostle speaking of the Ephesians, as under their natural, sinful condition, being dead in sins and trespasses, and walking according to the course of the world, and having their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, Ephes. 2:1,2,3, he saith of them, that at that time they were without Christ, and without the Covenant, and without God in the world, ver. 12.

**Object. It is true, that Renewing Grace is not an Antecedent in the Covenant.**

Sol. Yet it is true, that it is a Consequent of the Covenant; It is not a Cause why God is our God, yet it is an Immediate effect of this when God is our God: God doth not say, If you bring a changed and renewed heart, then I will be your God; but yet, when God saith in Covenant, I will be your God, he saith also I will give you a new heart, &c.

2. Special Disagreement. In all Covenants drawn up betwixt person and person, there must be a mutual agreement, or else it is not a Covenant, neither is it binding, neither is there, or can there be a propriety. If a man offer himself upon such and such terms to be a husband unto a woman, if she disagree, if she cannot like the person, or his terms, here is no Covenant betwixt them; she cannot say This

man is my husband; so if the Lord offers himself to be our God, but he and we differ upon terms proposed, he proposeth such terms as we cannot like, and will not yield unto; now it is evident that he is not our God in Covenant, nor can we say This God is our God. God saith, I am content to be your God; but then you must be content to be holy, Levite. 11:44. I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy, for I am holy. Now if a person replies, but I will not be holy, of all things whatsoever I cannot abide holiness, I hate it, and I scorn it, and I will never yield unto it; this person hath not God to be his God in Covenant, for he utterly disagrees, he cannot endure a holy God, and he will not be holy as God is holy. Again, God saith, you would have me to be the Lord your God in Covenant; If so, then you must obey the voice of the Lord your God, and do what he commands, Deut. 27:10. If you will have me for your God, I must rule you, and guide you, and prescribe unto you, what to do, and what to avoid; but if a person replies, I will not have God to rule me, and to order me, I will do what I think good, and will live as I list; I profess to thee, God is none of thy God; thou refusest him, and doest not come up to his Covenant proposals. What a silly thing is it, for any of you, to own God for your God, whilst you utterly disagree with him in his proposals, especially in those which must necessarily constitute you to be his people? Viz. sanctity and subjection.

3. A contrary League. When the people would make a Covenant that God should be their God, and him they would serve, mark how it is expressed, Josh. 24:23,25. Now therefore put away the strange gods that are amongst you, and incline your heart to the Lord God of Israel. Intimating that God would never be their God, if they would not put away their idols: If a man's heart be in league and Covenant with any sin, it cannot be in Covenant with God. Did God ever say, I will be a God to any man who loves his sins, and will not part with



them! I tell you the Lord abhors that man, and threatens all his curses against him, and will wound and destroy him that still goes on in his trespasses. And therefore if any amongst you sets his heart on sin, if he saith I love this sin, and I will not forsake it, (I will not forsake my pride, I will not forsake my lying, and I will not forsake my slandering, I will not forsake my drunkenness, or my uncleanness, &c.) by this he may know that God is none of his God in Covenant, nor is he any of the people in Covenant with God. Thou art in a contrary Covenant, in a Covenant wherein God will never agree with thee, Psal. 50:16. Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. There are two Covenants, unto which if a man cleaves, God is not in Covenant with him; one is the Covenant of good works, for justification and life: This is inconsistent with an interest in the Covenant of grace. The other is the Covenant with bad works: In this thou put'st off God, and rejectest him, and God puts off thee, and rejects thee: And thou mayest know that thou art in Covenant with sin, if thou hast a strong affection to it, and doest habitually yield a willing subjection to it.

4. Positive unbelief. When the sinner refuseth Christ, will not come to him, not consent to take and receive him for King, Priest, and Prophet; Ye will not come to me that ye might have life, John 5:4. We will not have this man to reign over us, Luke 19:14. Christ offers himself, and calls, and entreats, and promiseth, but they will not hearken; now, he that will not have Christ to be his Christ, cannot have God to be his God; For as much as God becomes our God and our Father only in Christ. By Christ only we are brought near unto him, and enjoy him as our God in Covenant.

### SECT. III.

2. The extreme misery and infelicity of such persons who have not God to be their God in Covenant. The misery is so great, and so sad, that I know not well how to express it to you.

1. You are wholly and utterly excluded from all good and happiness. You have nothing to do with happiness, nor with anything conducing to it. There is a merciful, loving, gracious, blessed God; but thou hast no portion in this God. There is a precious Christ, a mighty Redeemer, and only Savior; but thou hast no propriety in this Christ: There are great and precious promises, there are tender compassions in God; there are admirable undertakings for all good, for soul and body: But what are all these to him who is not in Covenant, who hath not God for his God? A man reads a Lease of lands, and goods, and houses; these are something to the heirs; but what are they to an enemy, or to a stranger? A person is very great and mighty, &c. but what is this to the woman who will not marry him? Ah, how sad is this, God hath love, and not for me; hath mercy, but not for me; is happiness, but is not so to me! Well did one cry out *Quid est Deus, nisi meus*, what is God if he be not my God! If he be not merciful to me, and good to me, and blessedness to me.

2. You have none to go unto in any distress and want. In the times of your distress whither will you fly, or to whom can you go? Wants are upon your bodies, and there is no creature to help you; anguish is upon your conscience, and there is no creature to quiet you: Danger is near your souls, and there is no creature to save you; whither will you go, in life for blessing, or in death for life? All good is treasured up in the Covenant, and conveyed to them that have God for their God; you must first have a propriety in God himself, before you can have a right unto, or a propriety in the good things that are to be had

by God. O but he is no God to thee, he is none of thine, nor hath he engaged himself to thee for any good whatsoever.

3. You are altogether exposed unto all evil. If God be not your God, assuredly then he is your Judge: If he be not your friend, then he is your enemy: If you be not under his love, you are then under his wrath: If his promises are not for you, his threatening's are against you: If he be not your loving God in Covenant, he is your wrathful God out of Covenant: If he be not your pardoning God in Covenant, he is your condemning God out of Covenant: If you have reason to expect mercy from him, because he is your God, you have as much reason to expect judgment from him because he is your God. I will tell you what God is, and will be to you, if he be not your God in Covenant; He is a just God, who will render unto you according to your works; He is a holy God, who will loath you, and abhor and reject you: He is a faithful God, who will certainly execute the fierceness of his wrath, and all the evil which he hath threatened in his Word against you, and you shall never escape that judgment; it shall certainly befall you, and abide on you to all eternity.

4. Against all this, you have no remedy, no hope. All the hope of a sinner is in a Mediator; but Christ is the Mediator of the Covenant; There is no Mediator to be found in any Covenant but this of Grace, and this you have no part in, God is not your God.

#### SECT. IV.

3. The Infallible evidences by which we may know that God is our God in Covenant. I will present unto you seven Evidences for this, and I beseech you to ponder them seriously: You may know that God is your God, and that you are his people in Covenant.

1. By answerable and reciprocal acts.
2. By inclusive and exclusive interests and properties.
3. By your choice and peculiar enjoyments, or (at least) your desires of them.
4. By the subordination and conformity of your hearts unto his authority and will.
5. By your sweet contentment and satisfaction in the manifestations of God in any part of his Covenant unto your souls.
6. By your dependence on God as your God in Covenant.
7. By your Covenant-care and carriage.

First, You may know that God is your God, and that you are his people, by your answerable and reciprocal acts between God and you.

There are four acts which God doth express when he becomes our God in Covenant.

1. There is his choosing act; he makes choice of us before any other to be his people. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth, Deut. 7:6.
2. There is his loving act. When I passed by thee, and looked on thee, Behold thy time was the time of love. And I swore unto thee, and entered into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine, Ezek. 16:18.

3. There is his engaging act: He binds himself to be our God, by Promise, and by Oath, Ezek. 16. I swear unto thee.

4. There is his imparting act: He doth in this Covenant bestow himself, and all that he hath, or can do, upon us. I am thine, and I will bless thee, and do thee good. And all these acts are free, not compelled; and they are also fixed acts, never will he reverse or alter them.

Answerable unto these acts of God, are the Acts in such who are the people of God by Covenant: What God acts towards them, they do act by the instinct of his Spirit towards him. They do also,

1. Choose him before all other to be their God. You have chosen you the Lord to serve him, Josh. 24:22. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, Deut. 26:27. As the wife owns the husband, this is the man on whom her heart is set, and none but him.

2. Love him; I love the Lord, said David, Psal. 116:1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, Deut. 11:1. We loved him because he loved us first, 1 John 4:19. Oh how dear is his presence and his favor to them, how sweet are their mutual communions?

3. Engage themselves unto him: Many Nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people, Zech. 2:11. They yield themselves unto the Lord, (or as it is in the original, they give the hand unto the Lord) 2 Chron. 30:8. As the custom is, when men make a Covenant or Agreement, they strike hands, or take one another by the hand, arguing hereby their consent and engagement, as the people in Ezra 10:19, gave their hands that they would put away their wives. So in covenanting with God, we

give out the hand unto him; (i.e.) we give up ourselves unto him, and bind ourselves unto him.

4. Impart themselves, and all that they have, or can do unto him; their hearts and lives, and gifts, and services, that God may have all; and draw out your All, all your hearts, all your graces, all your parts and lives, and estates, Josh. 24:17. The Lord is our God. Ver. 24. The Lord our God will we serve. Rom. 14:7. None of us liveth to himself. Verse 8. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, &c. Now is it thus with us? Have we indeed chosen the Lord to be our God? And are we engaged unto him, and love him, and own him, and are become his, and none but his, and have we made over ourselves, and all that we have unto him, and count nothing, no, not our lives too dear for him? The Lord hath passed by thousands, and hath set his heart on you; and have you passed by all others, and set your hearts only on him? But are you sure that you have not chosen some other Object with him, or before him? Only the Lord God is chosen by you, and set up by you. No sinful object, and no earthly object is set up: And are you so become his, as that you will be his forever? You are bound to him, you cleave unto him; nothing shall part you and your God; no outward preferments, afflictions, and crosses: do you count it your only happiness to enjoy him, and your only unhappiness to be deprived of him? Do you say, None but God, none but God? As the Martyr said, None but Christ. But are you so his, that he is the greatest desire, and the greatest delight, and the greatly beloved of your souls? Whom have I in heaven but thee? There is none on earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73:25. Nay, but may the Lord make use of you as his? If he should say, I must use your wisdom, or your power, or your authority, or your zeal, or your estate, or your lives, for the service of my glory: Can you now answer, O Lord, I am thine, I

am thy servant, all that I have is thine, and all that I can do is thine? Thou shalt command my heart, my parts, my estate, my life, my All, &c.

2. You may know whether the Lord be your God, and you be his people, By your mutual interests, and proprieties inclusively, and exclusively; God hath an interest in you, and you have an interest in God: he hath a propriety in you, and you have a propriety in him; in all that he hath you have an interest, and in all that you have he hath an interest; what he is, he is for you; and what you are, you are for him; he is only for you, and you are only for him: None hath that interest in you as God hath, if indeed he be your God; Nay, you have not such an interest in yourselves, as God hath in you; you are not your own, you are wholly his, if indeed he be your God, and you be his people; No Sin can say, You are mine; and no Creature can say, You are mine; only God can say, You are mine; As in the Covenant of Marriage, none but the Husband can say, This woman is mine; So if God be our God in Covenant, none can say, You are mine, but God only. Levite. 20:26. You shall be holy unto me, for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that you should be mine. Ezek. 16:8. I entered into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine. Cant. 2:16. My beloved is mine, and I am his. O sirs! These two words (mine and thine) make up the Covenant; Nay, if I may be rightly understood, this one word (mine) makes up the Covenant, when you sum up all, it is in this, God is mine, he is my God, he is my Lord, he is my Father, he is my friend, he is my mercy, he is my wisdom, he is my counsel, he is my rock, he is my help, he is my comfort, he is my hope, he is my salvation, he is my portion, he is my life, he is my happiness. Domine ubi sunt omnia mea, tuscis, said Paulinus; And when God looks on any person in Covenant with him, he can say, This person is mine, he is my child and my friend, and my servant; I have all his heart, and all his love, and all his hope, and all

his trust, and all his delight, and all his desire, and all his fear, and all his service, &c.

3. You may know whether God be your God, By your choice and peculiar enjoyments; or (at least) by your desire of them; your Covenant enjoyments; your desire to enjoy Covenant-mercies and blessings; if God be your God in Covenant? You do enjoy him, and such things from him as no oath people in the earth do enjoy; what peculiar things do we enjoy, I will tell you.

1. You enjoy that loving-kindness, and favor as none else do enjoy: Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people, Psal. 106:4.

2. You enjoy that pardoning mercy as none else do enjoy; Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin, Psal. 85:2.

3. You enjoy that power of renewing grace which none else do enjoy; That cleansing from sin, Jer. 33:8. That subduing of sin, Micah 7:19. That freedom from sin; Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are under grace, Rom. 6:14. That newness of heart, Ezek. 36:26.

4. You enjoy that peace and comfort which none others do enjoy; He will speak peace unto his people, Psal. 85:8. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, Isa. 40:1. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord, Zach. 2:10.

**Object. Oh, But we have hardly found any of these Covenant enjoyments.**



Sol. I answer, everyone to whom God is a God in Covenant.

1. Either hath expressly found every one of them.

2. Or his great desires, and longings of heart are after these Covenant enjoyments; O a reconciled God, a loving God, a pardoning God, a sanctifying God, a Peace-speaking God, &c. above all things else whatsoever, these are most eminently, and most earnestly, and most constantly to be found in the hearts desire of that person who indeed hath God to be his God; Let the conscience speak, and bear witness whether this be not so. All you who have God to be your God, and who are his people this day; Now tell me you who hear this Sermon, and perhaps think that God is your God, what are your enjoyments, your portions, your possessions; what Covenant-gift, or work is to be found in your souls; And what are the great things after which you so pant, and sigh? Is it the favor of God, is it the mercy of God, is it renewing, and subduing grace? I have nothing until I have these, and I cannot be satisfied until I have these. O Lord, be my God; O Lord forgive iniquity, remember me graciously, love me freely, heal my soul, &c.

4. You may know that God is your God, and that you are his people by your subordination, and by your conformity of your wills to God's Will; Beloved, the Covenant betwixt God and us, takes in these two things.

1. Subordination. For it is an agreement betwixt a Superior and an Inferior; betwixt the great God who is the Lord of all, and poor miserable man, who is inferior to him, and is to subject himself to his God, as to his Lord and Sovereign, to be ruled by him, and guided by him.

2. Conformity of will; for it is a Covenant of love, in which both parties have as it were but one heart, and one mind, and one will between them; and so in this Covenant [if we have God for our God; and if we be his people] what God likes, that do we like; and what our God loves, that do we love; and what our God hates, that do we hate; and what our God wills, that do we will; and what God would have done, that would we have done. This Covenant is an agreement, and mutual consent in all things; It will not permit us to give limits to God, because he is our sovereign Lord; Nor will it admit contrarieties and contradictions 'twixt God and us; And therefore in this Covenant, God writes his law in our hearts; i.e. he puts into our hearts such spiritual principles, as makes our will delightfully conformable unto his Will.

Alas! If there be an opposition 'twixt our hearts and God, a contradiction in our minds and wills unto his mind and Will, this enmity plainly testifies, that he is not our God, and that we are none of his people; if you be at that point, that your judgment, and your will, and your lusts shall rule, and sway, and govern, and command, and that God must stoop and yield to your thoughts, and to your pleasures, and to your wills, &c. But by this it appears that he is your God, and that you are his people, if God doth rule, and you do obey; if he commands, and you do hearken; if his mind rules your judgment, if his Will rules your will, if his love rules your love, if his Law rules your lives; O Lord, what thou lovest I love, what thou commandest I approve; good is the Word of the Lord, the Commandment is holy and just, and good.

5. You may know whether God be your God in Covenant, by the sweet contentment, and satisfaction, in the manifestations of your God in any part or branch of his Covenant into your souls. If the Lord

at any time be pleased to answer the desires of your souls in Covenant-love, or in Covenant-mercy, or in Covenant-grace, or in Covenant-strength, or in Covenant-peace; O what a heavenly satisfaction is this! But a glimpse of the favor of your God; but a taste of the mercy of your God; never so little of grace or peace which is an Ambassage, a Letter, a Token from God, that he is your God; this is such a life to you, it is such a rejoicing, it is such a cordial, it is such a sweet day to your souls; It is a thousand times more than to hear news, that the highest of earthly preferments is yours, or that the largest of earthly possessions are yours; Covenant-manifestations are most precious unto all who are in Covenant. Psal. 35:3. Say unto my soul, thou art my salvation.

6. You may know that God is your God, and that you are his people, by your dependence on God as your God in Covenant; you will go to him, and rest on him in all your occasions; I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me, Psal. 57:2. Thou art my God, early will I seek thee, Psal. 63:1. So, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us, Isa. 25:9. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me, Micah 7:7, &c. You will go to him and none else; to your all-sufficient God, to your Sun, and to your shield; Remember thy Covenant, O my God, which thou hast made, and save me, &c. You may know that God is your God, by your care, and your carriage in walking with him, and before him, according to the Covenant; I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect, Gen. 17:1. You are a choice and peculiar people, and you will lead choice and peculiar lives.

## SECT. V.

4. The comforts from this, that God is our God, and that we are his people: I shall propound these, 1. In general. 2. In particular.

1. In the general, it is our happiness, and blessedness, so the Scripture affirms, Psal. 33:12. Blessed is the Nation, whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance. Psal. 144:15. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord. We lost our happiness, when we lost our God; and we then recover our happiness, when we recover God to be our God; there are three things necessary to make up a blessedness for us.

1. Chiefness of good; Mans happiness must be the best of good. No good [below man] can be the happiness of man; and therefore man's happiness cannot be placed in the enjoyment of any created thing whatsoever, (suppose it be any gracious qualities) because there is a good better than all these, and that is God himself.

2. Fullness of good; it must be such a good as comprehends all the good which the soul of man doth or can need and desire, and is capable of; if the good be too short, and failing, that it is not suitable, or it is not extensive, if it cannot fully reach unto, and fill up the soul; it is not blessedness, for blessedness is perfect; it cannot consist with want; now such a good God only is.

3. Fruition of, and propriety in that good: Objective blessedness may be without our fruition; but our formal blessedness doth consist in our enjoyment of that blessedness in union with it, and communion of it; and all these are to be found when God is our God, and when we are his people in Covenant; That God (who is the chiefest good, and most full and infinite good) we stand possessed of, and enjoy him as so unto all eternity. This is our God forever and ever.

But to speak more exactly to this great truth: give me favor to open three things unto you, &c.

1. That God is, and that he only is our blessedness.
2. What that is which makes up our blessedness in God.
3. That everyone who hath God to be his God, doth enjoy everything which makes up that blessedness.

1. That God is, and that he only is our blessedness, this will presently appear by these three Arguments.

1. Blessedness is perfection, and it is the chiefest perfection; it raiseth our condition, and so raiseth it, that it cannot be raised any higher or further; and therefore the Apostle describing the blessedness of the Saints in heaven, saith, that thus the spirits of just men are made perfect, Heb. 12:24. But God is perfection, and he is the chiefest perfection; not only as to himself, but also as to us; that he is perfection to himself, is evident by his own all-sufficiency, and by his own infiniteness (all-sufficiency is perfection, and infiniteness is perfection, and independency on any, is a perfection of, and no it, self) and that he is a perfection, and the chiefest of perfection unto us is as evident; for,

1. The more or less you enjoy of him, the more, or the less perfect you are; you climb up to your perfection, as you climb up in your enjoyments of him: the more that you are brought into a likeness of him, and into a fellowship with him, and a participation of his grace and love, and glory, the more perfect you are.

2. The more you do enjoy of him, the less need you will have of other things; And when you come fully to enjoy him, all your needs, and all your wants will be at an end. As nothing can be added to God, because he is an infinite perfection; So nothing can be added to our blessedness, besides God himself, when we come to enjoy him, and therefore he alone is our perfection.

3. He fully makes up the wants of your souls; and therefore he is our perfection. Survey all the wants and complaints of the soul; he can supply them all; and all from himself alone; and therefore certainly God is our perfection.

4. Yea, go where you will, and pitch on any objects whatsoever, and let them all fall into your possession, yet, is your condition low, imperfect, needy, unhappy, unless you come to enjoy God; therefore he only is your perfection.

2. Blessedness is a quietation. It is our rest, our center where our souls quietly rest, and neither do, nor can move any further. It is our Fathers house unto which we are travelling, and unto which when we arrive, we are then at our journeys end.

Blessedness is that enjoyment, beyond which we cannot move in our desires, for any better or further enjoyment: It concludes and puts a full period to all the motions of the soul; Now God is, and he only is the quiet, rest, and end of the soul. O Lord, saith Austin, My heart was made for thee, and never is at rest till it come unto thee. There is a restlessness in man in all other enjoyments; his soul rests not, though he enjoys honors, or riches, or friends, or health, or liberty; yea, though he enjoys grace and comfort; But when he comes to enjoy God himself, now he is at rest; Now he can say as David, Return to thy rest, O my soul, Psal. 116:7. There is no more to be desired or enjoyed; for blessedness is a complete and fixed

satisfaction to the soul; it fills up all wants, and all desires, and therefore it gives rest and quiet; and so doth God; The Rabbins say, that all the letters in the Name Jehovah, are litterae quiescentes, letters of rest.

3. Blessedness is that good which is most desirable, and most delightful; for it is the greatest goodness, and therefore is most desirable, and because so, therefore it is the most delightful: It is the end for which all other things are desired, and it is the full possession of all that we have longed and waited for. Now God is the most desirable good; He is so in himself, (for he is goodness itself, and he is desirable for himself alone, and so is no other good) And he is so in the hearts of his people: Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73:25. And God is the most delightful good; there cannot be any object whatsoever, which can so please, and so take, and so affect, and glad and rejoice the heart, as God doth; His manifestations are a very Paradise, and a very heaven in the hearts of his people; they make them to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

2. What that is in and from God which makes up our blessedness, or a blessedness unto us.

There are four things which do it.

1. Propriety. Though God be an infinite blessedness in and to himself, whether we have any interest and propriety in him or not, yet he is not our blessedness without propriety; he must be our God, if he be our blessedness. Propriety in blessedness, is our blessedness. He is rich who hath riches, and he is great who hath greatness; the seeing of lands, makes no estate unto us, but the possession of them, and propriety in them, this doth it.

2. Conformity; as our unhappiness consists in dissimilitude (the more unlike any man is to God, the more unhappy is that man) where nothing of God appears, there nothing of happiness appears, (for there can be nothing but darkness, where there is nothing of light.) So on the contrary, our happiness depends upon similitude with God; The more like we are to him, the more blessed are we. The Apostle delivers this as our very blessedness, that when he appears we shall be like him, 1 Joh. 3:2. Hence it is, that holy persons are styled blessed persons: Blessed are the pure in heart, Matth. 5:8, and holiness is happiness. Imperfect holiness, is imperfect happiness; and perfect holiness is perfect happiness. The more holy you are, the more like to God you are; and the more like you are to him, the more blessed you are. The more you partake of the Divine Nature, (which is the only blessed Nature) the more do you partake of blessedness, for God is now the more yours.

3. Union. As dissimilitude with God, hinders God from being our blessedness: so likewise doth distance from God; this must necessarily be so; for if God be blessedness, then a distance from God, is likewise a distance from blessedness; of necessity there must be a nearness; yea, such a nearness as makes a union, which must make up a blessedness unto us; and indeed here lies our blessedness, that God unites himself unto us, and we are united to him. He unites himself unto us,

1. By way of donation; in that he gives himself unto us, even as a husband gives himself unto the wife, Hos. 2:19.

2. By way of inhabitation; in that he dwells in us by his Spirit, 1 John 3:24. We know that he dwells in us by the Spirit which he hath given us. 2 Cor. 6:16. I will dwell in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.



3. By way of affection; for as we are united to Christ by Faith, so God is united to us by love; when he loves us, he joins himself to us (union being an immediate effect of love) and where he unites himself, there he is a blessedness.

4. Communion. This Communion of God with us, is our great happiness on earth, and shall be our everlasting happiness in heaven, and it doth consist in God's gracious opening and manifesting of himself unto the soul; not simply in his loving of us, but especially in the manifesting that love unto us; not simply in his delight, but especially in manifesting that delight of his in us towards us, and in the imparting of his goodness to us; and verily in this communion doth our blessedness consist; namely, that God doth manifest himself in love, and grace, and glory to us.

3. That everyone who hath God for his God in Covenant, doth enjoy every one of these things which makes up blessedness; This so clear, that I shall not need to insist upon it.

1. He hath an interest in God; yea, such an interest that includes propriety; he can say, This God is my God, and this God is my portion. Psal. 118:28. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee. Psal. 119:57. Thou art my portion, O Lord. Psal. 73:26. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Bernard saith, Lord, whatsoever we give thee, unless we give ourselves unto thee, it doth not satisfy thee; So we must say, Lord, whatsoever thou givest to us, it cannot satisfy us. It is somewhat to say, This house is mine, and these lands are mine, and these parents and friends are mine; but it is infinitely more to say, This God is mine, this God is my portion.

The greater that God is above all others, the greater is the comfort and the blessedness, that he is mine.

2. He hath a conformity unto God: for he now is made partaker of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4, and is changed into the same image, 2 Cor. 3:18. He carries the very marks and characters of the holy, merciful, good, patient, wise, loving God in his soul.

3. He hath union with God, and God with him; therefore he is said to be married to the Lord. Thy Maker is thy husband, Isa. 54:5. And to be joined to the Lord, 1 Cor. 6:17. God is in him, and dwells in him: His heart is the Temple of the Holy Ghost; And the Father loves him, John 14:23. If any 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.

4. He hath communion with God; Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 Joh. 1:3. The Communion of the holy Ghost be with you, 2 Cor. 13:14. Oh what happiness is this! If all that God the Father will impart, or if all that God the Son will impart, or if all that God the holy Ghost will impart, can make you blessed, you have it all. God hath communion with you, and you have communion with him; he loves you; I will marry you to myself in loving kindness, Hos. 2:19, and you love him; We love him, because he loved us first, 1 John 4:19. He delights in you; Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee, Isa. 62:4, and you take delight in God. God is manifesting himself, and communicating his love and goodness to you to all eternity.

2. Thus have you the comfort in the general, from this, that God is your God. I shall now proceed to handle the comforts in particular, which belong unto you; and they are these. If God be your God,

1. Then you are the particular objects of the eternal love of God, and of all his gracious, unchangeable and infallible purposes, intentions and thoughts.
2. Then all the glorious Attributes of God are engaged unto you for good, for your good, for all your good, altogether for all your good.
3. Then Jesus Christ, and all the Offices of Christ, and all the works, and all the sweet fruits of his Redemption, Intercession, and Mediatorship are yours, and for your good.
4. Then the Holy Ghost, and all the excellent and choice works of the Spirit, his graces, assistance, guidance, refreshing's, joys, comforts, sealings, are your portion and assured possession.
5. Then there is a communion and conjunction of the whole Trinity, in all the businesses of your eternal blessedness.
6. Then all the promises of God are yours.
7. Then all the privileges and immunities annexed to the Covenant of grace, are yours.
8. Then all is yours.

Greater and better comforts than these, neither men nor Angels can possibly present unto you. And I desire the rather to discourse of them, that you who are the people of God, and have chosen him to be your God, and find him to be so, may know your blessedness, even in this alone, that God is your God: And that others, who as yet are out of Covenant, hearing the surpassing happiness of being in Covenant with God, and God's being in Covenant with us, may be awakened, excited and allured, to come off from their sins and sinful ways, and

may strive earnestly to enjoy this God for their God, and that they may become his people.

## SECT. VI.

1. If God be your God, then you are the particular objects of his eternal love, and of all his gracious and unchangeable, and infallible purposes, intentions, and thoughts; and so you may safely conclude that you are the vessels of mercy, on whom God will make known the riches of his glory, Rom. 9:23. The Apostle in that Chapter discourseth of the eternal love and grace of God in election (which he calls The purpose of God according to election, ver. 11, and his love, ver. 13, and his having mercy on whom he will have mercy, ver. 15:18) and those persons whom he hath thus loved and elected, he calls vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, ver. 23. Now the question might be, how we may know whether we be in that number, whether we be the persons on whom that love, and that election was fixed. This he resolves by our interest in the Covenant, ver. 24. Even us whom he hath called. Ver. 25. As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. Ver. 26. And it shall come to pass, that in that place where it was said unto you, you are not my people, where they shall be called the children of the living God: as if he had said, we know that God hath loved us, and that he hath had mercy on us, and that he hath elected us; for he hath called us out of our sinful condition, and brought us into Covenant with himself; he is our God, and we are his people; he is our Father, and we are his children; we are the children of the living God. Now what an unspeakable comfort is this, namely, a certain knowledge of the love of God, and of the election of God, that our names are written in heaven in the book of life, out of

which they shall never be blotted? 1 John 3:1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God! As if he had said, no love like unto this love; This was wonderful love, that he should be our Father, and we should be his children. 2 Thes. 2:13. We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation. Mark, the Apostle judgeth their election to be a just obligation of continual thanks, that God should be blessed for that, every day of our lives forever and ever, because he hath chosen us, and ordained us to salvation. Luke 10:20. Rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Oh, to be interested in that love of God, out of which Christ comes, and mercy comes, and all our good comes! To be interested in that love which is so free, so liberal, so invariable! To be interested in that election, which passeth by others, but clasps us; which intends for us no less than eternal glory, which will infallibly bring into us, all that will bring us unto glory! To be interested in that election which begins in choicest love, and ends in fullest blessedness! Certainly, these are grounds of highest comfort, and of sweetest joy: and in these are all such interested, who have God to be their God, and who are his people in Covenant. These, and none but they are the beloved and chosen of God.

## SECT. VII.

2. If God be your God, then all the glorious Attributes of God, are engaged unto you for your good; for when God is our God, then himself as considered in his essence, and as considered in his attributes or glories, he thus is ours; God and all that belongs to a God are for us, and for our good. As when the Covenant of Marriage

is finished betwixt the Husband and the wife, now the Husband is hers, and all that belongs unto the Husband is hers, she shall be the better for his riches, and for his honors, and for his wisdom, and for his power, and for his kindness: So when God is our God in Covenant, he is ours, and all that he hath is ours: ours, though not for Denomination (as if he made us God's, or made us omnipotent, and infinite, and eternal) yet ours for fruition: himself and all his attributes, we do and shall enjoy for our good and benefit.

I will mention some of those attributes of God, and will show you your good of and by them, and will demonstrate it, that they and all their good are engaged to all the people to whom God is a God in Covenant.

1. God is all-sufficiency. I am God Almighty (or all-sufficient) saith God to Abraham, Gen. 17:1. (i.e.) I am an infinitely perfect fullness to myself, and of myself; I am absolutely enough, and need or want nothing; and I will be enough, I will be a fullness to you, you shall not need any other but myself, to supply you with any good which you shall want, or to secure you from any evil which you fear. This is all-sufficiency, To be enough, and to be without any want, and to be enough to us, and to fill up all our wants; and this all-sufficiency, God doth engage himself to be unto everyone with whom he is a God in Covenant, Gen. 15:1. Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. What is that? It is as much as if he had said, I am thy all-sufficiency, and will see unto thee, that thou shalt have enough, thou shalt not want anything. Psal. 23:1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Psal. 34:9. There is no want to them that fear him. Psal. 84:11. The Lord God is a Sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly. Now this is the comfort belonging to you, That your God is all-sufficiency, and he is your all-sufficiency; all that you have

comes from him; and all that you want, shall be supplied by him; and he hath enough of his own fully to help you in any condition, and at any time, and he alone is enough unto you.

Consider, any want whatsoever (whether spiritual or temporal, whether inward or outward) your God will be an all-sufficiency to you. Do you want grace? Do you want peace in conscience? Do you want the joy of the holy Ghost? Do you want strength against corruptions, or against temptations? God is sufficient for them all: He can and will give more grace, Jam. 4:6. He can and will speak peace unto his people, Psal. 85:8. He can and will give you fullness of joy, Psal. 16:11. Exceeding joy, like that in harvest, Isa. 9:3, and in Isa. 12:3. With joy shall ye draw waters out of the wells of salvation: and he can and will be sufficiency against your corruptions; Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are under grace, Rom. 6:14. And against your temptations; My grace is sufficient for thee; and my strength is made perfect in weakness, 2 Cor. 12:9. And for any outward want; My God (saith Paul in Phil. 4:19) shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus: Bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure, Isa. 33:16. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: If all the earth can help you, you shall not want any good; nay, if the earth, or means do fail, God himself will not fail you, but will create good, and help, and salvation for you.

2. God is mercifulness: The Lord, the Lord God merciful, &c. Exod. 34:6. The Lord your God is merciful, 2 Chron. 30:9. Turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, Joel 2:13.

Mercifulness or mercy, doth especially denote two things in God.

1. One is tender compassion; and therefore the mercies of God are frequently styled his bowels; (Psal. 25:6. Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies) or thy bowels of mercies. So Psal. 51:1. According to

the multitude of thy bowels of mercies; and so in the New Testament, Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, Luke 1:78. It is remarkable, that the same word in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, which signifies bowels, is used for mercy: which notes two things.

1. That the mercies of God to his, are most inward, tender, affectionate compassions, like the bowels of a father, and of a mother to his dearest children being in misery.

2. That not only the effects of mercy, are the portion of God's people, but the very heart of God acts towards them, and yearns over them: when he shows mercy to them, mercy comes from his very heart and bowels.

2. Another is, forgiveness of sins; that essential propension in God to pardon sin, to pass by transgression, to blot out iniquity, and never to remember sin anymore. This is the Attribute of God, which is his great glory, and his great delight, and our only hope and life. There is a depth in this mercy, more than that in the Sea, and a height in this mercy, above all the thoughts of men; and a breadth in this mercy; it can pardon many sins, great sins, abundant sins; and a length in this mercy; it is everlasting, and endures forever: This is the mercy, or mercifulness of God! And to enjoy God in this Attribute (as our merciful God, as pitying, as pardoning us, as forgiving and forgetting all our sins, and never remembering them anymore) O what a comfort, what a settling, what a joy, and a rest is this!

Consider,

1. It is the great care, and the great desire almost of every man, especially in distresses of conscience, and times of sickness and



death; Be merciful unto me, O Lord, Lord be merciful unto me a sinner. O that my sins were pardoned, and how shall I get my sins pardoned! He that doth not regard the holy, doth yet prize and esteem very much the merciful God. Every sinner doth like and long for mercy.

2. All Controversy is at an end, when mercy pardons sin. Now enmity is slain, and wrath and curse go off (for these follow sin as unpardoned) but if sin be pardoned, all punishment is pardoned, and God is reconciled, and your souls are graciously accepted, and clasped with love and favor.

3. When mercy pardons sin, then conscience is at rest; The broken bones are at ease and rejoice, Psal. 51. (True peace follows full remission of sins) and then joy comes into the heart (Be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven) And then confidence of access unto God comes into the soul, and then hope of salvation is raised in the soul.

Now mark what I say, If God be your God, then he is your merciful God. Heb. 8:10. This is his Covenant, I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Ver. 12. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more. Isa. 40:1. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Ver. 2. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Micah 7:19. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Ver. 20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham.

There are six excellent comforts unto you who have God to be your merciful God.

1. That he will forgive you. Though the sins of others are sealed up, and stand upon record against their souls, yet your sins shall be forgiven. The sins of others are written, and stand upon record, but yours are blotted out.

2. That he will forgive your great sins, as well as your small sins: From all your filthiness, and from all your Idols, will I cleanse you, Ezek. 36.

3. That he will forgive all your sins, though they have been many, though there hath been a multitude of them. Your God (who is rich in mercy, and hath riches of mercy, and multitude of mercies) will abundantly pardon them, Isa. 55:7.

4. That he will freely forgive them; I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins, Isa. 43:25, and Luke 7:42.

5. That he will everlastingly forgive your sins; so forgive them, as never to mention them more. All his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him, Ezek. 18:22. Though they be sought for, there shall be none, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve, Jer. 50:20.

6. That your God will certainly do this; I will surely have mercy upon him, Jer. 31:20.

3. God is holiness; He is a holy God, Joshua 24:19. I am the Lord your God, ye shall be holy, for I am holy, Levite. 11:44. (Holy, holy Lord God Almighty, Rev. 4:8) Glorious in holiness, Exod. 15:11.

God's holiness, is his infinitely pureness without all sin, yea, hating of it. Being also the cause of all the holiness and purity in the creature.

This is one of the great excellencies and the glories of God; He were not God if he were not holy; and the more that any one partakes of holiness, the more excellent is he.

There are six things which we can affirm of holiness.

1. It is a glory attributed unto every person of the Trinity. It is attributed

Unto the Father: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me, John 17:11. Unto the Son, that holy child Jesus, Acts 4:27. These things saith he that is holy, Rev. 3:7. Unto the Spirit, who is called the Holy Ghost, Matth. 3:11, and the holy Spirit. Eph. 4:30. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God

2. It is a glory attributed unto all creatures, and persons, and things of excellency. The holy Angels, Matth. 25:31. The holy Prophets, Luke 1:70. The holy Scriptures, Rom. 1:2. 2 Tim. 3:15, The great City, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, Rev. 21:10. Holy men of God, 2 Pet. 1:21.

And indeed holiness is our glory, and therefore the Spirit of grace is called the Spirit of glory, Heb. 10:29, 1 Pet. 4:14. And they who are styled holy, Isa. 4:3, are styled the glory, ver. 5.

3. It is necessary unto glory, unto that glory which shall be revealed, unto the exceedingly exceeding weight of glory, unto that eternal glory, that heavenly happiness, as a means is necessary to an end; as a lower step to arise unto a higher. Heb. 12:14. Follow holiness,

without which no man shall see the Lord. 1 John 3:3. Every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself as he is pure.

4. It is necessary unto your present communion with God. He cannot take delight in you, nor will he be near you, nor impart himself unto you, unless you be holy. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? 2 Cor. 6:14. You read in the Law, that all was holy which had a respect unto God; the Altar was holy, and the Temple was holy, and the offerings were holy, and the persons who offered them were holy; To intimate unto us that there could or might not be any communion with the holy God without holiness.

5. It is the pawn and pledge of future glory, the first-fruits of the Spirit, Rom. 8:23. The earnest of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 1:22. The sealing of the holy Spirit is styled the earnest of our purchased possession, Eph. 1:13,14.

6. It is the distinguishing character of the Covenant. No people are an holy people, but the people of the Covenant, and all those people are holy, 1 Pet. 2:5. Ye are a spiritual house, an holy Priest-hood. Ver. 9. Ye are a holy Nation, a peculiar people, Isa. 4:3. He that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy; even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem. 1 Cor. 3:17. The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.

Now if God be your God, He is and will be your holy God; He will be a holy God unto you, and that affords you many comforts.

1. He will make you holy: (They shall call them the holy people, the Redeemed of the Lord, Isa. 62:12.) He will give his holy Spirit unto you, Luke 11:13. Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? Isa. 63:11. As you read of Joshua the High Priest;

The Lord said, Take away his filthy garments from him. Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment, Zach. 3:4. So the Lord deals with every person unto whom he is a God in Covenant; He cleanseth them from all their filthiness (I will cleanse them from all their iniquities, Jer. 33:8) I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean, Ezek. 36:25. So Ezek. 37:23. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their Idols, but I will cleanse them, so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

2. He will increase your holiness: He will sanctify you throughout, 1 Thes. 5:23. (He will give more grace, James 4:6.) He will strengthen what he hath wrought, Psal. 68:28. Holiness is like the waters of the Sanctuary, in Ezek. 47:3,4,5. To the ankles, to the knees, and then a river that could not be passed over. It is the field which the Lord will bless and prosper. It is the garden he will water. He will send forth judgement unto victory, Mat. 12:20, 2 Cor. 3:18. We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

3. He will preserve your holiness, and you (being holy) in holiness; To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness, 1 Thes. 3:13, and 1 Thes. 5:23. I pray God that your whole spirit and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it, Phil. 1:6. He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

4. He loves your holiness, and takes delight in it, for it is his own Image, and his own work, the fruit of his own grace, the birth of his own Spirit.

5. He will crown your holiness; ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6:22. Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God, Matth. 5:8. Therefore is holiness called a change from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18. Holiness at first is weak and little, at length it is much and strong, at last it shall be perfect and glorious. At first it is like a spark of fire covered with ashes, at length it is like a burning fire, at last like a flaming fire; at first it is in groans and desires, at length it is in conflicts and combats, at last it is in victory and glory.

4. God is an Omniscient God; he knows all things whatsoever, and all persons, and all conditions, and all the hearts, and all the counsels, and thoughts, and words, and ways of all men, at all times, and in all places, and that most clearly and perfectly by his own infinite light; he knows all that is past, and all that is present, and all that is future, and all that is possible, Heb. 4:13. There is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Consider this place (seriously) which declares God's Omniscience. There is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight. There be many millions of millions of creatures, and they be far and near over all the world; but whatsoever they are, and wheresoever they are, they are manifest in his sight; though they be hid from us, yet they are known to God; and though they be out of our sight, yet are they manifest in his sight; they are before his eyes which run to and fro throughout all the world.

And all things are naked and open to his eyes,] there is no darkness twixt him and them, no curtain is drawn over his eye; they are as naked to him as the child which is newly born is unto our eye, or as every pile of grass is discovered by the Sun at noon day: or as the

parts of a diseased body, &c. Psal. 139:2. Thou knowest my down-lying, and my up-rising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off, verse 3. Thou art acquainted with all my ways, verse 4. There is not a word in my tongue, but lo O Lord thou knowest it altogether.

**Quest. You will say This is granted; it is very unquestionable that God is omniscient, that he knows all things. But what is this for the comfort and good of his people? What good have they by being interested in an all-knowing God?**

Sol. 1. The good and comfort thereby is exceeding great; for God's omniscience is (as it were) the Key to open all his other Attributes; it is the spring which sets them all to work, and without which they could not work at all for your good.

Though the Lord be an All-sufficiency, yet unless he were omniscient, unless he did know all your wants, what good could his all-sufficiency do you? And though the Lord be of a very merciful nature, ready to pity and help, yet unless he did know your miseries, he could not help you in your miseries. It is his omniscience which doth (if I may be so bold to express it) acquaint and inform all his other glorious Attributes, and put them on, and draw them out to work for our good.

2. That the omniscient God is your God, this is an unspeakable comfort unto you, whether you consider what he knows, or how he knows, as concerning yourselves.

For what he knows as concerning yourselves and your conditions. The Lord knows who are his, 2 Tim. 2:19.

He knows the integrity of your hearts, notwithstanding all your weakness and failings. But the High places were not taken away, nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days, 2 Chron. 15:17, 2 Sam. 7:20. Thou Lord knowest thy servant, John 2:17. Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.

He knows all your wants, and all your distresses. I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty, saith Christ to the Church of Smyrna, Rev. 2:9. Your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things, Matth. 6:32.

He knows all your desires, and prayers, and tears, Rom. 8:27. He that searcheth the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit. Psal. 38:9. Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee, Psal. 56:8. Put thou my tears into thy bottle, are they not in thy book?

He knows all your active and passive service, in his cause for his glory; all the good that ever you have done, and all the evil that ever you have suffered, Rev. 2.

How he knows you, and all your conditions.

He doth know all the conditions of his people with a knowledge

1. Of Approbation: The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, Psal. 1:6, that is, he likes their way, he approves of their way; so Rev. 2:9. I know thy works, that is, I like them exceeding well, I am pleased to see them.

2. Of Compassion: The Lord said, I have surely seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their Task-masters; for I know their sorrows,



Exod. 3:7. If one loved us much, but did not know our wants and conditions; if one did know all our conditions, but did not love us, it were sad; but God knows and loves, &c. As a father knows the distresses and wants of his child, and pities the child in that condition; his bowels are troubled for him, and if he can, he will relieve him; so, &c.

3. Of Condescension: (that is,) he knows your wants and desires, and he will help you, and he will supply you; Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things, Matth. 6:32. What is that? That is, he will supply your need according to his riches and glory; so Exod. 3:7. I know their sorrows. This is explained in verse 8. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that Land unto a good Land; so Nahum. 1:7. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him: (that is) He will do them good, they shall find him to be as good as his word, and he will help and deliver them.

3. The Omniscience of God is a comfort unto you against all your enemies counsels, plots, reproaches, injuries, Jer. 8:23. Lord thou knowest all their counsels against me to slay me, Psal. 69:19. Thou hast known my reproach and my shame, and my dishonor, mine adversaries are all before thee, Isa. 37:28. I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. And how doth the Lord know your enemies, and their plots, &c. even with detestation and derision, and opposition, and judgment, and destruction.

4. The omniscience of God is a comfort unto you, in this respect, that it is a foundation and fountain of all saving knowledge in you: God knows you, and you shall know him, (I will betroth thee unto me in

faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord, Hosea 2:20. They shall all know me, Jer. 31:34.

He knows you for his people, and you shall know the Lord for your God, 2 Tim. 2:19. The Lord knoweth who are his; they shall know that I am the Lord their God, Ezek. 28:26, so Ezek. 39:22.

He perfectly knows you, and the time shall be that you shall perfectly know him; you shall know, even as you are known, 1 Cor. 13:12.

5. Another Attribute of God is this: He is a wise God, mighty in wisdom, Job 36:5. God only wise, Rom. 16:27, and this God is your God, and you are the better for his wisdom. For,

1. Your wise God guides and orders everything that befalls you for your good; (*omnia bona, or in bonum*) all things shall work together for good unto them that love him, Rom. 8:28. Sometimes you have abundance, and that shall do you good; sometimes you have wants, and that shall do you good; sometimes you have honor and respect, and that shall do you good; sometimes you have dishonor and reproach, and that shall do thee good; sometimes you have enjoyments, and they shall do you good; and sometimes you have losses, and these shall do you good; sometimes you have liberty, and that shall do you good; and sometimes you have afflictions and crosses, and they shall do you good. Though there be diversities and contrarities as to the outward condition, yet the tempest and the calm, the Winter and the Summer, all that befalls you, shall fall out for good, because all that befalls you comes from your wise God, who orders and guides all your contingencies for your good, and his own glory.

2. You shall not fail or miss of any good whatsoever: God hath promised you in its season; the appointing and choosing, and hitting of seasons peculiarly belong to wisdom. Therefore Solomon saith, A wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment, Eccles. 8:5. And all things are beautiful in their season, when a good word is spoken in season, and when help and deliverance comes in season, and when any mercy comes in the right season, it is more precious, and the more acceptable. The Lord hath undertaken all the conditions of all his people; he hath promised peace to their afflicted consciences, and comfort to their mourning souls, and help unto their distressed spirits, and audience to their fervent prayers, and strength unto their fainting hearts. Now though the Lord doth a while delay you, though he doth not presently give you what you ask, though he takes a time before he speak, though he doth not take your time, yet because he is a faithful God, therefore he will take a time; and because he is a wise God, therefore he will take the best time: He will answer you, he will help you, he will succor you in an acceptable time, in the right season which is the best part of time. 2 Cor. 6:2. He saith I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee.

3. He will give you the best counsel and advice, because he is a most wise God; wisdom itself can counsel best, Jer. 32:19. He is great in counsel, and mighty in works, Isa. 28:29. He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, Rom. 11:33. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! We are many times in straits, in difficulties, and in Jehoshaphat's case, we know not what to do; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps: we grope as in the dark, and oft times are dead in our own thoughts, and want wisdom what course to take, and what way to resolve on; but now if you be the

people of God, this is your comfort, your God is a wise God, and he can direct and counsel you, Psal. 73:21. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory; ver. 32:8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eyes, Isa. 30:21. Thine cars shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, 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 wise God can resolve all your doubts, and clear up unto you all your paths, and show you the path of life, and show you all the ways how to find peace and rest for your souls.

4. He will be too hard for all your enemies in all their cunning plots and devices.

Our Savior saith that the Children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light: they are too cunning, too crafty for them, but yet God is too hard for them: his wisdom is beyond all their policy, Job 5:12. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise, ver. 13. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong: did not the wise God do this to Pharaoh, to Balak, to Saul, to Achitophel, to Haman? Did he not exceed them, and disappoint them?

5. He will proportion your trials, temptations, and afflictions; for he is a wise God; therefore he will debate with you, and correct you in measure, neither will he lay upon you more than is right, Isaiah 27:8, Job 34:23. A father will not give the child as much physic as he can pour into the cup, only so much as is fit for his recovery. And no heavier burden will he lay on, than his child is able to bear: So the wise God he keeps time and measure; you

shall never have an affliction, but when you need it, nor shall any temptation befall you, but God will enable you to bear it, for he is a wise God.

6. He means you no hurt in any particular denials, or in any particular removals of outward blessings: He hath his reasons for them both, and those very strong and sufficient to satisfy you; you wonder sometimes that God deals so with you, as never to accomplish such a desire of yours, or presently to take away such a comfort of yours. O but your God is a good God, and he is a wise God, he knows that you know not what ye ask when you ask to be so rich, and to be so great. And he knows the danger into which you may fall by a long enjoyment of an earthly comfort, what a loss to his glory and to your own souls; and he knows how to set your hearts upon himself by breaking off your hearts from poor, vain, earthly and sensual comforts.

7. Your wise God will find means and ways to bring in unto you all the good which he hath promised unto you; your when, and your how, fall within the compass of your wise God, (that is) the fittest time, and the best way, and means of your enjoyments; the golden Candlestick had seven lamps and seven pipes.

8. Your wise God will give you wisdom, and make you wise, spiritually wise, wise for salvation, and wise in your conversation and walking's, wise in Christ, 1 Cor. 4:10. Wise Stewards, Luke 12:42. Wise Virgins, Matth. 25:2,4. Wise to know the day of your visitation, to redeem the time, to remember your latter end, to choose the better part, and the best paths, and to look at eternity, and to prefer things eternal before temporal, to make sure of Christ, and Grace, and Glory.

6. A sixth Attribute of God, is Omnipotency; your God is Elshadai, God Almighty; above seventy times is he styled so in Scripture, Psal. 62:11. God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God, 1 Chron. 29:11. Thine O Lord is the greatness and the power, ver. 12. In thine hand is power and might, Job 37:23. Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is excellent in power, Psal. 132:2. The mighty God of Jacob, Psal. 147:5. Great is the Lord, and of great power, Psal. 45:3. Most mighty, Matth. 19:26, with God all things are possible. This Omnipotency is a divine Attribute whereby God is (of himself alone) infinitely able to do whatsoever he will do, and whatsoever he undertakes to do, and whatsoever is possible to be done. We have a true saying, that *Potentia sequitur essentiam*, there is always a commensuration twixt the essence of a thing and the power of it. A limited essence hath but a limited power: and therefore every creature hath but a limited power, because it hath a limited essence; The fire and water can do some things (as such Elements) but more they cannot do; The Sun and Moon and the rest of the Stars can also do many things, in their Sphere, and without that they can do nothing; So men and Angels they are able to do much, but still their power is contracted and bounded according to their essence; but God is of an infinite essence, there are no bounds unto his being, and therefore he is of infinite power.

Again, there cannot be any imperfection and want in God: The divine essence is a most perfect essence, and therefore it must needs be Omnipotent. If there were anything which God could not do or perform, there should then be some insufficiency and defect, and weakness in his nature.

And besides all this, there would be an uncertain foundation for our faith to rest upon God, If there should be anything concerning us or his Church, to which he were not able to help and supply them in, or

to accomplish; This being a certain truth that the people of God do principally stand in need of those things which do require even an Omnipotent God to produce or cause them, their graces and comforts exceeding all created power to effect them.

I could add more reasons for the demonstration of God's Omnipotency; (viz.) 1. The Creation of the world, wherein that which was not at all was immediately formed into a being, and that formation depended only upon his Word. 2. The providential upholding, or sustentation of the whole world, and guidance, of every creature in every motion. 3. The wonderful works wrought by God, exceeding all created power. 4. And the Conversion of the hearts of sinners; but those already mentioned are satisfying and sufficient to our purpose.

**Quest. But now you may reply, What comfort is this to the people of God, that their God (he that saith in his Covenant, I will be to you a God) is God Omnipotent?**

Sol. There are six choice comforts from this unto you who have the Omnipotent God to be your God.

1. You may cast all your care upon him, whatsoever your wants be, (for soul or body) be they never so many, and never so great, and never so often, your God who is Omnipotent is able to supply them, Ephes. 3:20. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think: you ask many things, and you think of many things, and you need many things, and your God is able to supply you in all these; able, yea abundantly able, abundantly able, yea, exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think; his power exceeds all your wants: There are some wants that your friends can help you in, you may go to such a friend and say unto him, Lend me so much money to pay a debt, and he is able to help you, and yet there are some

wants that no friend nor man can be a help unto you in them. When the famine was very grievous in Samaria, a woman cried to the King of Israel, Help my Lord O King; and he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press? 2 Kings 6:26,27. As if he had said, In this thy strait, I am not able to help thee. Beloved, our wants may quickly rise above the power of man; but they can never rise above the power of God; every spiritual want exceeds the power of all creatures, but no corporal or spiritual want exceeds the power of God; you need knowledge, your God is able to give it; and you need wisdom, your God is able to give it; and you need mercy and grace, and comfort, and strength, and deliverance, and faith, patience, love, meekness, joy, peace, and friends, and bread, and house, &c. God (your God) is able to supply every want that is present, or that is possible. We read of the Israelites, that being in bondage they wanted liberty, and God gave it them; and being near the Red Sea, they wanted salvation, and God gave it; and being in the Wilderness, they wanted water, the Rock is smitten, and water is given; and they wanted bread, and God rained down Manna; and they wanted flesh, and God sent them Quails, &c.

If any man had such a friend who had power enough for all sorts of supplies, let his wants and straits be what they may be, yet he were able to help all. O saith he, I am well, I have a friend who can help me in all my wants and straits; Such a friend (amongst men) cannot I confess be found; but such a God may be found, who can perform all things for you, who hath power enough to help against all temptations, and against all corruptions, and in all afflictions, and in all necessities, yea, and in all extremities.

2. He alone can do you good; you need none but your God to do you good: Omnipotency is (of itself) sufficient for all your helps and supplies; as it can do all things, so it can do all things from itself: No



creature is alone able or sufficient to be a help unto you without God, but God alone is able to help you without any creature; for he is omnipotent. Suppose you be in danger, God alone is able to deliver you; suppose you be under trouble of Spirit, God alone is able to comfort you; suppose you need mercy, God alone is able to pardon you; suppose you be under outward wants, God alone is able to supply you; Omnipotency needs the help of none; unto your help, it can create salvation, and command loving kindnesses, and deliverances, and any good.

3. When God will do you good, none can hinder him or you from the enjoyment of that good: If he will bless you, you shall be blessed; is there any power able to hinder Omnipotency? As the Apostle spake in another case, (1 Cor. 10:22.) Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger than he? So say I, Will any contend with the Almighty God? Can they bind his hand? Are they stronger than the Almighty and Omnipotent God? Isa. 46:9. I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, verse 10. My Counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Isa. 40:15. Behold the Nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; ver. 17. All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. Beloved! You cannot put any supposition as a prejudice unto God's Omnipotency; you cannot say, were my Adversaries not so many or mighty; were my temptations not so high and strong; were my distresses not so deep and low? Were my wants not so many and great, then God could do me good, and help me; These are vain and weak suppositions in reference unto God; for although the power of men and devils, and the greatness of want and distresses may exceed out power, yet nothing is too hard for God; there are no difficulties, there are no impediments unto the Omnipotent God: If God be for us, who can be against us? Saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:31. As if he should say,

if God will preserve you, you shall be safe; if God will bless you, you shall be blessed; if God will do you good, none can hinder.

4. Then all his promises shall be accomplished unto you: Those promises which are so many and so great, and so precious, which are your treasures, your munition of rocks, your hopes and confidences, and the bonds and security which God gives unto you, they shall certainly be performed unto you.

There are three things concerning God which do assure you of the performance of his promises.

First, His Will; the will of his goodness is in the making of all his promises; and the will of his resolution is for the performing of them: Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the oath to Abraham, Micah 7:20.

2. His unchangeableness or unfaithfulness: I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail, Psal. 89:33. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips, Verse 34. He is faithful that promised, Heb. 10:23.

3. His Power or Omnipotency; being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able to perform, Rom. 4:21. Beloved! Your God doth never over engage himself unto you, his goodness doth not surpass his ability; he promiseth unto his people in general, riches of grace and glory; and he hath promised to some of his people in particular, such blessings as exceeded all the possible capacities of reason; and yet he easily brought all about, he performed all; for he is an Omnipotent God infinitely able to do, &c.

5. He can then raise and advance the work which he hath wrought; he can bring forth judgment unto victory; as it was said of

Zerubbabel, the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands also shall finish it, Zach. 4:9. Or as the Lord spake about the house of Eli, (1 Sam. 3:12) when I begin I will make an end: So say I, hath God begun in your hearts any work of grace? Hath he sown the seed in the field? Hath he planted the Vineyard? He is able to finish his work; he who was able to give grace, is able to make all grace to abound; he that planteth grace, is able also to water it, and to increase it, and to bring it to perfection, to give life to the dead, and to give strength to the weak, to convert a sinner, and to subdue sins, for he is an Omnipotent God. And so likewise for your joy and peace which are but weak, your God is able to fill you with joy in believing, to make your joy unspeakable and full of glory; he is able to give you peace that passeth understanding, and to make it as a River. And so for temptations which do so much distress you, your God is not only able to restrain Satan, but also to bruise him under your feet, Rom. 16:20. It is a certain truth that Omnipotency hath no bounds or limits; you cannot say that God who works thus far, can work no farther; as he can work all things unto their being, so he can work them up to that perfection of being of which they are capable.

6. If your God be an Omnipotent God, then you who are his people are altogether safe and sure, both in respect of your bodies, and in respect of your souls. For your bodies: Is not he safe who hath Omnipotency to be his guard and shield? Is not Omnipotency itself safety enough unto you? Deut. 33:26. There is none like unto the God of Jeruson who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky, ver. 27. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And likewise for your souls, they shall never be lost; nay, they shall assuredly be kept and preserved to glory, John 10:27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, ver. 28. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of

my Fathers hands, ver. 29. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hands. Mark here the comfort and assurance which Christ gives, and the reason thereof. My sheep shall never perish, but they shall have eternal life. This is the comfort, and this comfort he grounds upon the power of God: (he is greater than all, and no man is able, &c.) As if he should say, many assay to hinder them and deceive of that life, but they are not able, they are in my Fathers hand, (in the keeping of his power) and he is greater (he is stronger) than all, put them all together, he is too strong for them. 1 Pet. 1:5. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. There is not power enough in ourselves to keep out selves, but there is power enough in God; and we are kept by the power of God (even unto salvation) until we come to the heavenly glory.

7. If your God be an Omnipotent God, he can easily help you and enable you in and to all good: What shall I say more for your comfort from the Omnipotency of your God? It is a universal comfort unto you in all conditions of life and death. Tu non potes, sed Dominus tuus potest, said Chrysostom; he is able to enable you for all your duties, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me, Phil. 4:13.

He is able to comfort you in all your sorrows, 2 Cor. 1:4.

He is able to deliver you from all your sins and troubles.

He is able to keep you from falling, Jude ver. 24.

He is able to raise you up being fallen.

He is able to feed you all your days, Gen. 48:15.

He is able to deliver you from the power of death, Heb. 2:14.

He is able to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, Jude ver. 24.

7. A seventh Attribute wherein God is engaged unto you, is faithfulness; your God is often styled a faithful God; (that is,) one that stands to his word, and keeps his Covenant, Deut. 7:9. The Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, &c. 1 Kings 8:23. Lord God of Israel, &c. who keepest Covenant and mercy with thy servants, Neh. 9:32. Our God who keepest Covenant and mercy.

There are four things in the faithfulness of God.

1. Sincerity of intention: God is faithful, (that is) he really intends all the good of which he speaks, and which he promiseth unto you; his heart goes with his word; he doth not speak one thing, and mind another; promise much, and never intend to do anything; but his word of promise is bottomed upon the real purpose of his will.

2. Fixedness of resolution; God is faithful, (that is) he is steadfast, he is still in the same mind, he is not variable and changeable, he will never alter his word, he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself, 2 Tim. 2:13.

3. Certainty of execution, or performance. God is faithful (that is) will certainly perform unto you whatsoever good he hath promised, Gen. 28:15. I will surely do thee good, and I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken unto thee of, said God to Jacob, Jer. 31:20. I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord God, chap. 32:41. I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this Land assuredly with my whole heart, with my whole soul.

Hab. 2:3. The vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come. Micah 7:20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

4. Fullness and exactness of performance, not failing his people in any one promise, Jer. 32:42. I will bring upon them all the good that I have promised them, Josh. 23:14. Ye know that in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. 1 Kings 8:5,6. There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant: This is the faithfulness of God, and this is your exceeding comfort, that your God is a faithful God; he remembers his Covenant forever, and his word to a thousand generations, Psal. 105:8. Were he (as he is) an all-sufficiency and full of mercy, and Omniscient, and Wise, and Omnipotent, and never so abundant in goodness, yet if he were not faithful, you could have no comfort in any of his Attributes, nor in any of his promises, nor yet any confidence or assurance at all: But this faithfulness of God gives life (as it were) unto all his Attributes, and unto all his Promises, and unto all our hopes and confidences. What are a thousand Bonds and Indentures if they were not sealed? What are a million of promises and protestations from a man who is unfaithful, who regards not his word, who will break his word with you; faithfulness is all in all; a faithful heart, a faithful friend, a faithful God, and this is the great satisfaction of all our doubts and fears: But will God do me good? But will he perform what he hath promised? If I were sure that he were sure, he will not fail me, this would stay me, this would satisfy me, I had enough. Now you have it cleared out unto you, that your God is a faithful God.

**Quest. But you may perhaps desire to know the particular portions of comfort from this, that your God in Covenant is a faithful God.**

Sol. I will present a few of them unto you.

1. The faithfulness of God is a sure pledge unto you for all your enjoyments: It is (if I may so express it) the very seal of God to perform all the Bond of his Covenant; the security which God gives you for all his engagements, as full assurance as God can make for the performance of all his promises; it is a sure foundation for your faith to rest upon, a foundation that cannot be shaken, and which shall never be removed; you are as sure to enjoy all the good which God hath promised to you as God is God, and as God is your God: In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie, hath promised, Titus 1:2. God hath promised to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from our sins, and he is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, 1 Joh. 1:9. God hath promised to sanctify us throughout. And faithful is he who hath called us, who will also do it, 1 Thes. 5:24. God hath promised to establish us, and to keep us from evil. And the Lord is faithful who will establish you, and keep you from evil, 2 Thes. 3:3.

2. The faithfulness of God is a mighty and effectual, and prevailing Plea with your God. O Lord! This is my want and distress; and that is thy promise for help; and thou art faithful who hast promised, in thy truth, and in thy faithfulness to answer me; keep Covenant with me, remember thy word, do not fail me! Why? This comes close to God, this concerns him near; he hath taken his Oath upon it, that he will not lie, that he will not deceive, that he will not fail his people.

3. The faithfulness of God is enough to answer all your fears and doubts; O they are such great things, and they are such hard things,

and unto sense and reason, such improbable and impossible things, and who am I, &c.

Sol. Why? Dost thou find these things promised by God unto thee? God wants not power to do them, and he is faithful, and will do them; the faithful God will perform every good thing which he hath promised; though thy unbelief many times saith, He will not; and thy fears dispute how he can; though thy reason fail thee, and though thy sense fail thee, and though thy heart fail thee; yet thy God will never fail thee, thy faithful God will not fail thee. God is faithful, and he will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able, &c. 1 Cor. 10:15.

4. The faithfulness of God is a support unto you under all his silence, and under all his delaying's of the good which he hath promised, and you do so earnestly crave: Your prayers are not in vain, your waiting's are not in vain: Perhaps you have waited at the gate of heaven (many a day, yea, and many a year) for assurance of mercy, for power over such a sin, for victory over evil thoughts and temptations, and afflictions, and yet you are not heard, and still you are put off, and hereupon your heart begins to faint (God will not do me this good, and he will not remember his promise) O but do you remember that your God is a faithful God; and a faithful God cannot lie, a faithful God will keep his Covenant, will remember his Covenant, will perform his Covenant; he may be silent unto your prayers; he may delay you long; but he is faithful; he hath his time, and he will surely take his time to answer and succor you.

5. The faithfulness of God will break down all contrarities, and contradictions, and oppositions; Heaven and earth shall sooner fail and pass, than that one Word or title of God's promise shall fail or perish; his Word of promise shall take effect, though all the Devils in



hell oppose it, and though all the men on earth oppose it, and though all the powers of unbelief oppose it; this stands in the way, and that stands in the way, but yet God is faithful, and his promise shall be made good; Sarah was old, &c. But she judged him faithful who had promised, Heb. 11. God should never be trusted, if he were not faithful.

8. Graciousness is another Attribute of your God; your God is a gracious God, and he is and will be a gracious God unto all his people. Exod. 34:6. The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious. Psal. 86:15. Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious.

The graciousness of God is such an Attribute of God, whereby he doth favorably and freely love, and choose, and bless, and do all good unto his people without any desert, and notwithstanding any unworthiness on their part: It is the reason and account of all his actings towards them: It is all the Plea you have to all the good which God doth promise. You must distinguish 'twixt the actions and blessings of God; and 'twixt the ground or reason of them.

There are many and great blessings which God intends and confirms upon his people; and the cause of them all, is the graciousness of God. Viz.

1. The love of God is an unspeakable blessing, and the graciousness of God is the reason of that love: I will love them freely, Hos. 14:4. He set his love upon you, because he loved you, Deut. 7:7,8.

2. The election of God is an unspeakable blessing, and the foundation of that election is the graciousness of God; Ther is a reward according to the election of grace, Rom. 11:5.

3. Redemption by Christ is also a wonderful blessing, and this was according to the riches of his grace, Eph. 1:7.

4. Calling us into Christ; and the reason of this also is his grace, 2 Tim. 1:9.

5. The justifying of us is an inestimable mercy: And He justifies us freely by his grace, Rom. 3:24.

6. And the saving of us, is the completing of us, and of all our blessings; and by grace are we saved, Eph. 2:5,8. This is certain, that God's graciousness is the fountain of all our good, and it is the reason of all our enjoyments and hopes; If the Lord were not gracious, if he should look on us, and act towards us upon the account of our worthiness, we should never have enjoyed the least of his mercies. You might have heard of mercy, but should never have been the better for it; and you might have heard of all the promises, but should never have enjoyed the good of any one of them, if God were not a gracious God; but because he is your gracious God, and will deal with you altogether from the Throne of grace in a gracious way; This is it which puts life into you, and sweetly draws out the desires and confidences of your hearts.

**Quest. You may demand, But what comfort is this unto the people of God, that there God is a gracious God, and that he will deal with them altogether in a gracious way, and upon gracious terms.**

Sol. The comforts from this are very choice and precious; I will mention some of them unto you.

1. Because your God is a gracious God, therefore there can be nothing to discourage or hinder you in your addresses unto him, and

expectations from him. The graciousness of God answers all the doubts of the heart, and all the temptations of Satan.

There are four things which are apt to discourage our hearts, when we think of drawing near to God.

1. One is the greatness of our sins.
2. A second, is the greatness of God's mercies we need.
3. A third is the greatness of our unworthiness.
4. A fourth is the greatness of our evil deserts.

My sins are so great, that I cannot expect that God will ever do me good: The mercies and blessings that I need, are so great, and I can lay down nothing for them. And I am unworthy of the least of mercies; nay, I deserve to be rejected and cursed! But now the graciousness of God is able effectually to remove all these discouragements.

1. Your sins are great, and therefore you are afraid that the merciful God will not pardon them: But then remember, that the merciful God is a gracious God: As he hath riches of mercy, so he hath riches of grace: And as he promiseth to forgive the sins of his people, so he promiseth to forgive their sins freely (the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, Eph. 1:7.) And this remember withal, that the gracious God forgives the greatest sins, as well as the least sins of his people upon the same terms of graciousness. In Luke 7, we read of a less debtor who owed fifty pence; and of a greater debtor, who owed five hundred pence, ver. 41, and the Creditor freely forgave them both, verse 42, so, &c. Your God hath not one way to forgive less sins, and another way to forgive greater sins; but though

the sins be different, yet the terms or reasons of forgiveness is one and the same, viz. the free grace of God.

2. O but the mercies and blessings which I need, are so high and so great, surely those cannot come off but upon hard terms, and I have nothing to lay down for them.

I answer, your God is a gracious God; Your God in his Covenant, hath promised all sorts of good unto you; corporal, and spiritual; small and great; And remember it forever, that all the bonds of God's Covenant are paid in upon the same rate: Grace was the reason of making all the promises, and Grace is the reason of the performance of every good: you shall have the greatest good upon the self-same terms as you have the least.

3. O but I am so unworthy of these mercies! What am I, and what is there in me for God to look on, to affect and to move God to do such great things for my soul!

Why! There is nothing in you, but an extreme need of these great good things promised by God, and an absolute unworthiness of them: O but your God is a gracious God; and as an unworthy sinner may go to a gracious God, so a gracious God will give all that he hath promised to his people, though they be unworthy. Graciousness finds the price of all mercies in itself, it is the only reason of our enjoyments.

4. But I deserve to be rejected in my suits, and to be cursed.

'It is true, and so you should find it, if God dealt with you according to your deserving's; but your God is a gracious God, and deals with his people, not in a rigorous way, but in a gracious way, of loving kindness and mercies.

2. Is the gracious God your God? Then all your mercies are sure: you shall assuredly possess them, and inherit them: The children of grace are the surest heirs of mercy: It is of grace that the promise might be sure, Rom. 4:16. Beloved! If God had Covenanted with you to be your God upon a respect to your works, and not upon a sole respect to his own graciousness; and if he had promised you mercies, and other blessings, upon a bargain for your goodness, and not upon a foundation in his own graciousness; neither could God be sure to you, nor could the mercies of God be sure to you. Adam had as much (in a way of works) to have perpetuated, and ensured, and settled God and mercies upon himself, and more than ever we shall have, and yet all became unsure unto him; much more would it be with us, if God and we should traffic that way; If God should say to any of us, I promise to be your God, and to give you all blessings, upon condition of your perfect, constant obedience; your never failing obeying of my will, shall be the condition, and the reason of your certain enjoyment of me! I dare aver it, that our enjoyment of God, and the good things by him promised would not be certain, or sure unto us not one day, not one hour, nay, hardly one minute. But there comes the certainty of enjoying of God, and of his promised mercies, viz. the grace or the graciousness of God, I am freely yours, I will love you freely, I will bless you freely for mine own sake, though not for your sake.

Our obedience is a weak and unsteadfast reason, but God's grace is a full and constant reason for all our mercies, and for all our pleas, and for all our enjoyments.

3. Is the gracious God your God in Covenant? You have then plea enough, and reason enough to deal with God: It is the best plea you can make, Lord, do me good for thine own sake.

9. Immutability, or unchangeableness, is another Attribute of God; your God is an unchangeable God, and he will be so to you, Mal. 3:6. I am the Lord, I change not. Jam. 1:17. With him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. So Numb. 23:19. God is not man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent.

Consider God either

1. In his essence, so he is unchangeable; the essence of God cannot be changed; it is impossible that it should be, forasmuch as every change is either to the better, or to the worse; There cannot be a change in God to the better, because he is in himself an infinite perfection; nor can he be changed to the worse, because then he should not be God, if any defect or want were incident unto him; Besides, in every change there is a new succession for being, or manner of being; but God is eternal, and he is infinite; therefore he cannot be otherwise than he is.

2. In his decrees, so also he is unchangeable; these foundations stand sure, 2 Tim. 1:9, Isa. 14:24. Surely, as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. Ver. 27. The Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? The Decrees of God are laid upon the counsel and wisdom of God, and such grounds within himself, that there cannot be any new reason or stronger, to alter his decrees.

3. In his promises and Covenant with his people. All his promises are yea and Amen to the praise of his glory. 2 Cor. 1:20. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips, Psal. 89:34.

4. In his love, there he is unchangeable to his people; whom he loves, he doth love to the end forever. Hos. 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me forever, in loving kindness and mercies.

5. In his gifts. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Rom. 11:29. If the Lord calls you to be his people, you shall be his people forever: And if the Lord give you Christ, and faith, and the other graces of the Spirit, you shall have them forever; he will not repent that he bestoweth these upon you.

O what a comfort is this unto the people of God, who have an unchangeable God to be their God! Not without cause doth the Apostle in Heb. 6:17,18, declare that the immutability of God is a choice ground for our strong consolation. You would have but weak consolation (yea, I question whether you would have any consolation at all) if your God were a changeable God; His election of you, would afford you little comfort, if God would change that purpose of his, and after that reject you; his love of you would yield you little comfort, if after that, he would change his love and hate you! His promises of grace and glory, of mercy and life, what comfort would these be to you, if God should alter his words of blessings into words of curses: if he should put in your names in the book of life, and then cross out your names; if he should make his Will, and then alter his Will! Your faith could never be certain, and your conscience could never be settled, and your hopes could never be sure, and your fruitions could never be stable, if your God were a changeable God: But here now is your strong consolation, That your God is an immutable God: His faithfulness is unchangeable, his love is unchangeable, his Omnipotency is unchangeable, his graciousness is unchangeable, his promises are unchangeable.

And there are six precious comforts unto you, who have this unchangeable God to be your God.

1. The unchangeable God will never cast you off; He may correct his children, but he will never reject them. Rom. 11:1. Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. Ver. 2. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. 2 Tim. 2:19. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his. If God should choose and own you for his, and then refuse and disown you for his, he were a changeable God.

2. The unchangeable God, if he be your God, he will be your God forever and ever. This God is our God forever and ever, Psal. 48:14. If he should be your God, and yet cease to be your God, he could not then be your unchangeable God: but because he is an unchangeable God, he remains your merciful, your loving, your gracious God forever; as long as he is God, he will continue to be your God.

3. The unchangeable God ever lives. David speaking of the earth, and of the heavens, delivers himself thus in Psalm 102:26. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. Ver. 27. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end: He endures forever, his mercy endures forever, his loving kindness endures forever, his Word abides and endures forever; look on other things, they are changeable, and we see them to be changed; men love, and hate; they prosper, and they wither; they do us good, and then they die, and can never do us good more: But the unchangeable God still lives, he is still the same, and ever lives to love you forever, and to bless you forever,



and to show mercy to you forever. Though you have not a father to go unto (for he is dead) and though you have not a friend to go unto (for every one of them is dead) yet you have a God to go unto who lives forever, and lives unchangeable; yea, though your friend doth live, and now grows strange to you, and will not know you, yet your God will know you, and own you, and regard, and help you, for he is an unchangeable God.

4. In all your wants and distresses, and new occasions, you may still look up to your God, for he is unchangeable, and his promises are unchangeable: He did pity you, and he will pity you; he did hear you, and he will hear you; he did help you, and he will help you; he did comfort you, and he will comfort you; for he is still the same God, the same unchangeable God: ye are sure to be heard, and you are sure to speed; for he is unchangeable in his love, and in his promises unto you.

5. Then your spiritual condition is everlastingly sure and safe: He hath chosen you from the beginning unto salvation, 2 Thes. 2:13. And his election is unchangeable; he hath promised that whosoever Believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life, John 3:16. Yea, this is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life, 1 John 2:25. And his promises are unchangeable; he gives you Christ, and all the graces of the Spirit which bring unto salvation; and all his gifts are unchangeable, Rom. 11:29.

6. Though you be very changeable towards God, yet he is still unchangeable towards you; you many times forget him, and fall, and fail, and leave him, but God will never forget you, never falsify with you, leave nor forsake you. 2 Tim. 2:13. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself: Sometimes

you love him more, sometimes less; sometimes you please him, and many times you grieve him; sometimes you keep close in walking with God, and many times you wander from him, yet he is unchangeable. He will not destroy you, because he is unchangeable. If he should change as oft as we do, Now you offend me, now I will be your God no longer; I will love you, bless, preserve you no more; then there were cause of exceeding trouble.

10. Omnipresence; Your God is an Omnipresent God, he is everywhere; included in no place, excluded from no place. Non est ubi, ubi non est Deus. 1 King. 8:27. Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; how much less this house that I have built? Isa. 66:1. The heaven is my Throne, and the earth is my footstool. Jer. 23:24. Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the Lord, Prov. 15:3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Psal. 139:7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I fly from thy presence? Verse 8. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. Verse 9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: Verse 10. Even there shall thine hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Angels are of a limited presence, because of a limited essence; and the bodies of men have their circumscription by limited place; every creature hath his limited Ubi, or place; but God is an infinite, and immense being, whose Center is everywhere, and whose circumference is now here.

### **What a comfort is this to the people of God?**

1. That this God is everywhere, and in every place; that they are in the presence of God, and their God is always present with them.

God himself delivers this as a comfort and support unto all his people (I will be with you) in respect of all dangers, troubles, and difficult services.

To Isaac, Gen. 26:3. I will be with thee, and will bless thee. To Jacob, Gen. 28:5. Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. To Moses, Exod. 3:12. Certainly I will be with thee. To Joshua, Josh. 1:5. As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. To all his people, Isa. 41:10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. If your God be Omnipresent, then wheresoever you are, your God is present with you. Suppose a man were injuriously dealt withal, would it not be a comfort to him, if the Judge (the righteous Judge) himself were present, to see how violent men dealt with him? Suppose a man were in trouble, in exile with David, or in prison with Joseph, would it not be a comfort to him, if his loving Father were present with him, or his kindest friend? O Christian, be thou in any condition whatsoever, in any Country, in any place whatsoever, thy God, thy Judge, thy Father, thy best Friend is with thee. Psal. 91:15. I will be with thee in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. Isa. 43:2. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, &c.

2. As your God is present everywhere, so he is at once, and wholly present everywhere with all his essence, and all his Attributes; He is not sometimes present in one place, and then by a local mutation present in another place, but he is at once at the self-same time present in every place; neither is he present partly in one place, and partly in another place, a piece of him here, and a piece of him there; but in his infinite and complete essence, he is present everywhere; you may not imagine that the all-sufficient God is in one place, and the merciful God in another, and the wise God in another, and the good God in another, and the Omnipotent God in another place, &c.

No, but that one and self-same God in his essence, and in all his glorious Attributes is everywhere; and wheresoever he is present, all his Attributes and excellencies are present with him, altogether present: for his essence is undivided, his Attributes are inseparable from his essence.

O what a comfort is this to all you who are the people of God! Some of you live in one Country, and some of you live in another Country; and sometimes you have occasions to live in one place, and sometimes in another place, and yet everywhere, all of you have the same God in all his excellencies present with you, and he hath his God and Father present with him; you have him present in this Land, and if you should have occasion to remove to another Land (many thousand miles hence) there are you, and there is your God present with you, your all-sufficient God, your Almighty God, your merciful God, your wise God, &c. Go where you will, there are six things present with you. 1. Much weakness is present in your hearts. 2. Many temptations present from Satan. 3. Many adversities are present from the world, and many afflictions too. 4. Good Angels are present with you. 5. A good conscience is continually present. And lastly, a good God is present in all his excellencies for your good.

3. Although God be present everywhere, *ration essentiae*, yet he is in a more special manner present with his people, *ration influentiae*. There is the presence of his special providence, and there is the presence of his special grace; and thus he is everywhere present with and for his people: Hence it is that ordinarily where you read of God's presence with his people, you shall find some other special thing annexed to that presence, as I will be with thee and bless thee, and I will be with thee, and help thee, and I will be with thee, and deliver thee, and I will be with thee, and strengthen thee, and uphold thee, and save thee, &c. Jer. 15:20. Hushai's presence with David was

a burden, 2 Sam. 15:33. Jobs wife's presence was but a vexation unto him; our friends presence is many times fruitless, but God's presence is a blessing, comfort, help, (indeed) He is present with wicked men, but the more present he is with them, the worse it is for them; the presence of his knowledge, and the presence of his power, and the presence of his wrath, &c. But the presence with his people, is a very gracious presence, and a blessing presence, and a blessed presence; he is always present with them for good.

4. Here is yet one comfort more unto you; if your God be everywhere present, (and therefore present everywhere with you) then you shall not stay long for any good that you need, because your God is near unto you; he is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth, Psal. 145:18. What Nation is there who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? Deut. 4:7. The nearness or remoteness of a friend is very material and considerable in our distresses and wants; I have such a friend, and he would help me, but he lives so far off; and such a one is able to counsel me and comfort me, but he is now absent, and I may be undone before I can hear from him; but it is not thus with you who have God to be your God; he is always nigh unto you: As Christ said unto his Disciples, Mat. 28:20. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world: So your God is present with you always, as long as you live in the world. Do you want comfort? The God of consolation is present with you, very near unto you. Do you want grace? The God of all grace is present with you. Do you want peace? The God of peace is present with you. Do you want mercy? The Father of mercies is present with you. Do you want friends? The God of love is always present. Do you want safety? The Omnipotent God is present with you. Do you want anything? The All-sufficient God is always present with you. What the Apostle spake concerning the word of faith, in Rom. 10:8. It is nigh thee, even in

thy mouth, and in thy heart; That is as true of God in all his glorious excellencies for his people.

11. Sovereignty or Dominion, this is another Attribute of God; he is (I think) a thousand times in Scripture called the Lord, the Lord, &c. and to him is Dominion ascribed, Dominion forever and ever, 1 Pet. 4:11, chap. 5:11. He is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's, 1 Tim. 6:15. The Lord hath prepared his Throne in heaven, and his Kingdom ruleth over all, Psal. 103:19. All that is in the heaven and the earth is thine; thine is the Kingdom O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all; thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great and give strength to all, 1 Chron. 29:11,12.

One doth well distinguish of a twofold Sovereignty or Dominion in God. There is

1. Jurisdictionis, which is his Sovereign authority to govern all men, and all creatures; he may command what he will, and forbid what he pleaseth, and permit what he lists, and appoint what punishments, and what rewards as seem best to himself.

2. Proprietatis, which is his right or prerogative to dispose of all things and persons, and use them as he pleaseth; and in this respect all the world, and all in the world are his servants, Gen. 14:22. The Lord, the most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth: And this Dominion or Sovereignty is natural unto him, as he is God, the God of all the world, and Lord of all; neither is it controlled by men or Angels: If God will destroy or abase, or weaken, or afflict, or raise, or bless, the creatures must yield unto his Sovereign Will.

And truly this is an unspeakable comfort to the people of God, that their God is Lord of all, and Lord over all; that the Sovereignty is his

alone, and the Dominion is only his, that their God is above all gods, and that their God is above all Lord's, and that all the creatures in their whole being and working are under him; that if he saith to one Go, he goeth, and if he saith to another Come, he cometh; and if he say to one Do this, he doth it; and if he saith to another Be still, he ceaseth; this is a comfort unto you against all the wicked in the world, and as touching all the serviceableness of all the creatures in the World.

1. If your God hath the Sovereign Dominion, Then issues and events shall not be as men contrive, as they will, or as they desire; for there is a greater than they which rules and reigns in the Kingdom of men; Be still, and know that I am God, Psal. 46:10. All the powers, and all the policies, and all the rage, and malice of all the wicked on earth, are under the Dominion of God; he permits them, and he restrains them, and he confounds and destroys them; thus far shall they go, and no farther.

2. Again, If Sovereignty and Dominion are proper to God, then you can never be brought into any straits, but God is able to help you, and to deliver you: for he is Lord of all. He is the Lord of life, and the Lord of safety, and the Lord of deliverances, and the Lord of comforts. All the creatures are at his command; if he will open the hearts of men, they shall pity you and help you in your wants; if he saith to one, Go and comfort such a Christian, go and counsel him, go and deliver him, be a friend unto him, he shall come unto thee, and be this unto thee: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

3. What shall I say more? Seeing Sovereignty and Dominion belong to your God, Therefore all the Ordinances of grace and life are at his command, and they shall yield out their strength,

and drop down their fatness at his will and pleasure; he can open them, and he can let out all their joys and reviving's, and consolations, they shall be effectual means of all-saving good unto you upon his command.

12. He is and will be a good God unto you: The Lord is good, Psal. 136:1. Thou Lord art Good, Psal. 86:5. And truly God is good to Israel, Psal. 73:1. O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, Psal. 31:19.

There are ten things concerning the goodness of God unto his people.

1. He intends them good; I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an unexpected end, Jer. 29:11.

2. He will bring upon them all the good which he hath promised them, Jer. 32:42.

3. He delights in doing good unto them, I will rejoice over them to do them good, Jer. 32:41.

4. He looks upon his doing good unto his people, as his honor and praise; it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the Nations of the earth which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, Jer. 33:9.

5. He thinks no good too good for them; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly, Psal. 84:11.

6. He will never cease from doing them good; Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, Psal. 23:6. See also Jer. 32:40.



7. He will do them good every day, his mercy is new every morning, Lam. 3:23. Blessed be the Lord who daily loadeth us with benefits, Psal. 68:19.

8. He is so ready to do you good, that he oftentimes prevents you with his goodness; before they call I will answer, Isa. 65:14.

9. He doth them more good than they look for; Thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, Isa. 64:3. When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream, Psal. 126:1.

10. He reserves the best good to the last: For besides all the good which he doth for his people in this life, there is also an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them, 1 Pet. 1:4. Eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, &c. 1 Cor. 2:9.

13. He is a very kind God unto his people; Thou art a God of great kindness, Neh. 9:17. He hath showed me his loving kindness, Psal. 31:21. His merciful kindness is great towards us, Psal. 117:2.

The kindness of God contains four things in it.

1. The sweetness of his loving nature unto his people without the least disdain of them, and harshness towards them; he will not bruise the bruised reed, nor despise the day of small things.

2. The easiness of the communication of himself and goodness unto them, as waters flow out from a full fountain.

3. His favorable encouraging's, and acceptance of them in their persons and addresses unto him; as the father ran and embraced

the returning child, and fell on his neck and kissed him.

4. His respectful tenders; helpful, forwardness of dealing with his people in all gentleness and clemency.

And therefore he is said to pity and spare his people, as a father pities his child, (Psal. 103:13) and spares his child that serves him, (Mal. 3:17) and to draw his people with loving kindness, Jer. 31:3, and to draw them with bands of love, Hosea 11:4, and to take them by the arms, Hosea 11:3, and gently to lead them, and to carry them in his bosom, Isa. 40:11, and to dandle them upon his knees, Isa. 66:12, and to speak comfortably unto them, Hosea 2:14. In the Old Testament he would commune with his people, and give out all his answers at the Mercy seat: And in the New Testament he gives them audience at the Throne of grace and mercy, and would have them in all their petitions to look upon him as their Father, Our Father, &c.) Though the distance be infinite 'twixt him and us, yet he represents himself unto us altogether as a kind God and Father, and makes kind promises unto us, and gives us his own Son to be our Mediator, that so we may still find favor in his eyes.

There are twelve things which may assure you that your God is and will be a kind God unto you.

1. His relations to you; Thy Maker is thy husband, Isa. 54:5. I will marry thee unto myself in loving kindness, Hosea 2:19.

2. His love is exceeding great unto you; he loves you above all the people in the world, and his choice delight is in you, you are his Hephzibahs and Benlahs, because the Lord delights in you, Isa. 62:4.

3. His tender apprehension of any unkind and harsh injuries offered unto you: he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

4. His daily passing by the many failings and weaknesses; he pities them, and will not mark them, nor insist upon them.

5. His easy reception of you into favor; if he sees but a tear in your eyes, he will be gracious to the voice of your tears; I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, I will surely have mercy on him.

6. His sympathy with you in your distresses and afflictions; in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them, Isa. 63:9.

7. His yearning bowels towards you; My bowels are troubled for him, Jer. 31:20, and longings to do you good; He doth wait that he may be gracious unto you, Isa. 30:18.

8. His speed to close with you, and to show his affections unto you. He flies upon the wings of the wind, and leaps over the Mountains, and hastens, and runs to show himself reconciled unto you, Luke 15.

9. His great donations; he bestows no less on you than Christ, and grace, and glory.

10. His quick ear to all your petitions, and such a full compliance with you, that he will deny you nothing which you ask according to his will; If we ask anything according to his will he heareth us.

11. His looking after you, and special charge that men speak comfortably unto you, Isa. 40:1,2, and that you never come with fears to him, nor go away from him with sadness. Go in peace, Be of good comfort, Come boldly to the Throne of grace, Heb. 4.

12. His gracious entertainment of you, and communions with you, and manifestations unto you; so that you are as it were many times lifted up to heaven, and filled with joy unspeakable and glorious.

Beloved! This is unspeakable comfort and encouragement unto you that your God is a kind God, and will deal with you in loving kindnesses; Consider that of necessity you have to deal with him, and that every day and hour of your life; and that he is not an hard Master, nor of an harsh nature, nor rough in his words, or looks, or deeds: He will not seek, nor will he take advantages against you; so as that you may come with boldness into his presence, and need not to fear his intentions or dealings with you; Never did father or mother deal more gently with their tender infants, never did loving husband deal more kindly with his most beloved wife, than your kindest God will deal with you; and this affords unto you five comforts.

1. You have free access to him, the door is always open; Should the child fear to go to his tender Father?

2. You may come with full opening of your soul and wants to him; he is kind and willing to hear all.

3. You may have good hope; if any will use you well, 'tis your kind God.

4. You are sure of quick dispatch; kindness makes no unnecessary delays, no vain excuses.

5. When men deal unkindly with you, yet you shall find kind dealing from your God; Psal. 27:10. When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

14. Lastly, Eternity is another Attribute of God, your God is an eternal God; from everlasting to everlasting thou art God, Psal. 90:2. The Eternal God is thy refuge, Deut. 33:27. He inhabits Eternity, Isa. 57:15.

Eternity is an interminable being and duration before any time, and beyond all time; it is a fixed duration without beginning or ending: If you should imagine as many thousand myriads of years before time was as there are sands on the Seashore, and of ten thousand thousand times more myriads after time shall not be, you could not in the one or the other make any discovery of the being or duration of God; the Eternity of God is beyond all possible conception of measure or time. God ever was, ever is, and ever shall be.

Though the manifestations of himself unto the creatures are in time, yet his essence or being never did nor shall be bound up by time; look backward or forward, God from Eternity to Eternity is a most self-sufficient, infinite, perfect, blessed being, the first cause of our being, and without any cause of his own being; an eternal infinite fullness and possession to himself, and of himself: what God is, he was from Eternity; and what God is, he will be so to Eternity: This very Attribute is that which drops myrrh and oil, and honey it is one of the sweetest and strongest comforts unto you who are the people of God.

1. It sweetens all his love and mercy, and goodness unto you; God is Eternal, and his love to you is an Eternal love; there never shall come the time when his love or his kindness, or his goodness, or his mercy shall cease towards you; All the creatures slip away, and come to their end, and though one creature outlives another, yet every creature at last is at his journeys end: There is an end of this man and his power, and an end of that man and his love; but God never comes to an end, and his power and his love never comes to an end: O what is this that God is God, and that he is our God forever and ever, that his love is an Eternal love, and his mercy is an Eternal mercy, and his fullness

is an Eternal fullness, and his blessedness is an Eternal blessedness.

2. It gives you confidence in all your space of time which you are to live, still to live upon your God: for there is no newness, nor alteration, nor weariness, nor weakness in Eternity; no want or waste in Eternity, Eternity is full to all Eternity: God is full of mercy and grace, and power, &c. The Eternal God is in all times the self-same perfection and all-sufficiency; there is no variation or diminution, or contingency in Eternity; his power and mercy, and wisdom, and knowledge, and love, and kindness are still at the same height.

3. The Eternal God hath time enough to make all his promises good unto you; you need not fear that he will die in debt unto you; Eternity never dies, but hath time enough in it.

4. Though your life be not Eternal, but short, yet your Eternal God hath promised to give unto you Eternal life, 1 John 2:25. This is the promise which he hath promised us, even Eternal life: Happiness were not happiness without Eternity; Eternity of happiness is a full possession, and a present possession, and an invincible possession, and endless possession of the blessed God forever, and ever, and ever.

5. This is comfort in all losses; I die, but God will surely visit you, said Joseph; as if he had said, I cannot live to do you good, but God lives forever; what though this comfort dies, yet the God of all comfort lives.

Thus have you heard the singular and manifold comforts of having God to be your God, from the excellency of all his glorious Attributes, in respect of which (because he is your God) he is engaged unto you.

I thought to have added unto all this another discourse of God's engagement in his Attributes unto his people. viz. That his Attributes were engaged unto you conjunctively; and that conjunctive engagement was, 1. Universal, not this or that Attribute of God, but this and that, every one of his Attributes. 2. Special, as his all-sufficiency and faithfulness, his goodness and graciousness, his power and wisdom, his mercifulness and unchangeableness, his omnipresence and kindness, his Sovereignty and eternity.

But then I fear I should be too tedious unto you, therefore let what hath been spoken be sufficient to give you a taste of that happiness which the people of God enjoy, by having God to be their God, upon this account, that their God is engaged unto them in all his Attributes for their good.

#### SECT. VIII.

3. Now follows a third singular comfort unto all who have God to be their God in Covenant, which is this, If God be your God, then Christ is your Christ: To whom God is a God, unto them Christ is a Christ; if God be your God, then Jesus Christ is yours; as Christ spake unto his Father, All mine are thine, and thine are mine, John 17:10. All that have an interest in me, have an interest in thee; and all that have a relation to thee, have also a relation to me; We may so safely say, All who have propriety in God, have propriety in Christ: If God saith unto you I am your Father, Christ saith unto you I am your Savior; whom the Father owns, he doth own; whom the Father loves, he loves. This is certain that God the Father hath not one sort of people, and Christ another sort of people; that there are some to whom God hath relation, and there are others to whom Christ hath relation. No: but what relation God hath to any, and what propriety God hath in

any, the same hath Christ; and what relation and propriety any have in God, the same have they unto Christ: I and my Father are one. Then if you be God's, then you are Christ's; and if God be yours, then Christ is yours; he is given to you, and you are given to him: Unto us a Son is given, Isaiah 9:6. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, John 17:6.

Now if God be your God, Then Christ is yours in these respects.

1. He is yours as to his person: He himself is yours, not yours only in the respect of his graces and works, but yours also in respect of his person; as it was his person who gave himself for you, (Christ hath given himself for us, Ephes. 5:2) so it is the person of Christ who gives himself unto you; my beloved is mine, and I am his, Cant. 2:16.

The union and relation 'twixt you and Christ is as real, as that between the husband and the wife, as that between the head and the body, as that between the Vine and the branches; as the husband can say This woman is my wife, and the wife can say This man is my husband; so truly doth Christ say This believer is mine; so can the believer say This Christ is mine; that Christ who is the Son of God, the brightness of his Fathers glory, who is immortal, God with us, who is God blessed forever, who is the Lord of glory, whose Name is Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; The Savior of sinners, the Redeemer, the Light and Life of the world, the desire of all Nations, who is altogether lovely, and most excellent and precious; in comparison of whom, Paul counted all things but loss and dung, this Christ is your Christ; this Christ in whom is life, and without whom there is no life; this Christ in whom is salvation, and without whom there is no salvation; this Christ in whom is blessedness, and without whom there is nothing



but curse and misery; this Christ in whom is hope, and without whom there is no hope; this Christ is your Christ.

But let us a little more distinctly consider our happiness and comfort, that Christ, the person of Christ is ours.

1. It is more to enjoy Jesus Christ himself, than to enjoy any or all other things without himself: Could you enjoy every good, and every comfort which every creature in the whole world doth contain, as all these are nothing in comparison of Christ, (what is the Candle to the Sun? What is the glory of the grass to the glory of the only begotten of the Father? What is the chaff unto the wheat? The soul of man is above all these, much more is Christ; so they are nothing in a separation from Christ; unless the figure stands before, all that follows are but empty ciphers, which signify nothing, so unless you have Christ, your greatness is but a cipher, your riches are but a cipher; they are neither a blessedness unto you, nor yet a blessing, nor yet a way to the one or to the other; Christ alone hath more worth in him, more wealth in him, more delight in him, more greatness in him, than can be possibly found in all the creatures, although dividedly or conjunctively considered; and therefore Moses preferred even the reproaches of Christ, before all the treasures in Egypt, Heb. 11. Take me the greatest man on earth; if he be a Christless man, he is but a cursed man, and all that he hath, is but a curse unto him; and take me the meanest man on earth, if Christ be his, he is a blessed man; and all that he hath, is a blessing unto him.

2. It is more to enjoy Jesus Christ himself, than to enjoy any, or all the benefits depending on Christ; The benefits I say, from the enjoyment of Christ are very precious (how precious is the peace which flows out of his blood, and the joy which comes in by his Spirit, and the graces, and the gifts from him!) yet Christ himself is

more precious, more sweet, more lovely, and more desirable: If the Image be so precious, much more the pattern itself; if the tokens and gifts be so precious, much more is the giver himself; if the words of his mouth, and the kisses of his lips are so sweet, much more sweet is the enjoyment of Christ himself; therefore Paul rejoiceth especially in this, that Christ loved him, and gave himself for him, Gal. 2:20. And above all things, desires to be found in him, Phil. 3:9. No, not the knowledge of Christ (though it were the excellency of knowledge) could suffice him; it was Christ himself after whom he principally looked, and in whom he would be found.

3. All is enjoyed by the enjoyment of Christ. All is enjoyed

1. Equivalently; there is as much in Christ, as answers all other enjoyments (*Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso uno bono bona sunt omnia*) the wisdom of Christ doth more than answer all other wisdom; and the knowledge of Christ doth more than answer all other knowledge; and the love of Christ doth more than answer all other love; and the unsearchable riches of Christ doth more than answer all other riches; and the delights in Christ do more than answer all other pleasures.

2. Really; if you enjoy Christ himself, you do actually enjoy all the glorious benefits by Christ, with the enjoyments of himself. If the field be yours, the treasure in the field is yours indeed; in some civil enjoyments, there is an *exceptio juris*; sometimes such a Manor you shall enjoy, but such or such particulars are excepted and reserved; But it is not thus in your spiritual enjoyments, (in the enjoyment of Christ) there is no exception, no clause, no distinction; but if Christ be yours, all of Christ is yours; his love is yours, his righteousness is yours, his wisdom, his holiness, his Redemption, all is yours.

4. Jesus Christ himself, his person is the greatest blessing, and choicest gift, that God hath or can give unto you; for all the other blessings fall into our possession and enjoyment by Christ alone; all your enjoyments are bestowed by the enjoyment of Christ himself; the loving God, the merciful God, righteousness, holiness, as long as Christ is Christ, you shall have possession of them. Ephes. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Jesus Christ (if I may so express it) is the out-let of all blessings, and he is the in-let to all our blessings; Look on our blessings as descending from God to us, Jesus Christ is (as it were) the out-let of them all; they are let out unto us by Christ; God himself becomes our God in Christ, and he loves us in Christ, and chooseth us in Christ, and is merciful and gracious unto us in Christ, and showeth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. And look on our blessings as desired from God by us, we are let or brought into the enjoyment of them by Christ; We lost all by the first Adam, and we come to enjoy all again by Christ; Jesus Christ is (as it were) the root upon which all our mercies and comforts, and hopes do live again and grow.

You obtain your access by Christ unto the Father, and your persons come to be accepted in Christ, and all your services; He holds up all your Communion, and makes them effectual and sure: God would not look on you, nor regard you, nor let fall one glimpse or beam of his favor upon you, were it not for Christ; it is Christ which makes you nigh, and dear, and lovely, and delightful, and precious, and for whose sake you come to be sons and heirs of love and mercy, and peace, and all the blessings which you do possess, or ever shall enjoy in this world, or in the world to come.

5. Your condition cannot be otherwise than safe and comfortable, and blessed, if Christ be yours. As it cannot be well with any without Christ, so it cannot be ill with any who have Christ: There is no condemnation unto you; you are now passed from death to life; he is your life, and he that hath the Son hath life; and he is your hope, (Christ in you the hope of glory) and he is your Rock on which you are built; he is your peace, he is your glory, he is your head, he is your Savior; in one word, the enjoyment of Christ makes life and death comfortable.

2. Christ is yours as to all his Offices; You know that Christ is the anointed of God; He was set apart, and ordained, and called, and sent, and undertook all the work of salvation for sinners; and for the accomplishing of that salvation, he was installed a Prophet, a Priest, and a King.

By reason of our sinful fall, there were (if I may so call them) three diseases falling upon us.

One was Ignorance, and this Christ doth heal as he is our Prophet.

A second was Alienation from God, and this Christ doth heal as he is our Priest.

A third is Impotency to come back to God, and this Christ doth heal as he is our King.

As he is a Prophet, he doth open and unfold salvation; and as he is a Priest, he doth acquire and procure salvation; and as he is a King, he doth apply that salvation unto us.

The Prophetical Office of Christ, is that by which he doth perfectly and effectually reveal the whole saving Will of God.

The Priestly Office of Christ, is that by which he doth expiate all our sins, and doth reconcile us unto God.

The Kingly Office of Christ, is that by which he doth with authority and power dispense and administer all things which do belong unto the everlasting salvation of his people.

Beloved, All the works of our redemption, and reconciliation, and salvation, do depend on Jesus Christ as invested with the threefold Office of Prophet, Priest, and King; his whole Mediatorship is contained in them, and so is all our comfort and hope; and therefore I will speak briefly unto every one of them.

1. Jesus Christ is a Prophet, and he is your Prophet. He is that Prophet whom God had promised to raise up, Acts 3:22. And whom all are commanded to hear, verse 23. And this was he who was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord, to preach the Gospel to the poor, Luke 4:18. And this is he in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2:3, who knows the Father, and by whom alone the knowledge of the Father is revealed, Matth 11:27, who is in the bosom of the Father, and declares him unto us. John 1:18, who is the Angel of the Covenant. Malachi 3:1, unto whom the great Commission of opening the mystery of salvation is granted and sealed.

Now there are four singular comforts unto you, which have God to be your God in Covenant and consequently have Jesus Christ to be your Prophet.

1. He hath it in his Commission to teach you, They shall be all taught of God, Joh. 6:45, yea it is his express Commission to preach the Gospel unto you, Luke. 4:18, to open and reveal that Mystery which was kept secret since the world began, and to make it manifest. Rom.

16:25,26, even the Mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest unto his Saints, Col. 1:26. Though others sit in darkness and see no light, yet unto you (through Christ) there ariseth light in darkness; and your eyes shall and do see the salvation of the Lord, and the glory of the Lord: the light shines in your hearts, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4:6, he makes known unto you, the true life, and the true way of life, the mystery of salvation.

2. He hath it in his commission to instruct and teach you the whole mind and will of God in everything which concerns your salvation: all things that I have heard of the Father, I have made known unto you, Joh. 15:15.

As he discovers unto us infallibly the reality, and the quality of our salvation, so there is not any one truth, nor any one path necessary unto that salvation, but he opens it, and reveals it, whether it respect our faith, or our obedience: he is the anointing which teacheth you of all things and is truth, and is no lie, 1 Joh. 2:27.

3. He is that Prophet who doth teach, not only by his word, but also by his Spirit: others can speak only to the ears of men, but he can speak to the hearts of men, he can imprimere in mentem, as well as mentem exprimere, write his Law in the heart, as well and as easily as he can deliver and make it known to our minds: when he teacheth you that you must believe, he doth by his Spirit cause you to believe; when he saith that you must be born again, he doth by his Spirit make you new creatures: there is not any one grace, or duty, or path of life which he sets before you (who are in covenant with God) but he works in you those very graces, and puts forth a strength to perform all those duties, and to walk in those paths.

4. As a Prophet he is anointed to preach good tidings, Isa. 61:1, the Apostle calls it preaching of peace, Ephes. 2:17, and not only the Prophet Isaiah in that place, but also Christ himself in Luke 4:18, tells you what those good tidings are, what that Gospel is, namely to bind up, and heal the broken-hearted, liberty and deliverance to the captives, sight to the blind, to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

O what comfort is here for you who are the people of God, and have Christ to be your Christ, and your Prophet? Here are glad tidings for you, and your Christ is anointed to preach them unto you when your hearts are broken and bruised, you have a Christ to bind them up, and to heal them with his own precious blood; I died for you, saith Christ, this is my blood which was shed for you, for the remission of your sins, to reconcile you, to make peace for you, saith Christ: and when you find yourselves captives, and as it were shut up on prison, Christ your Prophet comes to you by his Spirit and breaks open the prison doors, and sets you at liberty from your sins, from Satan, from your fears, and tears, and all the powers and chains of darkness: and when your soul sits in darkness and sees no light, when they feed on tears, and are overwhelmed with sorrows and heaviness, your Christ (who is your Prophet) can, and will speak words of life unto you, and words of joy unto you: why are your hearts troubled? Said he to his Disciples; woman why weepest thou? Said he to Mary; daughter go in peace; so to another, son, be of good comfort.

There is no Prophet like your Prophet, who knows so much of the mind of God, who reveals it so fully, so faithfully, so infallibly, so powerfully, so sweetly, so savingly.

Jesus Christ is a Priest, and he is anointed to be your Priest, Psal. 110:4. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest

forever after the order of Melchizedek, vide Heb. 6:20, Heb 7:17. Cap. 4:14, we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.

I shall not insist on this Argument, to tell you how Christ was called and qualified for his priestly Office, nor of the differences 'twixt him and all other Priests: nor how that his Sacrifice was his human nature, and the Altar was his Divine Nature, and himself according to both these natures was the Priest; My intention is only in few words to touch at this Office of Christ as our Mediator: and then to express unto you, the chief comforts from your interest in him, as to this his Office of Priesthood.

There are two Acts wherein his Priestly Office consisteth.

1. One was the oblation of himself once for all; as a perfect Sacrifice for the expiation of sin, and reconciling us to God, Heb. 9:14. Through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself, without spot to God, verse 26, he appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself, verse 28. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, Rom. 5:10, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Col. 1:20. He made peace through the blood of his Cross, Heb. 2:17, a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

2. The other is, His Intercession for us: This man (saith the Apostle) because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood, Heb. 7:24, wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them: and therefore as to this interceding part of his Priestly Office, Christ is said to appear for us in the presence of God, Heb. 9:24, as the Attorney appears for his Client in Court to answer for him; and



likewise he is called our Advocate with the Father, 1 Joh. 2:1, to plead for us, and to obtain for us, &c.

But some may now reply, We know all this, that Christ is a Priest, and a Mediator of Redemption and of Intercession; that he offered up himself, that he died, shed his blood, was sacrificed, and that he ever lives to make Intercession. But where lies the comfort of this to them that are in Covenant with God, and have Christ to be their High Priest?

I will show you what comfort you have by this, and I pray you mark it: There are four unspeakable comforts unto you who are Christ's, from this, that he is your High Priest, who offered himself for you, and lives to make Intercession for you.

1. All your sins were laid upon him: for in that respect he was your Priest, in that respect also he was your Surety, Heb. 7:21,22, what's that? That? That is, he became bound to God, responsible unto him for all your sins, for all that God in justice could charge upon you, and demand for satisfaction. Our salvation was laid on one that is mighty.

As Judah became a surety to Jacob for Benjamin, he engaged himself to his Father, I will be surety for him, of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever, Gen. 43:9. Thus Jesus Christ is our Priest, and therefore our Surety with his Father; Father, I will take upon me all the sins of thy people; I will be bound to answer for them, I will sacrifice myself for them, at my hands do thou require satisfaction for their sins, and a full compensation unto thy justice: I will die, I will lay down my life, I will make my soul an offering for sins, I will become a curse, I will endure thy wrath.

O what a Comfort is this, that there is a Christ to answer for that which we could not answer!

2. He discharged all your debts and bonds: There is a twofold debt which lay upon us; one was the debt of obedience unto the Law; And this Christ did pay by fulfilling all Righteousness, Matth. 3:15. The other was the debt of punishment for our transgressions, and this debt also Christ discharged by his death on the Cross, and being made a curse for us to redeem us from the curse, Gal. 3:13. Hence it is that we are said to be bought with a price, 1 Cor. 6:20, and that Christ is called our ransom, Lutron, Matth. 20:28, and Antilutron, 1 Tim. 2:6, the words do signify a valuable price laid down for another's ransom: the blood of Christ (the Son of God) was a valuable price, a sufficient price; it was as much as would serve the turn to take off all enmities, and to take away sin, and to satisfy Divine justice, and indeed so it did: and therefore you read that in his blood we have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins, Ephes. 1:7, and his death was such a full compensation to Divine Justice, that the Apostle makes a challenge to all, Rom. 8:33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? And ver. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; as if he had said, Christ hath satisfied and discharged all.

O what comfort is this unto us, to have such a high Priest, who himself bare all our sins, even all our sins, left not one unsatisfied for? Laid down a full ransom, a full price, such an expiatory sacrifice, such a satisfactory sacrifice, as that now we are out of the hands of justice, and wrath, and death, and curse, and hell and are reconciled, and made near, and deal altogether under the throne of Grace and Mercy.

3. As our Priest in offering himself for us, his Sacrifice being (as the scripture speaks) the blood of God (that is) of one that is God, there is more therefore in it than mere payment, or satisfaction; there was merit also in it to acquire, and procure, and purchase all Spiritual good and all Eternal good for the people of God: not only immunities from evil in sin and death, but privileges, and dignities of sons, and heirs, yea all grace, and all love, and all peace, and all glory; even that glorious inheritance purchased by his blood.

You may now look on God as your Father, and on Heaven as your inheritance, sealed on you by the love of God, and purchased for you by the blood of Jesus Christ.

4. What shall I say more? Jesus Christ is your Priest for Intercession also; Do you know your happiness by this, and in this? Your Christ is now entered into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father: and therefore he intercedes for you, he presents himself as your Surety, as your Redeemer, in all his susceptions and endurances and discharges and purchases for you, in the price which he laid down and in the merits of that price, and so negotiates, and obtains for you, and still is effectually letting down unto you the virtues, and purchases of his life and death, until you come at length to the highest and full enjoyment of himself in glory. Father, I purchased this for him, I paid dearly for it &c. And therefore some (not without ground) ascribe all the purchases of Christ (for the application of them unto us) unto the Intercession of Christ.

I will say no more but this, That all your communions with the Father, all your audiences, all your acceptances, all your answers, in graces, in comforts, in hopes, in helps in present, in future enjoyments, owe themselves unto Christ as your Priest, in the

Oblation of himself for you, and in the intercession of him unto the Father for you.

3. Jesus Christ is a King, and he is your King: He is called a King, Psal. 2:6, and he is called King of Saints, Rev. 15:3. He is such a King, as there is not the like.

A King by contract in respect of God, by conquest in respect of us.

1. He makes Subjects by the power of his Word and Spirit effectually calling us out of the kingdom of darkness, into his own gracious Kingdom.

2. He makes all his Subjects free-men; If the Son shall make you free, you are free indeed, Joh. 8:36.

3. He makes all his Subjects Kings; He hath made us unto our God Kings and Priests, Rev. 4:10

4. He rules all his Subjects by Righteous Laws: therefore he is called Melchizedek, which signifies a King of Righteousness: and his Kingdom is called a Righteous Kingdom.

5. He is the King of Salem, of peace as well as of Righteousness. Men never enjoy peace, at least such a peace anywhere as in the Kingdom of Christ; there is no man that obeys him, and is ruled by him, but finds peace, Gal. 6. His kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

6. He as a King seeks your good, and all that he doth hath a respect to your good: all his dispensations are good, and for your good: he seeks your well-fare and happiness, speaks kindly to you, hears your groans, answers your complaints, and pleads for the poor and needy.

7. He is a King for Protection: He will protect and secure you against all your Enemies, Devils, Sins, Men, the worst and greatest, and will subdue them, and trample them under his feet: His enemies shall be his foot-stool.

8. He hath great rewards, an infinite treasure to bestow on all his people; he will accept of their service, and reward every one of them with a crown of life.

O how happy are the people who have the Lord to be their God! And who have (therefore) Christ to be their Christ: a Christ who is such a Prophet, such a Priest, and such a King.

I will not stay you any longer in this one part of your Covenant-happiness, viz. That Christ is yours; only I think it fit to sum up in a few particulars the general comforts which I have mentioned or insinuated already in the Person and Offices of Christ. Thus then; if Christ be yours, Then 1. Life is yours, Christ is your life, and he that hath the Son hath life, Col. 3:4. 1 Joh. 5:12.

2. Love is yours, Christ loves all his with a love of Kindness, and tenderness, and benevolence, and beneficence.

3. All that Christ did or suffered, in order to man's salvation, all is yours, your good, and for your good.

4. His Redemption is yours, he hath Redeemed you from wrath, and curse, and sin, and Satan, and death, and hell.

5. You are certainly partakers of the forgiveness of all your sins.

6. You are perfectly reconciled unto God, who is now your God, and your Father.

7. You are accepted and approved with God in the Righteousness of Christ, which is now yours, as Christ himself is yours.

8. You now receive the adoption of sons; as you are the brethren of Christ, so are you with him in the same relation of sons unto God.

9. You are clothed with the same Spirit wherewith Christ himself was anointed; the self-same Spirit which is in Christ as your Head, is in you as his Members.

10. He is your Apology against all Satan's accusations, and your own sins and fears: There is no condemnation unto them that are in Christ Jesus, for it is Christ that died.

11. He is the living Root and foundation of all your graces and comforts.

12. All his victories shall extend to you, over Satan, the world, your sins, and death.

13. You are no more strangers, nor Foreigners, but are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14. You have all the sights of God in his glory, as he is the Lord, gracious, and merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth.

15. You enjoy liberty of Access by his blood to the throne of grace.

16. You shall assuredly speed well in all your suites, be heard, and answered upon his account.

17. He will take special care of you, and will own, and help, and succor, and supply you, as long as you have a day to live on earth.

18. He is your Defense; as he is exceedingly sensible of all your Injuries, so he will certainly judge all your enemies

19 By him you are heirs of the same glory and Kingdom which the Father hath bestowed on him, and which he hath prepared for you

20. He will never part with you, nor forsake you, but will love and keep you to the end.

21. He will entertain you with sweet communions in the day of your pilgrimage: and as you are walking, and travelling through the vale of tears, many a kind word, many a good look many a feast all you have, where he will sup with you, and you shall sup with him; many refreshing's, and joys, and reviving's of your spirits.

22. You shall infallibly possess and enjoy all the grace, and comfort, and blessing, and blessedness which he hath purchased for you in this life, and in the life to come, even to all eternity: he is ever with you whilst you are on earth, and you shall forever be with him when you die, and come to Heaven.

#### SECT. IX.

4. A Fourth singular comfort unto you who have God to be your God, is this, then the Spirit of God is yours. He also is given unto you; for this is one part of the Covenant, Ezek. 36:27. I will put my Spirit

within you. 1 Thes. 4:8. He hath given unto us his holy Spirit. 1 Joh. 4:13. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. Neh. 9:20. Thou gavest them also thy good Spirit. Acts 5:32. The holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey him.

The Spirit of God may be considered seven ways, and as to every one of them he is yours; In respect, 1. Of his Titles, or Attributes. 2. Of his gifts and fruits. 3. Of his works or operations. 4. Of his helps or virtues. 5. Of his joys and comforts. 6. Of his Office or Function. 7. Of his presence or abode.

1. The Spirit is yours in respect of his Titles and Attributes: he is called sometimes,

1. The Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2:11, and the Spirit of Christ, Rom. 8:9, and the Spirit of glory, 1 Pet. 4:14. This very Spirit is given unto you, who have God to be your God; we have received the Spirit which is of God, 1 Cor. 2:12 God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, Gal. 4:6. O what a glory is this? What a dignity? What a comfort? That the same Spirit which is in Christ, is also in you? That you have Christ, and you have the Spirit of Christ.

2. The holy Spirit: Grieve not the holy Spirit of God. Ephes. 4:30, sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Ephes. 1:13, above eighty times is the Spirit of God styled the holy Ghost, or Spirit, in the Scripture. And under this notion also is he given unto you; as we are said in Heb. 3:14, to be partakers of Christ, so are we said in Heb. 6:4, to be partakers of the holy Ghost: and as Christ is said to be given unto us, Isa. 9:6, so the Holy Ghost is said to be given unto us, Acts 5:32, 1 Thes. 4:8.



This is the excellency of the Spirit of God, that he is holy, and this is our excellency that we are holy, and the holy Spirit is given unto us for this end, to make us holy (like unto the Father, and the Son, and himself) hence it is that we are said to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 15:16, 2 Thes. 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:2.

3. The free Spirit; so he is called, Psal. 51:12. Uphold me with thy free Spirit He is a free Spirit on a twofold account; 1. Because he works where and on whom, and when, and how he himself pleaseth: he blows where he lists, Joh. 3:8. 2. And he is a free Spirit, in as much as all spiritual freedom and liberty is received of us from him; hence the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3:17, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

4. The good Spirit by Spirit is good, Isa. 43:10 Thou gavest them of thy good Spirit, Neh. 9:20. The Spirit is essentially good, and counsels good: he is indeed a good Spirit unto us; All the good thoughts in us, and all the good desires in us, and all the good we have or shall receive from God in Christ, is handed to us by this good Spirit, yea and all the sweet sights of God himself that ever we enjoyed, and all the tastes that ever we have had of Jesus Christ, and all the joys and contentment's in our souls, we are beholding unto this good Spirit for every one of them; though in some respect you are not beholding unto the Spirit for dying, and suffering, and satisfying, and reconciling, and purchasing for you, yet this I may safely affirm, that for all the enjoyments of all the sweet comforts depending on the sufferings of Christ, you are singularly beholding to the good spirit for them; you never could have partaked of Christ, nor of any one good purchased by Christ, had it not been for this good Spirit.

5. The powerful or mighty Spirit: The Spirit of the Lord is called the Spirit of might, Isa. 11:2. The power of the holy Ghost, Rom. 15:13,

the power of the Spirit of God, verse 19, the power of the Highest, Luke 1:35. It was the power of this Spirit which did convince you of your sins, and which did break your hard hearts, and did rescue and deliver you from the power of darkness; which doth subdue your iniquities, and pull down your strong holds: It was, and is this powerful Spirit by whom the Ministrations, or Ordinances of the Gospel have been, and still are of power with you. The Word is called the sword of the Spirit, Ephes. 6:17. The Ministrations of themselves are weak, it is the concomitant presence of the Spirit which makes them powerful and lively for your conversion, comfort, and salvation; you had lain in the same condition, and darkness, and bondage, and death with other men, had not the powerful and mighty Spirit of God put forth the greatness of his own strength to the alteration of your hearts by his own grace.

2. The Spirit is yours in respect of his gifts and fruits; You read in 1 Cor. 12:14, of diversities of gifts of the Spirit for edification, or to profit withal, ver. 7, and you read of the first fruits of the Spirit, Rom. 8:23, and of the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22.

The Spirit of God (as to these gifts and fruits) is called the Spirit of grace, Zach. 12:10, and the Spirit of wisdom, Isa. 11:2, and the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord: and the Spirit of faith, 2 Cor. 4:13, and the Spirit of love, 2 Tim. 1:7, and the Spirit of supplication, Zach. 12:10, the fruit of the Spirit, saith the Apostle in Gal. 5:22, is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (and ver. 23.) meekness, temperance.

There are six things which I would briefly observe concerning the graces, or fruits of the Spirit.

1. They are the Beauties, Glories, Ornaments, Chains, Pearls, Jewels of a Christian; you have no excellencies till you partake of them, but

are dead, loathsome, polluted and vile.

These are the very image of God.

2. They are necessary unto salvation: No man can be saved without them. They are the way to the kingdom, though they be not the cause of reigning in the kingdom: without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12:14.

3. They are pledges of salvation: therefore called the first fruits, which were the beginnings and the pledges of the full harvest: and also the earnest of the Spirit which he leaves with us to assure us of that glorious happiness which we are to receive shortly in fullness.

4. They are given to none but unto such as shall be saved. There are the common gifts of the Spirit, which are for the edification of others. These they may have who shall perish, like those who helped to build the Ark, and yet were drowned. But there are the special gifts of the Spirit which are for Renovation of the soul, and for the preparation of it for glory. These are given to none but unto such who are elected unto salvation: As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Act. 13:48. Matth. 11:25. Hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes.

5. Every gift or grace, which accompanies salvation, is (by the Spirit) given to every child of God; to everyone who hath God to be his God in Covenant: every one of them hath every saving grace of the Spirit.

1. The spirit of grace; I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace, Zach. 12:10.

2. The Spirit of knowledge. They shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, Jer. 31:34.

3. The Spirit of wisdom. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the Spirit of wisdom, Eph. 1:17.

4. The Spirit of faith; We have the same Spirit of faith, 2 Cor. 4:13. You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:26. To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, 2 Pet. 1:1.

5. The Spirit of love, 2 Tim. 1:7. Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another, 1 Thes. 4:9.

What should I speak of godly sorrow, repentance, humbleness, meekness, patience? &c. whatsoever gift is necessary to our salvation, the Spirit doth certainly work in every one of the people of God, although not in the same measure, proportion and height, yet to the same truth, and for the same efficacy unto their salvation.

Every child of God hath the same Spirit of grace, and faith, and love; and though one Christians graces may fall short of another's for the quantity, yet they do not fall short for the present quality, nor for the future glory; The weakest grace of the Spirit, is able to change the heart and save the soul.

6. The Spirit doth cherish, and preserve, and keep all those saving gifts of his in you: As a Parent who begets the children, he looks unto those children, and maintains and keeps them; All your graces are the births of the Spirit of grace; and as they are the effects of his power, so also are they the objects of his care; and therefore as they receive life from his presence in the Ordinances, so shall they receive strength, and growth, and stability from his continual influence upon them; We are strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, Ephes. 3:16. As we are changed from our shameful condition to glory

by the Spirit, so by the same Spirit are we changed from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18.

3. The Spirit is yours in respect of his works or operations: And truly, this consideration makes out an exceeding happiness unto the people of God, in as much as the participation of all their happiness depends upon the workings of the Spirit of God in whom they are interested by this Covenant of grace.

There are five choice works which the Spirit doth for all the people of God, who have God to be their God.

1. He doth unite Christ and them; Although the benefits by Christ are inexpressibly precious, yet the fruition of them is impossible without a precedent union with Christ (forasmuch as union is a necessary foundation for Communion) you must be in Christ, and being his, himself and all his benefits become yours.

Now it is the Spirit which makes up this union; as love makes the union 'twixt Christian and Christian; and as faith makes up the union from us to Christ (for we are planted into Christ, and are espoused unto Christ, and live in Christ by faith) so the Spirit makes the union 'twixt Christ and us; there being no other way for him to be joined unto us, and to become Relatively ours, but by his own Spirit; it is the Spirit which doth let out the heart of Christ to us, and who doth bring in our hearts unto Christ; it is the Spirit by whom Christ applies himself unto us, and apprehends us, and by whom we also do apprehend and apply Christ; by his Spirit he takes hold of us, and by the same Spirit it is that we take hold of him. In a word, it is the Spirit by whom Christ speaks to our hearts, and by whose light we see the excellencies of Christ, and the great love of Christ, and who gives Christ (as it were) into our hands, and mightily allures and prevails upon our hearts, to give themselves unto Christ again; as

Christ had never been effectually revealed unto you but by the Spirit, so you had never been effectually brought to Christ but by the Spirit; you had been Christless forever without him.

And now consider the happiness in having this Spirit, which hath wrought so effectually as to unite Christ and you, and you and Christ, that Christ is yours, and you are his; by him are you persuaded and drawn, and brought into the possession of Christ, and all the benefits by Jesus Christ.

2. He doth conform us unto Christ; We all (saith the Apostle in 2 Cor. 3:18.) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. As by the Spirit we do discern a most glorious nature of holiness in Christ, so by the Spirit we are changed into the same image of holiness. Hence are we said to be born again by the Spirit, John 3:5,6, and to be renewed by the holy Ghost, Tit. 3:5. And to be sanctified by him, 1 Pet. 1:2.

You read that Christ was conceived by the holy Ghost, and he was anointed by the Spirit; So is every Christian; he becomes a Christian by the Spirit, and he is anointed by the Spirit: The ointment indeed is first poured upon our head, and then upon us; but as it is the same spirit in us which is in Christ, so it is the same anointing; only it is in Christ as the head, and without measure; and as in the pattern unto which we are conformed by the Spirit. As by the unction of the Spirit, we become like Christ in nature, so also in Relation; God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba-Father, Gal. 4:6.

Now judge of the blessedness of having the Spirit; He is the cause of our union, and he is the cause of our unction: he brings us into Christ, and he anoints us with the same grace wherewith Christ

himself was anointed, so that we are like Christ himself; we are anointed with the same Spirit, and therefore we must needs be excellent and choice persons, and very lovely in the eyes of God.

3. He doth reveal unto us, the highest, and the choicest things of salvation; He is called the Spirit of Revelation, Eph. 1:17, because he opens and reveals those things unto the people of God, which are hid from the eyes of others.

There are five precious things which the Spirit reveals unto you.

1. The mystery of life unto you; even Jesus Christ, who cannot be known or acknowledged but by the Spirit. Flesh and blood cannot reveal him: No man can confess him; No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord but by the holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12:3. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory, 1 Cor. 2:7.

2. The love of God unto you: The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the holy Ghost which is given unto us, Rom. 5:5. He makes the greatness of the love, and your propriety in it known unto you, and the exceeding riches of grace, &c.

3. The presence of Christ within you: Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 John 3:24. Christ without, nay, Christ within us, is not discerned by us without the Spirit.

4. The wonderful glory prepared for us: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2:9,10.

5. The most precious gifts bestowed on us: In this life we have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God, 1 Cor. 2:12. The sight of your own graces, is by the assistance of the Spirit.

O what a happiness is all this, to know Jesus Christ, and as present in my soul! To know the love of God in mine heart! To know the exceedingly exceeding weight of glory prepared, and prepared for me! And to know all that God hath freely given me, in order unto that exceeding glory! This, &c.

4. He fits us for that salvation which Christ hath purchased for us. As the blood of Christ did purchase our salvation, so the Spirit of Christ doth fit us for the enjoyment thereof; He makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light: The Apostle speaking of this salvation, under several expressions in 2 Cor. 5:1,2,3,4, he adds in the fifth verse, Now he which hath wrought us for the self-same thing, is God, who hath given unto us the earnest of his Spirit. And this fitting work of his upon us for the salvation purchased by Christ, he doth execute,

Partly by cleansing and purifying our sinful hearts, and mortifying those lusts, which otherwise would render us unfit, and incapable of that glorious salvation.

Partly by endowing and beautifying the soul with Christ and his righteousness, and his graces, that thereby an entrance may be made for us, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1:11.



Partly by leading and upholding us in all the ways of Christ, until we come to receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

5. I will add but one work more of the Spirit on your behalf, which is this, He works all your works in you, and for you: Consider your works, either of faith or obedience; your works of faith in reference to the promises of God; and your work of obedience in reference to the precepts of God; although you are the persons who do believe the one, and obey the other, yet it is the Spirit of Christ which is the cause, and the powerful principle of those in you. He it is who doth make your hearts to believe, and who doth cause you to walk in his Statutes, and do them, Ezek. 36:27.

4. The Spirit is yours, in respect of his help or virtue; The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, Rom. 8:26.

And there are six things wherein the Spirit is a help unto all the people of God.

1. In all their Communion with God.
2. In the weaknesses of all their graces.
3. In the actings of every grace.
4. In the conflicts of grace.
5. In the darkness upon their spirits.
6. In the Captivities of their souls.

1. The Spirit helps them in in all their communions with God; in their Meditations of God, in their hearing of the Word of God, in their

addresses of prayer unto God; and as to this, the Apostle gives a special instance in that, Rom. 8:26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. When we are to pray, there is in us sometimes an infirmity of ignorance; we know not what to pray for, either for the matter, or for the manner; and there is in us sometimes an infirmity of deadness and dullness; we cannot pray with that fervency as we should, or as we would. But now the Spirit helps these infirmities by way of instruction; Teaching us what (especially) to pray for; and by way of causation, in making intercession for us (that is) in quickening and enabling us to pray with groanings (that is) with such full and strong affections of heart, as cannot be uttered or expressed by words; Our streightened, and narrow, and barren hearts, are many times by the influence and assistance of God's Spirit, enlarged and opened, and filled with a Spirit of supplication; with such an ardency, with such an earnestness, with such a copiousness, that after we have long insisted with God, yet we have not opened half our minds and desires unto God; it excites all our graces, and sets them a work: such an help is the Spirit unto us in praying unto God.

2. The Spirit helps them in the weakness of their graces; He waters the plants, and blows upon the buds, and draws on his works of grace towards perfection: He doth (as it were) Nurse them up, and breed, and brood them up. He helps your dim knowledge, by adding light unto light, and opening more and more the eyes of your understanding to know the things of God in Christ. He helps the weak and staggering faith, by adding faith unto faith, in answering your doubts, and evidencing your grounds and interests in Jesus Christ. He is the wind which blows upon your garden, and makes the Spices there of to flow out, Cant. 4:16.

3. The Spirit helps them in the actings of every grace. You know the distinction of gratia praeveniens & gratia subsequens: gratia operans & gratia cooperans.

It is the Spirit which works grace in us; and it is the Spirit which makes grace (wrought in us) to work. You are not able (of yourselves) to use the graces given unto you (when you please) without the influence and assistance of the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 15:10. By the grace of God I am that I am: and his grace bestowed upon me was not in vain. I labored, yet not I, but the grace of God in me. Can you trust when you will? And mourn when you will? And fear when you will? And command your thoughts and passions when you will? And patiently bear the hand of God when you will? The light (if it were cut off from the influence and presence of the Sun) would not be light, nor give light at all: The arm if it were cut off from the body, it could not stir at all. Though the arm be grafted into the body, yet it stirs by influence from the head.

No grace that we have could move or act at all, were it not acted and moved by the Spirit of Christ; and therefore when you are to believe, he helps you to believe; and when you are to repent, he helps you to repent; and when you are to bless, he helps you to bless; and when you are to suffer, &c.

His hand is upon your hand, his strength is upon your strength, his grace is upon his own grace; As all your graces have their being from his power of life, so they have their working from his power of influence too. He it is who worketh in you to will and to do.

4. The Spirit helps them in the conflicts of grace; when inward temptations arise out of your own hearts, and when outward temptations arise out of your own hearts, and when outward temptations fall in from Satan, alas, your own strength is insufficient

to conquer for you; nay, to maintain the fight for you, unless the Spirit of God put forth his actual help; unless he take your part, what one temptation of lust, of doubt, of fear, is not too hard for you? And what one temptation from Satan is not too strong for you? Every little touch throws down, or hazards the weak child; so this, &c. But this is your comfort, that in all your spiritual conflicts you are sure of the Spirit's presence to own his own graces, and to defend and secure them. His gracious presence shall be sufficient for you, 2 Cor. 12:9, and his power makes itself manifest in your weakness; he will be near to help you, strengthen you, to make you to resist, and to conquer, and to be more than conquerors through Christ that loved you. We are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. 6:10.

5. The Spirit helps them in the darkneses upon their spirits; my meaning is, in all the with-drawments of God's favor and light of countenance, and in all the sad apprehensions of their own spiritual condition; when they think God is become their enemy, and that themselves are forgotten of God, and cast off by God, and have no interest, nor hope in Christ. Now in these times the Spirit of God works and helps, supplies, supports, stirs up faith against hope to believe in hope, and against our own feelings, yet to pray, and trust, and wait, and look for God.

6. He helps them in the captivities of their souls: As when sin or Satan (in this or that particular) have been too subtle, and too strong for them, and have prevailed over them, so that they are fallen and not able to rise; even then in this condition doth the Spirit of God by his wonderful graces, help them up again; he makes them to see their sins, and bewail them, and raise them by renewing and strengthening faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus he dealt with David, with Peter, &c. As the finding of us in our lost estate, so the raising of us from our fallen estate, is done by the help of the Spirit.

5. The Spirit is yours in respect of his joys or comforts; You read of the joy of the holy Ghost, Rom. 14:17. And of the comforts of the holy Ghost, Acts 9:31. And that Christ himself calls him the Comforter, John 16:7. The Spirit is given unto you, not only to unite you to Christ, not only to conform you unto Christ, not only to lead you in the ways of Christ, not only to help you in the services of Christ, but also to comfort your hearts in Christ.

The Spirit is a comforter in three respects.

1. He opens unto you all the true springs of comfort; It is he who opens unto you the fountain of mercy, and the fountain of the love and grace of God, and the fountain of the blood of Christ.

2. He actuates your faith to look on all these fountains of joy, and wells of comfort, as set open for the good and help of your souls.

3. He applies all of them unto your souls: he makes it evident that God loves your souls, and that Christ died for your souls, and that you are justified by faith in him, and are reconciled and pardoned, and accepted unto life; and hereupon he fills you with all joy in believing, even with joy unspeakable and glorious. You cannot imagine what a comfort it is to have the Spirit of God to be our comfort; for

1. His comforts are choice comforts; There is no more comparison 'twixt the comforts of the world, and the comforts of the Spirit, than between the light of the Candle, and the light of the Sun; they are the very comforts of God; they are the very

drops out of the Wells of Salvation; they are drawn out from the proper and only grounds of joy. They are comforts which (of all other) do most punctually answer the distresses of your souls.

2. He can comfort you under all your discomforts; Who comforteth us in all our tribulations, 2 Cor. 1:4. Yea, under the deepest and saddest disconsolations; In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul, Psal. 94:19. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, &c. thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, Psal. 23:4. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds, Psal. 147:3.

3. He can comfort you when there is none else to comfort you; when you have neither father nor mother, sister nor brother, companion nor friend; when you are in prison, in exile, in the loss of all, yet he alone (when you are alone) can comfort your souls, he can show you the salvation of the Lord, speak peace, assure you of mercy, and cause you to rejoice.

4. He can comfort you, and none shall hinder him; neither men, nor devils, nor your own fears and doubts; He can create your peace and joys, and make comforts for you, and make you to drink of them; And as none can take away your joys, so none shall be able to hinder them.

6. The Spirit is yours in respect of his offices; There are three special offices belonging unto the Spirit.

1. One is to make all the Ordinances of Christ powerful and effectual unto you; Take the doctrines of the Gospel, they are not effectual without the Spirit; and take the seals of the Gospel, they are not effectual unto you without the Spirit; There are excellent precepts in the Gospel, and excellent offers in the Gospel, and excellent promises

in the Gospel; the Gospel commands us to repent, to mourn, to deny ourselves, to renounce all for Christ, to come and believe on Christ; but it is the Spirit which makes all these commands effectual: and the Gospel offers Jesus Christ to poor sinners, and thirsty sinners, and presents singular arguments to persuade and allure and draw the hearts of sinners; but it is the Spirit which makes all those offers, and all those arguments effectual; and the Gospel promiseth all heavenly good of love, of grace, of peace, of joy, &c. but it is the Spirit which makes all these effectual. And therefore the New Testament is called the ministration, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit who giveth life, 2 Cor. 3:6. And the Gospel hath excellent seals of mercy and forgiveness, but it is the Spirit, &c. It is the peculiar office of the Spirit to make all the Gospel effectual, and effectual to the elect of God, to the people of God; There is not one part or branch of the Gospel, but the Spirit is (*virtute officii*) to make it effectual to you. He is to give you sufficiency of strength for all Evangelical obedience; and he is to open and apply unto you, all the good in Christ, and all the comforts in the attributes of God, and promises of God; and he is to make out unto you, all the mercy and blessings, and happiness sealed in Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; And as Christ never failed in any Office which he undertook, so the Spirit will not fail, but perform and accomplish all and everything that belongs to his Office; and therefore you shall have all the good intended to you in any Gospel-Ordinance whatsoever.

2. Another is, To witness unto us our present standing in grace, and relation unto God: you read this plainly in Rom. 8:16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. 1 John 5:8. There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.

A Witness is one who gives in a Testimony against a man, or for a man; and he is of use in all doubtful and litigious cases, in all suits and trials; Satan puts it many times in debate by his accusations, Thou art not right, thou art not the child of God, thou presumest, thou deceivest thyself; In this or such like cases, there are two Witnesses for the Christian. 1. One is his own Spirit. 2. The other is God's Spirit; Saith conscience (this is the spirit of man) I know that his heart is right, and that he belongs to God. And saith the Spirit of God (who searcheth the heart, and knows me, and all which himself hath wrought in the heart) and I know that he is born again, for I regenerated him; and I know that he is a child of God, for he hath received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he crieth Abba-Father.

And verily a greater Testimony, and surer witness cannot be had then the Testimony and Witness of the Spirit of God who knows all things, and is truth.

3. A third Office of the Spirit is to seal us in respect of our future happiness; and this also the Scriptures expressly deliver, Eph. 1:13. In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Verse 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. Eph. 4:30. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption; The sealing of the Spirit is that assuring confirmation unto the hearts of believers, that the heavenly inheritance purchased by the blood of Christ is theirs; and that they (when this day of full Redemption comes) shall assuredly possess and enjoy it.

Beloved, what can be said more to express the happiness and comfort of the people of God, in having God to be their God? The Father is theirs, the Son of God is theirs, and the Spirit of God is theirs; theirs in his graces, theirs in his comforts, theirs in Offices



witnessing their present condition in grace, and assuring them of their future inheritance in glory; what more happiness can be enjoyed on earth than this!

7. Lastly. The Spirit is yours in respect of his presence. Joh. 14:17. The Spirit of truth dwelleth with you. Rom. 8:11. By his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 2 Tim. 1:14. By the holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. It is observable concerning the presence of the Trinity, that every one of the persons is said to dwell in believers; God the Father doth dwell in them, 2 Cor. 6:16. The Son doth dwell in them; Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Eph. 2:17. The holy Ghost likewise dwells in us.

O happy soul, who art made such a Temple wherein God the Father, and God the Son, and God the holy Ghost dwells! What canst thou want? What dost thou enjoy? How great is thy excellency? How perfect is thy beauty? How full is thy glory?

Dwelling, notes a special presence, and it notes a constant and permanent presence; and truly, such is the dwelling of the Spirit of God in the children of God; it is a gracious residence, and it is an abiding residence; he never leaves you. John 14:16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.

Can you reach this comfort of the perpetual presence of the Spirit in you and with you? Let me tell you

1. The presence of Christ (I mean his bodily presence only) was not comfortable without the presence of the Spirit. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, so Christ, Joh. 6:63.

2. The absence of Christ now in heaven, is made up unto us by the presence of his Spirit now within us here on earth. The Spirit only supplies his absence, and makes our condition as good, and as happy as if Christ himself were present with us.

3. The presence of the Spirit makes all to be present with us; all are present by the presence of the Spirit; God comes to be present, and Christ comes to be present, and joy and salvation come to be present by the presence of the Spirit.

4. And are you not safe and sure with whom the Spirit of God is, and will be always is present? He is present with your souls, with your faith, with your graces, and he can give you present strength, and present help, and present victory, and present comforts.

#### SECT. X.

5. A Fifth singular comfort unto you who have God to be your God in Covenant, is this, viz. A common conjunction of the whole Trinity in all the businesses of your eternal blessedness; This is an exceeding high point, and of exceeding comfort unto you, that there is an union in the Trinity of persons in their gracious respects unto your salvation.

There is a union, or common conjunction of the persons of the Trinity. First, In respect of love. Secondly, In respect of consent, and in respect of purpose. Thirdly, In respect of operation. Fourthly, In respect of Relation. Fifthly, In respect of engagement. Sixthly, In respect of Communion.

1. In respect of love; what is that? That is, every one of the persons doth love you. John 16:27. The Father himself loveth you. Ephes. 3:19. To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Rom. 15:30. The love of the Spirit.

There is a twofold love in the persons of the Trinity.

1. A natural and necessary love, so they love each other. The Father and the Son and the Spirit do so love one another, as that they cannot but love one another.

2. A voluntary and gracious love; with this love all who are in Covenant with God, are loved of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit.

This love of the Trinity may be considered both in respect of the properties of it, and in respect of the fruits and virtues of it.

1. In respect of the properties of it.

1. It is the highest of all loves. Nothing which is in the creature can possibly be of that height, as that which is in God; Holiness in the creature, is not so high as holiness in God; goodness in the creature, is not so high as goodness in God; mercy in the creature, is not so high as mercy in God; love in the creature, is not so high as love in God.

Love in God is purest love; there is no mixture in that love; love in God is perfect love; there is no defect or want in that love; The love of Parents to their children, and the love of husband and wife, they are but weak shadows of the unutterable and inconceivable love of God unto his people; As the essence of the Trinity is the highest essence, so the love of the Trinity is the highest love; you cannot be loved by

any that is higher than the Trinity; nor can there be any love higher or equal to their love.

2. It is a most special love; not only in this respect, that no other people (besides yourselves) are dignified with this kind of love; but also in this respect, that the love of the persons even unto yourselves, is most choice and wonderful; and this you do read concerning the love

Of the Father, which is in the same Meridian unto you who are the children of the Covenant, as it is unto Jesus Christ. John 17:23. That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. And ver. 26. That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

What love the Father hath to Jesus Christ, such a love hath the Father unto you who are Christ's; and this doth appear in four particulars. 1. When he elected Christ, he did then elect you. 2. When he did purpose to give Christ to you, he did then purpose to give you to Christ. 3. That you are of the same relation unto him with Christ; and therefore Christ is not ashamed to call you brethren. 4. That you are heirs of the same Kingdom and glory with Christ.

Of the Son, who loved you to the utmost height and depth, and expression of love; Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, Joh. 15:13. Ye are my friends, ver. 14, so Ephes. 5:2. Christ loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God.

And so for the Spirit; He loves you so, that he lays out the utmost of his power, and the choicest of his gifts and graces upon your souls.

3. It is the sweetest of all loves; There is no love whatsoever which affords more delight, contentment, and satisfaction unto the hearts of men: Thy love is better than wine, so the Church speaks of Christ, Cant. 1:2. Thy loving kindness is better than life; so speaks David of the love of God, Psal. 63:3. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, 1 Joh. 3:1, so sweet is the love of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit, that in the apprehension and enjoyment thereof, the soul is satisfied as with marrow; It is a kind of heaven unto us; every faculty of the soul is affected with it, and by it is filled with joys, and praises, and love again to God.

4. It is a most tender love: the Fathers love unto you is so, and the Sons love unto you is so, and the love of the Spirit is so unto you; The love of every one is tender, in a marvelous sensibleness of your persons and conditions, and in as marvelous a readiness to help and bless you; There is not any one want upon you, not any one distress, but every one of the persons in Trinity is apprehensive of it, and looks on it with tender bowels of compassion; I pity them saith the Father, I will help him saith Christ the Son, I will support and comfort him in this condition, saith the holy Ghost.

5. It is a most free love: every one of the persons loves you with a love which ariseth only from love, not from anything in yourselves, nor for any benefit which can arise from you unto yourselves; but only because they will love you, and are so pleased to love you: the love of the Father doth not find you, but make you children; the love of Christ doth not find you, but make you righteous; the love of the Spirit doth not find you, but make you holy: It is a communicating love: all the favor which you have, and all the good which you have, you have it wholly upon the mere account of the freeness and goodness of their love.

6. It is a most permanent love: There is no change of it, nor end unto it; see Rom. 8:35, to the end. God is your eternal Father, and Christ your eternal Priest, and the Spirit is your eternal Comforter: there is no end of themselves, and there is no end of their love unto yourselves.

Secondly, In respect of the fruits and virtues of it.

The fruits and virtues of the love of the Trinity unto you, are high and glorious. I will mention some of them.

1. This love is the foundation of all the building, the springs of all the streams; all that future glory in heaven, and all the possible enjoyments on earth (in reference unto that glory) they all flow from this love: all the kind thoughts of God, and purposes, and Counsels, and Acts are built upon this foundation of love.

2. This love is the moving wheel, it is that which sets all the Attributes of God a working for you (the Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness, and Mercifulness, and Graciousness, and faithfulness of God) yea which sets every person of the Trinity a working for you; It is the love of the Father which did put him upon the thoughts, and upon the gift of Christ: It is the love of the Son which did put him upon the giving of himself, upon dying for you: And it is the love of the Spirit which did put him upon the giving of himself unto you, and working all his works for you.

3. This love is the reason of their delight in you; you are made near by it, and become exceeding dear unto every one of them: the Father takes pleasure in you, and so doth the Son, and so doth the Spirit; they take delight in your persons, and in your

graces, and in your services: and every one of them manifests himself unto you, and makes known their relations unto you.

4. This love is at cost and charges for you, and it makes all easy and joyful: there is not a person of the Trinity but is glad (if I may so express it) with all his heart to do you good: it is no burden to the Father to promise, nor to the Son to purchase, nor to the holy Ghost to apply the riches of Grace and Glory unto you.

This love is that which makes them restless until they have done you good; (the Father waits to be gracious, and to show mercy! How do I long until it be accomplished, said Christ of his sufferings for us, &c.) and unweariable in the doing of us good.

5. This love of theirs is that which makes them so dreadful and heavy unto your enemies; so high in the ways of your defense, and so high in the works of vengeance on your Adversaries; enemies to your enemies, and friend unto your friends; God by his Spirit fills their hearts with terrors, and puts them into straits, and drives your enemies to their feet: and Christ rides conquering, bathing his sword in blood.

6. This love of theirs is the reason why they do all of them bear with all your infirmities, yea and cover the multitude of your sins, that they deal so gently with you, and accept of your weakest performances, and desires, and tears, and sighs, and groans, and pass by all your failings, &c. Thus have you heard of the common union of the Trinity in their love unto you, which I think is a clear ground of wonderful contentment; for being interested in this their common love of you,

1. All fears and doubts are silenced in all your approaches unto God; The Father unto whom you pray, he loves you: the Son by whom you pray, he loves you: the Spirit who helps you to pray, he also loves you: If you have the love of every one of them, there is no just cause of any distrustful fears.

2. Nay, how can it be, but that you must speed very well? Love gives the kindest, and fullest, and easiest, and sweetest answers and helps! What, will not the loving God and Father, the loving Christ and Savior, the loving Spirit and Comforter, what will they not do for you?

3. Whatsoever God is in his greatness, the better it is for all you, who are thus beloved of him. I do confess that the greater God is, (if he loves us not) the more dreadful is our apprehension of him: but the greater that he is, (if he loves us) this is the more comfortable unto us: The greatness of his power, who loves us; The greatness of his All-sufficiency, who loves us; The greatness of his Mercifulness, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faithfulness, &c. who loves us; can you have a greater encouragement then this; that God who knows all things, who hath all things, who can do all things, who will perform all things, this God loves me! Unquestionably therefore I shall be the better for that power, &c.

4. The common love of the Trinity assures you against damnation, and perishing; and of salvation, and blessedness: Love preserves, but destroys not: love brings us near, but rejects, and forsakes not: for how can it possibly be, that any man should perish and be lost, who is interested in the highest, and dearest, and unchangeable love of God? Who hath the ordaining love of the Father unto salvation, and the meriting love of Christ to purchase salvation, and the applying love of the Spirit, effectually undertaking to guide and lead him unto



salvation. I confess that if God did not love you, there could be no salvation for you; or were the love of the Trinity divided and parted, so that though the Father loved you, intending your salvation, but the Son would not undertake it with his love to die for you, to procure salvation; or if the Son and Father would consent in their love, but the holy Ghost would not love you, so far as to bring you into Christ, to be partakers of him, and of salvation, then there would be a manifest uncertainty of your salvation; or if all of them did love you with a changeable love.

5. Lastly, it cannot be that you should want any necessary good; If that argument of Christ's be strong against the fear of wants (Matth. 6.) For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things: surely this is stronger; Your Father loves you, therefore you shall not want them.

2. There is a conjunctive union, as in the love of the Trinity, so in the will and consent, and purpose of the Trinity in the matters of your salvation. There was one mutual will between them from eternity, and there is one and the same mutual will between them unto eternity: what the Father did will, the Son did will, and the same did the Holy Ghost will: and what the Father did propose for your salvation for the matter and manner, unto all of that did the Son and holy Ghost consent and agree: and what the Father did intend and purpose with respect unto the salvation of the Elect, that same did the Son and the holy Ghost intend and purpose also.

As the will of the Father was not, nor could be hid from the other persons, (every one of them being one and the same God) so there was a mutual will and liking, and determination in every one of them, as to all the matter appertaining unto our salvation.

Though it be most true, that the persons of the Trinity be in their respective subsistence's so different, that the Father neither is, nor can be the Son, nor the Son the Father: nor the holy Ghost either; yet it is as true, that every one of them is the same Deity, and had the same will in and for man's salvation: that some should be elected of God and find mercy, and have salvation: there was a mutual will and consent twixt the three persons in the Trinity. That Jesus Christ (the Son of God) should have these bestowed upon him, and he be charged to procure their salvation, by being incarnated, and by being humbled to the death, even to the death of the Cross; as to this also, there was a mutual will and consent in the Trinity; I will give and send you, saith the Father; Lo I come, I will give myself, saith the Son; and I will anoint and sanctify you for this, saith the Spirit; that the holy Ghost should be sent to open and apply the salvation of God unto the Elect of God the Father, and to the redeemed by Christ the Son, this also fell into their common will, and consent, and purpose, in respect whereof the holy Ghost is said to be sent and given from the Father and from the Son, Joh. 14:26. The Comforter which is the holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, &c. Joh. 15:26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me.

I will not enlarge myself in this discourse at this time, because it will fall in more fully when I come to speak of the parties interested in the Covenant: only let me tell you who are in Covenant with God, that your comforts are exceeding great, even from this, That there was, and is a mutual will, consent, agreement, and purpose of the whole Trinity concerning you and your salvation; for this will concerning you, and your salvation,

1. It is the gracious will of God's decree.

2. It is a fixed and invariable will.

3. It is an effectual, and infallible will.

4. And (I if may not be mistaken) it is the binding will, or argument of all the persons, unto which every one of them (as it were) sets his seal, and in which they are all of them bound up, and according unto which every one of them doth act, or express himself for our salvation; O what infinite love, and goodness and wisdom is this, that our salvation should be thus contrived, and ordered, and distinctly undertaken and agreed upon with one common consent of will and purpose by the whole Trinity of persons, every one of them contributing his whole self, and heart, and power towards it! Surely your salvation must be precious, and excellent, and sure, and we ourselves as sure in our enjoyment of it.

3. There is a conjunctiveness of operation: every person of the Trinity doth act or work for the good and salvation, as will and intend it, Joh. 5:17. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, verse. 19, whatsoever things he doth, these also doth the Son likewise, John 14:31, as the Father gave me commandment so do I.

The Mission and Donation of Christ to save us, this is the work of the Father.

The giving of himself for our Redemption and Reconciliation, this is the work of the Son.

The calling of us, and Renewing, and Regenerating of us, this is the work of the holy Ghost.

Indeed there is such an excellent co-operation of the whole Trinity in the business of our salvation, that the greatest works conducting

thereunto are promiscuously attributed to every one of them, as our Vocation, and Justification, and Adoption, and Sanctification, and Glorification; all these are sometimes attributed to the Father, and sometimes to the Son, and sometimes to the holy Ghost.

Sanctification is thus promiscuously attributed unto them.

1. To the Father, Jude ver. 1. Sanctified by God the Father.
2. To the Son, 1 Cor. 1:2. That are sanctified in Christ Jesus.
3. To the holy Ghost, Rom. 15:16. Being sanctified by the holy Ghost.

Justification is also thus attributed to them.

1. To the Father, Rom. 8:33. It is God that justifieth.
2. To the Son, Rom. 9:5. Being now justified by his blood.
3. To the holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6:11. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God.

Vocation likewise is thus attributed unto them.

1. To the Father, 1 Pet. 1:15. As he who hath called you is holy, &c.
2. To the Son, Rom. 1:6. Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.
3. To the holy Ghost, whose mighty power it is which brings us into Christ.

The like you may read of Adoption ascribed unto the Father, Ephes. 1:5, unto the Son, Gal. 4:6, and unto the holy Ghost, Rom. 8:15.

We have a rule, that *opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*, although the *modus operandi* and the *Terminus actionis* may be distinct; and questionless as all the Attributes of God are affirmed of every person, so all the operations proper to God, are common also unto them.

Now what a glory and comfort is this, that every one of the Divine persons hath a hand in everything which concerns our salvation! As they do all of them consent unto it, and resolve upon it, so every one of them doth work towards it; We look upon that passage as of great weight, and stay, and comfort unto us, in Rom. 8:28. All things (*viz.* here below in common contingencies) work together for good to them that love God! How much more is this for our support and comfort, that all the Trinity, that every person in the Trinity is working together for our salvation, that God the Father is working, and God the Son, and God the holy Ghost!

As they say about the Incarnation of Christ, that every one of the Persons in the Trinity had a hand in it, though the second person only was Incarnated (as three may weave a garment, which one of them only wears) thus may we say of our salvation, that every person of the Trinity acts, and works towards it, and will still so work, until they have come to the last work, until they have finished that work in our eternal glorification.

4. There is a common union also of Relation and Interest of all the persons in every believer, and of every believer to them. Every one of the persons hath an interest in you, and relation to you.

1. The Father hath an interest in you, 2 Cor. 6:18. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.

2. The Son hath an interest in you, Christ in us, Col. 1:27.

3. And the holy Ghost hath an interest in you, he dwells in us, and abides in us, 2 Tim. 1:14, and you also have an interest in every one of the persons.

1. You are in the Father, the Church that is in God the Father, 1 Thes. 1:1.

2. You are in the Son, Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 1:30.

3. You are in the Spirit, He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17. I also have the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 7:40.

Now this common relation and interest of every person in the Trinity as to you, and the mutual relation and interest again as to them, is a matter of such infinite consequence, and full happiness, as indeed I am not able to unfold it; I will only touch at a few things in relation to one of these persons, and that is God the Father. If God be your God in Covenant, then he is your Father, and you are his children: the Apostle admires at this, in 1 Joh. 3:1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath showed us, that we should be called the sons of God: the dignity is most high, that we should be the sons of the most High; But let us view the comforts of it. There are six comforts from this, that our God is our Father.

1. Your Father is the Father of mercies. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, 2 Cor. 1:3. God is the Father, 1. Of Christ. 2ly. Of every believer. 3ly. And of mercies. All mercies are in the Father, and from the Father. And shall you want mercies who are in so near a Relation to the Father of Mercies?

2. Your Father doth love you exceedingly: Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? Jer. 31:20, love is frequently given to God the Father, Joh. 14:23, 1 Joh. 2:15. Cap. 3:1, &c. his Jewels, Mal. 3.

3. Though you have offended him, yet if you mournfully return unto him, he will be very gracious unto you, and receive you kindly. When the Prodigal child came back to his Father, his Father saw him yet a great way off, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, Luke 15:20.

4. Your Father hath enough to help you, and he will take care of you; In my Fathers house there is bread enough, and to spare, Luke 15:17. Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things, Matth. 6:32.

5. You may easily prevail with your Father for any necessary good; If you being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask him? Matth. 7:11.

6. You shall be heirs, who are children of this Father. If Sons, then Heirs, Rom. 8:17. Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Luke 12:23. It is your Fathers pleasure to give you a Kingdom. Matth. 25:34. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

5 There is a common engagement of the whole Trinity unto you; every one of the persons is engaged to you. The Father is engaged to you, to do all that a God and Father can and will do for his children. The Son is engaged to you, to do all that a Christ, and Mediator, and a Redeemer and Savior can and will do for his Members. The Holy Ghost is engaged to you, to do all that a Spirit of truth, knowledge,

faith, comfort, can do for those who do come to the Father and the Son.

6. Lastly, There is a communion twixt you and every person of the Trinity, 1 Joh. 1:3. Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 13:14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Communions with a Father, with a Savior, with a Comforter; And verily these communions are most gracious and heavenly in respect of every one of them: when the Father manifests himself unto you in the Relation and Testimonies of your loving God and Father; And whom Christ discovers himself unto as your Head, and as your Lord, as your Savior, in your interests in him, and his in you: and when the Holy Ghost opens himself unto you in the strengthening of your graces, in his comforts, and evidences, and assurances, and sealings, why! These things are as life to the dead, and as rain to the thirsty land; they are an exceeding refreshing unto you, they are a most heavenly tranquility and joy, and satisfaction unto your hearts.

And thus have you heard of the happiness of those people who have God to be their God in Covenant, in respect of his Attributes, and in respect of Christ, and in respect of the Spirit, and in respect of every person of the Trinity, and in their conjunctive relation and operations.

I will proceed a little further to some of the rest of the comforts depending upon God's being your God, which I mentioned at the first.

## SECT. XI.



6. If God be your God in Covenant, and you be his people, then all the promises of God are also yours. As you are the children of God, so you are the children of promise; and as you are the heirs of God, so you are the heirs of promise; and as your title is clear unto you, so your possession is sure; you shall certainly inherit all the good comprehended in them.

I have discoursed largely of the promises in general, and shall God willing (in the prosecution of this discourse of the Covenant) speak more of the promises in particular; and therefore I shall at this time only touch at two things, viz.

1. The real stating's of the promises upon all who have God to be their God in Covenant.

2. Their singular happiness thereby, that all the promises of God are theirs.

1. The promises do belong to all who are in Covenant with God; They are stated and settled upon them; They are the heritage of the servants of the Lord; the children's bread; Unto us are given exceeding great and precious promises, 2 Pet. 1:4.

The very nature and constitution of the Covenant do evince this, which is a very cluster of promises, I will be merciful to your transgressions, I will cleanse you from all your Idols, and from all your uncleanness's, I will put my Spirit within you, I will bless you, I will do you good, I will hear you, and deliver you; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly; In hope of eternal life which God hath promised unto them that love him, &c.

Again, which way Christ goes, that way the promises go; Now Christ belongs to every believer; therefore the promises also belong &c.

This truth no man can question, but he who will question the Scriptures themselves; or a distressed sinner who questions his relations unto God, and thereupon questions the relation of the promises unto himself; nevertheless ex parte Rei, it is certain if God be yours, then his promises are yours, &c.

2. But now let us see the happiness and comfort from this, that all the promises of God are ours.

There are twelve things which we may confidently affirm of the promises of God, all which afford sweet comfort unto the people of God.

1. They are bonds of love; They are every one of them the draughts of God's special love unto you. God doth not first make promises, and then love us; but he first loves us, and therefore draws his bonds of promises; God doth not enter into these Bonds by force against his will unwillingly, but, &c. The promises do plainly tell you how great the love of God is to you, how great his goodness is to you; they are the transcript of his mind and heart; Because I love you, I will therefore do all this good for you, and in these I bind myself unto you.

2. They are susceptions of grace; whatsoever promise God makes to you, grace is the foundation of it, and grace is in the performance of it. It is freely made, and as freely made good; nothing moved God to make the promises, but his own grace; and there is no reason why we enjoy the good of them, but God's own grace, I will do you good, and all this good I will do for my own sake; you shall have it as freely as ever child had kindness from a father.

3. They are full treasures. All my springs are in thee, said David, Psal. 87:7. So may we say of the promises, All my helps, all my goods are in you. The promises as they depend for their constitution upon the love and goodness of God, so likewise upon the prescience and wisdom of God; God foresaw all the exigencies and wants, and straits of his people, and drew up the promises with sufficient provisions and supplies, and helps, to answer all their conditions. There is not any good whatsoever which you do actually want, or can possibly want, but there is a full stock, and a peculiar supply for it in the promises.

4. They are the best security. All the promises are the word of a God, and given upon the honor of a God that they shall be made good. The all-sufficiency of God, the Omniscience of God, the loving kindness of God, the omnipotency of God, and the faithfulness of God, yea, and the oath of God, are full security, sufficient pawns and earnestes for all the good which God promiseth unto you.

5. They are sure payments. We say when an honest man passeth his word for a little money, O, it is as sure as if it were in the purse; God's word of promise is much more sure: for as his nature or being is eternal, so his word of promise is unchangeable. The vision will speak, it will surely come, so Hab. 2:3. I will plant them in this land assuredly. Jer. 32:41. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips, Psal. 89:34. Therefore the promises are many times said to be performed before they be performed; and the things promised are said to be given and done, before they be given and done, because, when God promiseth to do his people any good, it is as sure as if it were already done.

6. They are present stays; Though you have not friends always present with you to stay you; and though you have not as yet the

things promised present with you to stay you, yet you have the promises of your God still present with you, to stay your hearts, and to uphold them.

There are four things still present with the people of God to stay their hearts. 1. A good God. 2. A good Christ. 3. The good Spirit of God. 4. The good promises of God; Either God doth you good, gives it into your hands, or saith he will do good, which is enough for faith to stay and rest your hearts upon.

7. They are living and lasting fountains; Wells still full of waters; and stars still full of light; Could you have a thousand years, or to thousands of generations, there would be no diminution in the promises; They are as full of mercy as ever, and as sure a word of truth as ever; though your wants be more or less, higher or lower, it is all one; One promise hath as much mercy in it as will last as long as you shall live; and another promise hath as much grace, and another hath as much comfort as will serve you all your days; and the same abundance still remains for all the people of God, as long as the world lasts.

8. They are the quickest dispensations. God comes not off slowly, or hardly, or unwillingly, or sparingly, in the performance of them. Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it, Psal. 81:10. Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, Psal. 50:15. Before they call I will answer, and whiles they are yet speaking I will hear, Isa. 65:24. One prayer many times melts these clouds; as in Jacob's case, one act of faith many times gets your supplies. As in Jehosaphats case, when you look by faith upon the promises, you are then trading with the good and kind God, by your mighty Advocate Jesus Christ, In whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen.

9. They are seasonable helps. The promises do contain our best good; and They do always dispense it in the best time. Jer. 5:29. Let us fear the Lord our God, who giveth rain, both the former and the latter in his season; He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest; Thus doth God with his promises unto his people; they shall be made good in their season; they are as the appointed weeks of the harvest; Every week is not a harvest week; when the corn is ripe, then is that time come to put in the sickle, and to reap with joy. As yet thou hast not such a mercy, such a help, such a desired and promised blessing; the reason is because it is not the season for the rain to fall; it is not yet the week of thy harvest: therefore still seek, and trust, and wait; for there is an appointed week for the harvest, and then thou shalt reap all the good which thy God hath promised, and which thy soul hath desired.

10. They are sufficient inducements and encouragements to pray unto God, and to depend upon God. May you not come to your God who is good in himself, and who hath promised to do you good? May you not trust him who is faithful in all his promises? 2 Sam. 7:28. O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant. Ver. 29. Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue forever before thee; for thou O Lord God, hast spoken it, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever. So David; The promises as they are God's assurances to help us, so they are secret inducements to us to depend upon his help.

11. They are powerful pleas; The best and the strongest Arguments to plead with God. Your worthiness is no argument to use with God; your necessity is an argument to move him (we know not what to do, said Jehoshaphat, &c.) But God's promises are your best and strongest pleas; Do me good, O Lord, though I deserve it not; but yet

do me good, because thou hast promised to do me good; Thou saydst I will surely do thee good, said Jacob, Gen. 32:12. Remember thy word upon which thou hast caused thy servant to hope, said David, Psalm 119:49. Remember, break not thy Covenant with us, said the Church, Jer. 14:21.

12. They are satisfying answers. To all our fears, to all our thoughts, to all difficulties, to all improbabilities, to all silences, to all contrary times, to all delays, yet God hath promised to hear, and help, and do me good. Isa. 50:10. He that sits in darkness, and feeth no light, let him trust on the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Psal. 73:26. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Though you do not know when God will do you good; though you do not know what way God hath to do you good; though you see no probability in all the world for your good; though you see everything still contrary to your good; yet if God hath promised you any needful good, it shall certainly fall into your possession, even because God hath promised it; He alone is sufficient to make all good to be yours, whatsoever he hath promised unto you.

## SECT. XII.

7. A seventh comfort for you who have God to be your God in Covenant, is this, Then all the immunities and privileges annexed to the Covenant of grace, for the people of that Covenant, they are yours.

I will speak something unto both these this day, that you who are the people of God, may see more of your happiness in having God to be your God.

1. The immunities or liberties by the Covenant of grace for such as are in Covenant.

They have ten excellent and most comfortable liberties by it.

1. They have immunity from the revenging wrath of God. There is (you know) *Ira patris, & ira judicis*:

A paternal anger or wrath; from this they are not free; In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, Isa. 54:8.

A judicial anger or wrath, which consists in two things. 1. In a resolution, by no means to clear the wicked, to acquit, to pass by offenses, to be pacified. 2. In a pouring forth the vials of his just vengeance upon transgressors, according to the demerits of their sins and wickedness's; There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and the wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same, but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them, Psal. 75:8. This judicial wrath of God, it is expressed against sinners partly in this life, in the dreadful terrors of conscience, and in the dreadful destruction of ungodly men who are consumed by the wrath of God, as the dry stubble is by the flaming and devouring fire; and partly in the life to come, which is called God's reserved wrath, and his prepared wrath, and the day of wrath, Rom. 2:5, Nahum 1:2. He reserveth wrath for his enemies. Matth. 25:41. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.

From this judicial wrath of God (whither present or future) are all the people in Covenant with God, freed and delivered by Christ who is their Atonement, Rom. 5:10,11. Propitiation, 1 John 2:1, Rom. 5:9.

Much more being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him, 1 Thes. 1:10. Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come. 1 Thes. 5:9. God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now this our immunity is a singular comfort unto us. It is a great matter to be delivered from the wrath of man; what is it then to be freed from the wrath of God! You may observe in others, how dreadful the expectation of future wrath is unto sinners, and how unsupportable the burden of it is unto their consciences; how it turns all their delights into gall and wormwood; how it shakes the foundations of their souls, and fills them with restless amazements, and horrors, and despairs; And you read of that hell of his wrath on them in hell, which makes the damned to gnash their teeth, to cry out and roar, to curse, and blaspheme, which they cannot endure, and which they cannot escape.

But you who are the people of his Covenant, as you shall never fall under the power of that future wrath of God, so you shall never taste one drop of God's judicial revenging wrath any one moment of your present life; whatsoever your troubles, and crosses, and sadnesses may be, yet there is no judicial wrath in them; Christ hath fully drunk off the cup for you, and satisfied the justice of God, who by his blood is reconciled and well-pleased with you.

2. They have immunity from the dominion of sin; Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are under grace, Rom. 6:14. Here you see expressly, that there is a freedom from the dominion of sin, even upon this account, that we are under the Covenant of grace. Though you be not totally freed from the inhabitation of sin (for sin doth dwell in us, whiles we dwell on earth) and though you be not totally freed from the rebellion of sin (for peccatum hostis est quamdiu est,)



The flesh lusteth against the spirit, Gal. 5:17, and there is a law in our members, warring against the law of our minds, Rom. 7:23, yet you are totally freed from the dominion of sin, which consists in the effectual Rule, Command, and Sovereign strength of sin, and a free, and full, and willing subjection or obedience unto the Law and authority of sin; and verily this freedom or deliverance, is a wonderful mercy and happiness unto the people of God whither you consider,

1. The great and utmost distance twixt you and God.
2. The baseness of servitude, in which everyone lives, over whom sin hath dominion; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage, 2 Pet. 2:19. You were but very slaves to your lusts, and to the devil, whiles sin did rule over you.
3. The height of enmity. As you were the basest of slaves, so you were the worst of enemies; living not only as aliens without God, but as desperate enemies, opposing and fighting against God.
4. The superfluity of naughtiness (a full contrariety) your whole hearts, and your whole lives, were nothing else but a constant dishonor unto God, and contradiction to his Will and Glory.
5. The certainty of destruction which would infallibly have attended you, had not the mercy and grace of God rescued and delivered you; I say, certain destruction to your souls; as there is a certain destruction to the life of our bodies, if we fall into the sea and lie under it.
6. The sweet and immediate communion 'twixt the deliverance from the dominion of sin, and admission to the Kingdom of Christ: It is a translation from death to life. The Apostle joins

these together in Colos. 5:13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.

3. They have immunity or freedom from the damnation meritoriously depending upon the guilt of sin. As salvation depends upon the merits of Christ, so doth damnation depend on the merit of sin. There is so much merit in sin, as to render us obnoxious, not only to temporal destruction, but also to eternal destruction; for the wages of sin is death, even that death which stands in opposition to eternal life, Rom. 6:23.

But from the effectual redundancy of this damnation upon your persons, you are everyone freed who are in Covenant with God; For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1. And whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life, John 3:15. And the ground of this your immunity from the damnation due unto you for your sins, is the satisfaction which Christ hath made for your sins unto the justice of God; and thereupon the obtaining of riches of mercy from your God, who (according to his Covenant with you) blots out, and forgives all your sins, and never remembers them anymore.

For this is a sure truth, that remission of sins, and actual damnation for sins, are incompatible, or inconsistent. Now whether this be any cause of comfort that you and your sins are parted, and that you and hell are forever separated, I leave it to any one of you to judge: for mine own part, I do look upon four things as very great mercies. 1. That I am delivered from the power of sin. 2. That I enjoy the pardon of sin. 3. That I shall never be damned for sin. 4. That I shall be saved, notwithstanding all my sins.

4. They have immunity or freedom from justification by the Law, from all legal trials for life: Although you are not freed from the Law as it is a rule for life, yet you are freed from the Law as it is a Covenant of life; although you are not freed from the Law as it is the image of the good and holy will of God, yet because you are under the Covenant of grace, you are freed from the Law as it is a reason of salvation and justification. The Covenant of grace takes you off from that Court and that Bar which pronounceth life upon your own good works; and pronounceth death upon your own evil works; Rom. 3:28. We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. Gal. 3:11. No man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, for the just shall live by faith. As the Law calls for perfect and personal righteousness of our own; so the Law will not justify you, it will not give life unto you, unless it finds that righteousness in you; you live not, if you be not perfectly righteous; absolution is pronounced upon your own perfect innocence, and condemnation is pronounced upon any defect or breach: And verily upon this account, no man living can or shall be justified; therefore here is comfort, that being in Christ, and in this Covenant of grace, ye are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses; See the Apostle, Acts 13:39. Your life doth not lie now in your own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ; nor doth it depend upon your own works, but upon the obedience of Christ. That expression of Luther is an excellent expression, *Christus solus me justificat contra mea mala opera, & sine operibus meis bonis*. Though my works have been very good, yet not those, but Christ doth justify me; and though my works have been very ill, yet the righteousness of Christ can and will justify me; my evil works shall not damn me, and my good works cannot acquit me; it is Christ, it is Christ, and not the Law which justifies me.

5. They have immunity or liberty from the rigor of the Law: The Law in the rigor of it exacts of us a most absolute obedience, a most exquisite and full obedience, it will not abate us the least grain or scruple, if it be not every way adequate, (for matter, and manner, and measure) your obedience will not pass, nor will it be accepted according to the rigor of the Law; Cursed is everyone who doth not continue in everything that is written to do it. But when once you are under the Covenant of grace, when once God is your God, and you are his people, neither you nor your services are judged by the exactness of your services, but by the sincerity of your hearts: Though much be wanting which the Law prescribes, yet if that be present, which your merciful God and Father delights in, viz. uprightness of Spirit, your sighs and groans, and tears, and desires shall pass and be accepted instead of more full and ample performances, 2 Cor. 8:12. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. Mal. 3:17. I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Psal. 51:17. A broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise. Zach. 4:10. Who hath despised the day of small things?

6. They have immunity from the terror or coercive power of the Law: Namely, from obeying the commands of it upon the mere principles of slavish fear of the threatening's annexed unto the breach of the Law. You do now obey the Law, not as slaves, but as sons; not out of fear of wrath, but out of love to your Father. That Spirit of bondage, (Rom. 8:15) and that spirit of fear, (2 Tim. 1:7) is removed, and a spirit of love comes in the room thereof. Though there were no rewards to allure, and though there were no severe threats to terrify you, yet you would serve your God with willing minds, and with willing hearts, 2 Chron. 28:9, Psal. 110:3. There is such a heavenly suitableness and super-connaturalness 'twixt the Law of your God

and your hearts, that it is your delight to meditate in it, and to walk up unto it in all things; there is no constraint on you but the love of your good God.

7. They have immunity from the curse of the Law: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, Gal. 3:13. Indeed afflictions, and fatherly chastisements, or corrections, may befall the people of God in this life, (whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, Heb. 12:6) but no curses befall them. Though the cup be bitter, yet there is no poison in it; though it be a cross, yet it is not a curse; their wounds are healing wounds, and their afflictions are instructions, and their losses are their gains; for nothing comes as a curse which doth us good.

8. They have immunity from the Kingdom and power of darkness: You are no longer under the Prince of the power of the Air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, Ephes. 2:2. The Devil is dispossessed, and cast down, and cast out; he is still your enemy, but he shall never be your Lord more; he may tempt you and disquiet you, but command and rule over you he shall never do. Though the Devil be very busy and active with you, yet he shall never regain possession, never conquer your graces, never part you and your God, never hinder you of your inheritance.

9. They have immunity from death; there is the first death, and the second death; or there is a three-fold death; there is the death of the soul, and the death of the body, and the death of soul and body. 1. Spiritual death, that is, the death of the soul. 2. Corporal death, that is, the death of the body. 3. Eternal death, that is, the death of soul and body. Now all the people of God are freed from spiritual death by the grace of Christ, and from eternal death by the blood of Christ,

and from corporal death, though not absolutely or simply, yet respectively, so far forth as sin hath made it dreadful, and our enemy, and prejudicial to us; Though you must die, yet your death is but your sleep, and is but your strait passage into life: The death of death is removed from you by the death of Christ. Vide, Heb. 2:15, 1 Cor. 15:55,56,57. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law, but thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

10. What can I say more? They have immunity from all evil in this life, and in the life to come; you are freed or delivered from an evil conscience, which never leaves accusing and condemning; from this present evil world and the corruptions thereof, from every evil work and way, from evil men, from all the evil which remains for evil men in hell.

God in this Covenant secures you against all; why? What comforts are there in these things! And what confidence! And what encouragements! And what support unto your souls! Why do you fear so often? And why are your hearts troubled? Surely, you do not know yourselves to be the people of God, or else you do not fully know the liberties and immunities of the people of God.

Sometimes you fear the heavy wrath of God; but why do you so? He is your God and your Father, and full of compassions and loving kindnesses; he will not deal with you as a revenging Judge, but as a loving and merciful Father; he is at peace with you, and reconciled unto you: Sometimes you fear the damnation and curse belonging unto sin; But why do you so? Christ hath died and satisfied for your sins, and he was made a curse for you, and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. Sometimes you fear because of the

powerful motions and conflicts, and rebellions of sin in your hearts: but why do you so? Seeing that sin shall not have dominion over you, and Christ in you is daily mortifying and destroying the body of sin; neither shall any Lord reign in you, but your Savior who died for you.

Sometimes you fear because of the imperfection of your graces; but why do you so? It is not your weakness or want of holiness, but Christ's perfect righteousness which is imputed unto you for life, and for justification.

Sometimes you fear because of the weakness of your obediencial services and performances; but why do you so? Your God in Covenant works all his works in you, and he owns your persons, and will accept the weakest offerings of an upright heart in and for Christ.

Sometimes you fear because of the strong temptations of Satan; but why do you so? Grace sufficient shall be given unto you, and your God will shortly bruise Satan under your feet.

Sometimes you fear men because of their malice and power; and why do you so? Your God will restrain the rage of man, and frustrate the counsels of the Heathen, and break the arms of the ungodly, and knows how to deliver you.

Sometimes you fear to die; but why are you afraid of death? Which is but the last Style to go over, and then you are at your Fathers house; death to you is but an end of your sins and miseries, and only a quick passage into your eternal happiness.

Secondly, The privileges which you enjoy by being under the Covenant of grace, by having God to be your God in Covenant.

There are divers rights and possessions, and liberties, and privileges which you do enjoy, and none but you who are the people of God, and have him to be your God: And I will propound these

1. In the general: Where be you pleased to take notice of five things.

1. Whatsoever privileges believers have, those are yours who are the people of God: The privileges of faith are yours; all that faith can pretend unto from a right in Christ, and a title by Christ as Mediator, in respect of suffering, of satisfying, of purchasing, of victorious conquest, of interceding, they are all of them yours; whatsoever advantage a soul may get by Christ, and whatsoever advantage Christ is to a believing soul, that is yours.

2. Whatsoever privileges belong to the friends of God, they do belong unto you: All the people of God are styled the friends of God, James 2:23, and the friends of Christ, John 15:14,15, Cant. 5:1. Friends (as friends) have free access, courteous welcome and entertainment, liberty of speaking, familiarity of converse, delightful communion, confident imparting and openings of their hearts one to another, cheerful counsel, and helps of one another; these in a spiritual way do you enjoy with your God, and from your God, who because you are the people of God, are therefore the friends of God.

3. Whatsoever privileges do belong to the sons and children of God, these also do belong to you; for you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:26. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, 2 Cor. 6:18. You are the children of the Lord your God, Deut. 14:1. Children have the privileges of nearness, of residence in their fathers house, of dependence on their father, of presence, of confidence, &c.



4. Whatsoever are the privileges of the Kingdom of God, those are yours who are the people of God. It is a Kingdom of righteousness, of peace, of joy, of safety, of blessing, of honor, of immortality, &c.

5. Whatsoever are the privileges of the heirs of this Kingdom, those also do belong to you. Forasmuch as if you be children, you are then heirs, Rom. 8:17. All the Charter and conveyances, and assurances, and hopes, and at length possessions of the heavenly inheritance are yours.

2. In special, you have twelve excellent privileges, which I will touch upon a little.

1. You have liberty of appeal, and that appeal is accepted and ratified; you have the liberty to appeal

1. From the Judgment-seat, to the Mercy-seat.

2. From the merits of sin to the merits of Christ.

3. From a condemning conscience to an acquitting God.

4. From the Law to the Gospel.

5. From your own unworthiness to Christ's righteousness.

6. From your own feeling unto God's promises.

When you see yourselves cast at the bar of justice, you may decline the sentence by flying unto the Throne of mercy; O Lord, justice condemns me, but let mercy succor and save me; when your hearts are overwhelmed in the apprehension and consideration of your many sins, and the great guilt of them, you may then appeal to the infinitely precious and surpassing merits of Christ; where sin

abounded, grace did much more abound; and as sin hath reigned unto death, even so doth grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5:20,21. When your conscience condemns you for sins past, then may you appeal unto your God for mercy to pardon you: God be merciful unto me a sinner, saith the Publican. Pardon my sin O Lord, for it is great, saith David.

When the Law indites and pursues you as guilty, then may you appeal to the Gospel as the Sanctuary to receive and secure your distressed souls; when your hearts fail you because of your own unworthiness, then may you appeal to the righteousness of Christ, and so be justified in the sight of God.

When you feel yourselves (as to your own sense) utterly destitute, left, lost, forsaken, then may you appeal to the promises of God, and there find yourselves still owned and loved, and plentifully and graciously assured.

2. You have this privilege, that all your communions with God are by a Mediator, and Advocate, and Intercessor: Or you pray not in your own names, but in the Name of your Christ and Mediator; and you plead not in your own names, but in the Name of your Christ; and you speed not in your own name, but in the Name of your Christ; nay, you believe and hope not in your own names, but in the Name of Christ.

There are two sad things for any man: 1. To be left alone unto himself, so as to have no part in Christ. 2. To go alone in his approaches to God without a Christ to plead for him, to have no Christ to own him, to step in for him, to undertake for him. But this is your privilege, and this is your comfort who are the people of God, that you never deal with your God but by a Mediator; when you

appear before your God, Jesus Christ appears with you, and he appears for you; when you do invocare, then he doth advocare; when you put up your petitions, then doth he make intercession; he is your Advocate with the Father, and he ever lives to make intercession for you.

3. You have this privilege, that you trade altogether at the mercy-seat, and at the Throne of grace: God deals with you in no other Court but that of mercy, and answers you from no other Throne but that of grace, and you deal with God at that Seat and that Throne only: When you have any sins to be pardoned, you may go to your merciful God, and to your gracious God, and your merciful God will pardon them, and your gracious God will freely pardon them: When you would have any kind of good and help, you may go to your good and kind God, and he will give it; and to your gracious God, and he will freely give it.

4. You have this privilege, that you may go to your God when you will: There is no space of time whatsoever but the door is open to you, and your God is at leisure to speak with you. You have liberty of access, and that liberty is never restrained; let your occasions be never so urgent, never so many, you may freely speak with your Father; yea, though there be ten thousand Petitioners before him, yet you may put in your request, and shall be owned, and heard.

5. You have this privilege, that you may not only come into the presence of your God, but you may with confidence urge him, and importune him, and wrestle with him, and still renew and reinforce your requests; you may take hold of him, and challenge, and expostulate with him, and stay him, and not let him alone, nor let him go until he blesseth you: And so large allowance of blessedness

is granted unto you, that you may (in some sort) command God; it is the Highest Expression that you read of, Isaiah 45:11.

6. You have this privilege, by having God to be your God, and by being his people, that you may enter in and survey all the rich treasures and jewels of heaven; and when you have so done, you may lay claim unto them all, and say, O Lord, all these are mine by thy promise, and by my right in Christ. Thou art mine, and thy mercy is mine, and thy Christ is mine, and thy grace is mine, and that glory is mine; all this is the purchase of Christ, and all this is mine.

7. You have this privilege also, that all the seals of the Covenant of grace are restrained unto yourselves alone: As the Covenant is none but yours, and with you, so the seals of the Covenant are none but yours, and unto you only: The seals of the Covenant are to confirm you, and to assure you, and to revive and comfort you, and to establish you; there is not any ungodly person on the earth who hath right unto the seals of the Covenant, and the reason is because he hath no interest in the Covenant itself; you only are the people of the Covenant, and therefore you only have right to the seals of the Covenant.

8. You have this privilege, that you may expect help from your God, for all the works which you owe to God: You may go to him for grace, for strength, for sufficiency to work in you both to will and to do; both to believe and to suffer, Phil. 2:13, and chap. 1:29. Give thy strength unto thy servant, Psal. 86:16. He will give strength unto his people, Psal. 29:11. God's promises are joined with his commands; this thou wouldest have me to do, O Lord give thy Spirit unto me, and cause me to do it.

9. You have this privilege, that your all is in another; Your life stands in the life of another; and your righteousness in the righteousness of

another; and your satisfying in the satisfaction of another; and your defense in the death of another; and your title and claim in the obedience and purchase, and right of another, and your acceptance in another; your life lies in the life of Christ; and your righteousness is the righteousness of Christ, and your satisfying is the satisfaction of Christ, and your defense and answer to all indictments and accusations is the death of Christ, and your claim and title is the obedience and purchase of Christ; your power is in the power of Christ, and your acceptance is in Christ. This is a privilege indeed, that you are wholly made up in another, and by another; that you shall never be found in your own righteousness, but only in the righteousness of Christ, and shall never be tried by your own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ, &c.

10. You have this privilege, that you live upon free cost all your days: The Covenant of God will find and provide enough for you; you never need to load yourselves with anxious thought or care; For your God and Father careth for you; all your burdens, and all your cares are taken off; Be careful for nothing, cast all your care on him, for he careth for you. He layeth up for his children, and he lays out upon his children; his Covenant will find food for your bellies, and raiment for your backs, and mercy and salvation for your souls, &c.

11. You have this privilege, that all the gracious and sweet manifestations of heaven are unto you only: None know the Father but you, none taste of the loving kindness of God but you, none sup with Christ but you, none partake of the joys and comforts of the Holy Ghost but you, none have that hope and assurance of glory but you, none eat of the Manna but you who have a new name given unto you; heavenly banquets for the soul are provided only for you.

12. You have this privilege, that the very Angels of God are ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for you who shall be heirs of salvation, Heb. 1:14. They pitch their tent, and encamp round about them that fear God, Psal. 34:7. This seems a high privilege, and yet you have an higher than this; For as the Mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even forever, Psal. 125:2.

13. What can I say more? Is this any privilege that whilst you live, you may live upon your God and Father, and when you die, you shall go to your God and Father? This also is yours who have God to be your God in Covenant; God will be your God in life, and God will be your God in death, and God will be your God after death; whiles you live he is yours, and with you; and when you die, he is yours, and you shall be with him reigning in glory forever and ever, and ever.

Thus have you heard a few things of your happiness in respect of your Immunities and Privileges, by having God to be your God in Covenant. I will one comfort more unto you, and then put an end to this use.

### SECT. XIII.

There is yet one comfort more from this that God is your God, which is this, If God be your God, then all is yours: As he said Christus meus, & omnia, Christ is mine, and all is mine; so Deus meus, & omnia mea; If God be your God, then heaven and earth are yours; whatsoever there is in all the world that may do you good, it shall be yours: The Apostle expressly delivers as much in 1 Cor. 3:21. All things are yours. Ver. 22. Whether Paul or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are

yours. He doth not in these expressions intend that Christians have a civil, and common interest in all men's earthly possessions, but this is it which he intend, viz. That God ordains all things for the good of his people, and makes them serviceable thereunto. All those choice gifts which he bestows on Ministers, whether Apostles or others they are bestowed on them for the good of his Church; And all the things of the world, whatsoever good they may afford, they are to let out the same for the good and comfort of the people of God; and all the conditions and states of things are for their good, life shall do them good, and death shall be for their good, and all the vicissitude of things are for their good; the present posture of things, and the future state of things, (whether of prosperity or adversity) all occurrences whatsoever are for their good, Rom. 8:24. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose: As if you consider ungodly and wicked men, (who are none of the people of God) there is nothing in all the world that doth them good: The Ordinances of Christ (by reason of the unbelief of their hearts) do them no good; they are the favor of death unto death unto them, and not the savor of life unto life; the blessings of God do them no good, they prove curses unto them, their table is a snare unto them, and their riches are thorns unto them, and their prosperity is a ruin unto them; the judgments of God do them no good, they learn not righteousness by them, they harden their hearts under them, and grow more obstinately wicked; Wherefore should ye be smitten anymore? Ye revolt more and more: So on the contrary, all the dispensations of God, (either of the world, or in the world) they are for good to the people of God.

Outward mercies are blessings to them; they eat and drink, and rejoice, and praise and bless the Lord their God. Outward afflictions are mercies to them, they do them good; It is good for me that I have been afflicted, said David, Psal. 119:71. By these things men live, saith

Hezekiah; he chastiseth us for our profit or good, saith the Apostle, Heb. 12:10. Wants and enjoyments, honors and dishonors, sickness and health, smiles and frowns, life and death, all doth them good.

There are four things, which I beseech you who are the people of God to remember.

1. All the good in the World is in the Fathers hands; it is the Fathers for possession, (he is the possessor of Heaven and Earth; Gen. 14:22) and for Dominion, The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, Psal. 24:1. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thy hand is power and might, and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all, 1 Chron. 29:12.

2. When God makes a Covenant with you, he doth also take in all the creatures, and lays a bond of special command upon them to be serviceable to your good: he doth not leave them out, but covenants with them to do you good: This is (I confess) a strange expression that God should make a Covenant with other creatures for the good of service unto his own people; and yet this you may expressly read in Hos. 2:18. In that day will I make a Covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. Ver. 19. And I will betroth thee unto me, forever. Ver. 21. And I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth. Ver. 22. And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel.

There are two choice things observable in these words. 1. One is, that God makes a Covenant with his people to bring them into a near and sweet relation unto himself, this you find (in verse 19.) I will betroth



thee unto me forever. 2. A second is, That God makes a Covenant for his people, and that is twofold.

1. For their security, to secure them against all danger and evil: and this you find (in verse 18) I will make a Covenant for them with the beasts of the field; &c. No creature shall do them hurt, neither the beasts of the field, nor fowls of the air, nor the creeping things of the earth, nor no wicked enemies who bend the bow, and draw the sword, and prepare to the bottle; As when a Covenant is between Nation and Nation, all the people are thereby bound up from all acts of hostility and mischief; so the Lord by making a Covenant with the beasts and fowls, &c. he doth therein bind them up from being prejudicial to his people.

A second is for their prosperity: and this you may find (in verse 21:22) I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel. As if all the creatures (when we are in covenant with God) were so many supplicants and Petitioners unto God, entreating of him that they might be used for a blessing unto us. The heavens do (as it were) beg of God that they may send down seasonable showers, and seasonable influences; and the earth doth (as it were) beg of God, that it may be made fruitful by those influences of heaven, &c. And God doth promise to hear every one of them for Jezreel.

3. All the creatures are in the hand of the Father; and as all creatures are brought into the bond of the Covenant for you, so all the creatures of the world are in a subordination, and a necessary submission unto the will and pleasure of your God. If he saith to any of them Go, it goeth, or to any of them Come, and it cometh; your God hath an over-ruling Providence over them: all their power, and

operations, and motions are at the sole will and command of him; they act as God will have them act, and when God will have them act, and for them for whom God will have them to act; and shall not all this be for you for your good who are the people of his Covenant, and the children of his love?

If all this cannot satisfy you, then know, that as God hath the command of all creature good and comforts, so he hath engaged himself unto you to settle that kind of good upon you. Though the earth, and the things of the earth, be not your only portion, and be not your best portion, yet it is a part of your portion, Psal. 37:22. Such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth, verse 29. The righteous shall inherit the land: He will not suffer the righteous to want: he watches over you to do you good.

I do not know any one outward blessing, but God hath promised it to his people; length of days, and riches, and honor and peace, Prov. 3:16,17. Food, and raiment, and liberty, and safety, and friends, and children, the former, and the latter rain, &c. Josephs blessing from Jacob is their portion, Gen. 49:25. The God of thy Father shall help thee, and the Almighty shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, with blessings of the breast, and of the womb. 1 Tim 4:8. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

And for Heaven itself, it is the Kingdom prepared for you, and an inheritance reserved for you.

I will say no more to you who are the people of God concerning your interests in these earthly things, but this;

1. You shall have the surest enjoyment of them: Bread shall be given unto you, and your waters shall be sure, Isa. 33:16. The Lord will never leave you nor forsake you, Heb. 13:5.

2. You shall have the comfortablest enjoyment of them. The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it, Prov. 10:22. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me besides the still waters, Psal. 23:2. A little that the righteous hath, is better than the riches of many wicked, Psal. 37:16.

Your outward mercies are all of them sweet drops distilled out of the love, and out of the Covenant of your God; And are enjoyed together with the apprehension of God reconciled to you in Christ, and with peace in conscience, and joy in the holy Ghost.

3. You have the easiest enjoyment of them. They come in at a more easy rate: the enjoyments of wicked men do cost them dear; many times they cost them their souls, and at all times they cost them painful drudging's and vexing cares: but the people of God enjoy upon praying terms, and believing terms, and safe terms.

4. You have the longest enjoyment of them: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, Psal. 23:6. Hearken unto me O house of Jacob, &c. which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs I will carry you, Isa. 46:3,4.

#### SECT. XIV.

Unto this I add a Use of instruction, which respecteth the people of God in Covenant.

The instructions for them who are the people of God, and do enjoy him for their God in Covenant.

1. You cannot do less than thankfully to bless your God for bringing of you into Covenant with himself: This is such exceeding grace, and exceeding mercy, and exceeding love, and exceeding favor, and exceeding honor, and exceeding happiness, it cannot be but your souls must bless him for this blessing. If one should meet with a poor man, and tell him I have set my love upon you, and I will settle upon you such a Lordship worth so many thousands a year; nay, and I will settle such a Manor which hath all sorts of accommodations upon you, which is worth many thousands more, &c. O how our hearts would melt at this kindness, and this bounty. Met we ever with such a friend in all our life, we would speak of him, and praise him, &c. The Lord hath chosen you for his people, he hath set his love upon you, he is entered into Covenant with you, and is become your God: he hath bestowed himself upon you, and engaged all his glorious Attributes unto you, and given his Christ, and his Spirit unto you, and settled grace and glory upon you, and all his promises: and all Spiritual privileges, and the good of Heaven and Earth; surely your souls must needs adore this riches of grace, it cannot be but you must be enlarged with blessings and praises, &c.

2. Have ye such a God to be your God in Covenant? Then make use of your God, and go unto him in all your occasions, in all your wants, in all your troubles, and straits, Psal. 63:1. O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee. Beloved, God's relation unto you, and your propriety in him, are choice grounds, and strong engagements for prayers, and for confidence; you find the Saints improving their interest in God both these ways.

For Prayers, Psal. 13:3. Consider and hear me, O Lord my God, Psal. 109:26. Help me, O Lord my God.

For confidence that their prayers shall have success, and be answered, Mich. 7:7. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

There are but two things on which you can possibly fix, and fasten any scruple, or doubt in respect of God: one is, whether he be able to help you: the other is, whether he be willing so to do: and as to both these your hearts may easily be satisfied. For

Because he is a God, therefore he is able to do you any good. And because he is your God, therefore he is certainly willing, and most ready to do you any good. There are four things which (if you did seriously consider of them) would be of special help unto you, against your fears, and would strengthen your hearts in all your approaches unto God.

1. That God's relation unto you, as your God, is a relation of the dearest love, and kindness, and grace, and mercy, and peace, and bowels of compassion.
2. That God's Covenanting with you to be a God unto you, it is the highest engagement which God can lay upon himself, and the fullest assurance which he can give unto you, that he will be your God. His Covenant engagement unto you hath all his glory and Attributes pawned in it, and the highest ratification, even his Oath, and the blood of Christ to seal it.
3. That as far as your God stands engaged unto you in his Covenant, so far may you go unto him, and confidently rest upon him, that he

will do you good; be your wants never so many, yet if your God hath undertaken the supply of them, you may be confident.

4. That so long as God remains and continues to be your God; so long may you (who are his people) draw near unto him, and beseech him, and be confident of all the good for which he stands engaged unto you in his Covenant. He remains and continues to be your God forever and ever, and therefore all your days may you go to him and expect good, and help from him.

3. Is it such an exceeding and complete happiness to have God to be our God in Covenant? Then the people of God should encourage themselves in the Lord their God, and make up themselves in their Covenant interest against all the discouragements which they meet with in the world. There are the Creature interests, and there are the Covenant interests; you are many times deprived of the former. The world loves his own, and the world hates you, and deals hardly and deceitfully with you. The world slights, and contemns, and reproaches, and withdraws, and opposes, and troubles you, and persecutes you! Now in such cases you should not suffer discouragements to sink and tear your hearts: you should remember

1. That you are not of the world, but are chosen out of the world.

2. That you have a Covenant interest (God is your God in Covenant) and by virtue of that Covenant interest, you shall find that in your God, which is denied you in the world: As the Church spake, Isa. 63:16. Doubtless, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledges us not. Thou, O Lord art our Father, our Redeemer, &c. You shall find it better in your God, then it can ever be found in the world: You cannot find love, and kindness, and favor, and good dealing, and faithfulness, and help from the world; O but you shall find at

that time love, and kindness, and favor, and tender dealing, and faithfulness, and help from your God. Though men will not love you, yet your God will love you; though men will curse you, yet God will bless you; though men forsake you, yet your God will help you; Yea and you shall find the love of your God in Covenant, and his countenance, and his presence, and his goodness a thousand thousand times more sweet, and refreshing, and comforting, then all the comforts could be to you, which are denied unto you by the weak Creature.

O Christians! Be not so dejected upon Creature withdrawments, and upon Creature failings, or upon Creature oppositions: there is enough in your God, and there is better in your God; There is fullness in him, and a living fullness: you have all, and abound by enjoying God to be your God. Though you have not the Candle, yet you have the Sun: though not the dirty puddles, yet you have streams and fountains. Reckon the enjoyment of God for your God, reckon this as something reckon on it as your best and fullest good. Assuredly it is enough to make up your happiness, and that which is enough to make you happy. It is enough to countervail all other things which can never make you happy.

4. Give diligence to make out unto your souls this Covenant relation twixt God and you; as you have a real interest in God, so rest not until you do attain unto a personal evidence that God is your God, and that you are his people: until you can say as the Church in Isa. 64:8. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father. Verse 9. Behold, see we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

Two things I would briefly speak concerning this duty.

1. You may attain unto this personal evidence, and certainty of knowledge; That God is your God, and that you are his people for as

much as

1. You have express promises for this in Zach. 13:9. They shall call upon my Name, and I will hear them, I will say It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God. So Ezek. 34:30. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel are my people, saith the Lord God.

2. Both the graces of the Spirit, and the testimony of the Spirit can make the Covenant relation evident unto you. The graces in you are the infallible characters that God is indeed your God, and that you are indeed his people. The Spirit of grace is given only unto the people of God, and unto every one of the people of God; and besides that you have the testimony of the Spirit, Rom. 8:15. Yea have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry Abba Father. Verse 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God.

2. You should strive to attain unto this personal evidence of your relation: Next to your being in the Covenant, I do not know any one thing of that advantage unto you, as the knowledge (upon sure grounds) that God is your God in Covenant.

It is of singular advantage and benefit unto you.

1. For the settling of the heart. If this Covenant relation were known of you, you may say as David, Return unto thy rest, O my soul, Psal. 116:7. Your souls cannot be settled by knowing what is happiness, but by knowing your propriety in happiness, whiles your propriety is unsettled, all is unsettled within you; and if that be obtained, all is peace, and at peace; I know that this God is my God.



2. For the Comfort and joy of your hearts: It is fruition joined with knowledge which is the Spring of all delight and comfort: You have heard the precious comforts which belong unto the people of God, who have God to be their God, and yet none of them have made comfort within your souls, because you are doubtful whether God be your God: it is certain you cannot taste the comforts, whiles you fear your title and interest: But if your interest were clear, your joy would be full: happiness known to be ours, is a necessary cause of joy. The Saints in glory have most joy, because they have the fullest knowledge of the enjoyment of their happiness.

3. For your confidence in approaching unto God, and in the application of the several promises of God, your ways to God would be always open and fair; in all your duties, and in all the Ordinances you might say I am now going to my God and Father to help me: and that promise is my portion, and this promise is my hope; They are all of them mine, for God himself is mine: He hath given them (every one of them) unto me, (2 Pet. 1:4.) That I might not fear, that I might have strong hope, and consolation, and encouragement. I will say no more unto you, but this, the knowledge of your Covenant-relation unto God, it is the life of your lives, and the life of your prayers, and the life of your confidences, and the life of your hope, and the life of your comforts, it is your Paradise, and your Heaven here on earth.

5. Maintain and justify your Covenant-relation (when once it is made manifest unto you) against all the suggestions of Satan, and against all the risings and oppositions of your own unbelief.

There are four things especially which you should still maintain, and make good, for at them doth Satan most strike at.

1. The unchangeableness of the Covenant-relation: This God is our God forever and ever. He will be our Guide even unto death, Psal. 48:14. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. You are many times under Spiritual silences (God seems not to regard your prayers) and many times under Spiritual delays (God puts you off from day today) and many times under Spiritual desertions (God hides his face from you) and Satan in such cases puts it upon you to question and disown your Covenant-relation; If God were your God, it would not be thus.

But notwithstanding all these, or any other trials of yourselves, yet God still maintains his interest in you, and your relation to himself. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew, saith the Apostle, Rom. 11:2. I am the Lord, I change not, Mal. 3:6. I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and will look for him, Isa. 8:17. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me; Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee! Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me. So Hosea 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me forever, and Heb. 13:5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

2. The tenderness of your Covenant-relation. The tenderness of God's love unto you, and the tenderness of God's care over you; Do not suffer Satan to raise jealousies, and do not you nourish any jealousies about these; if you do so, you dishonor your God by them, and make your souls to serve him with bitterness; your God loves you with as tender love as ever Father loved his dearest child, Is Ephraim my

dear son? Is he a pleasant child? My bowels are troubled for him, Jer. 31:20. His love is set upon you, Deut. 7:7. And he doth rest in his love, Zeph. 3:17. He loves you with an everlasting love, and therefore draws you with loving kindness, Jer. 31:3. And your God hath a most tender care over you, as a man hath over his jewels, (which are his chiefest treasures) I will make up my jewels, Mal. 3:17, and as a man hath over the apple of his eye; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye, Deut. 32:10. And as an Eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreads abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, verse 11. So the Lord, &c.

3. The goodness of the Covenant relation; that God still is, and will be good unto you, that he prepares of his goodness for, and he prepares mercy and truth for you, and lays up exceeding goodness for you, reserves it for you, and is never weary, nor will ever turn away from you from doing of you good.

4. The graciousness of your God in Covenant; that as at the first when he took you into the Covenant, this was the work of his own grace, so all along in the dispensations of the Covenant, the Lord still acts in a way of grace towards you always, and altogether upon free terms; he freely loved you, and he freely chose you, and he freely called you, and still he freely blesseth you, and doth good unto you, and upon gracious terms he deals with you all the days of your life, in all things for which you have to deal with him.

6. Walk and live like a people who have such a God to be your God in Covenant; as your relation is different from all other people's relation, so your conversation should be different from the conversation of all other people; as your condition is now higher than the condition of other people, (for God exalts you by making you to

be his people, so the word avouching signifies in Deut. 26:18) so your walking must be better than that of other people; and as your enjoyments and hopes transcendently exceed all other men's, so your returns must be in some proportion answerable unto your great interest in so good a God; and as God by becoming your God makes you high above all Nations, which he hath made in praise, and in name, and in honor, Deut. 26:19, so hath he formed you for himself, that you should show forth his praise, Isaiah 43:21. You are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should show forth the praise of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, 1 Pet. 2:9. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy, verse 10.

Quest. If any of you demand how that people should live and walk who have God to be their God in Covenant.

Sol. I answer; Such a people should walk,

1. By faith, in a continual dependence upon their living and giving God.
2. In a singular love and delight in their good and merciful God.
3. With holiness before their Holy and Omnipresent God.
4. With uprightness before their Omniscient and All-sufficient God.
5. Without inordinate cares before their Faithful and Never-failing God.
6. Without inordinate fears before their Almighty God.

7. Without offense or grieving of their Loving God.
8. With all contentedness and well-pleasedness of Spirit before their Wise and gracious God.
9. With all humility before their Great and Merciful God.
10. With all cheerfulness and gladness of heart before their Blessing and Blessed God.
11. In all constancy of obedience before their Eternal God.
12. In all the kinds of zeal for the honor of that God who hath so much honored them as to be their God.

1. You who are the people of God, and have God to be your God in Covenant, you should live and walk by faith in a continual dependence upon your engaged, and promising God. 2 Cor. 5:7. We walk by faith, not by sight. Hab. 2:4. The just shall live by his faith. Psal. 115:9. O Israel trust thou in the Lord, he is their help and their shield. Ver. 10. O house of Aaron trust in the Lord, he is their help and their shield. Ver. 11. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord, he is their help and their shield. And mark the reasons annexed, why everyone of these should trust in the Lord, ver. 12. The Lord hath been mindful of us; (you have had experience of his goodness for the time past, and therefore trust in him, and you shall every one of you find him to be your good God still for the time to come, therefore still trust in him) he will bless us, he will bless us, He will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron. Ver. 13. He will bless them that fear the Lord both great and small.

There are six Arguments to persuade you unto this one duty. viz. to depend upon your God by faith.

1. Because he is your God and your Father, and this comprehends within it all the foundations and grounds for your faith and dependence.

He is an infinite all-sufficiency and goodness, and he undertakes all your helps and supplies, and stands engaged unto you for whatsoever is necessary to life and godliness, and gives unto you so many promises as so many bonds and assurances that he will do you good; and besides all this he is able to perform them, and likewise faithful in his word; yea, and besides all this, he loves you above all the people in the world, and looks on you with tender compassions and loving kindnesses, and assures you that he will do you good for his own Names sake: What can there be more? And what can he said more to draw and persuade any to depend on a God, and to rely upon him?

2. Because you are his people: Should not a people seek unto their God? Saith the Prophet, Isaiah 8:19. Whether should children go but to their father? I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-borne, Jer. 31:9. And wilt not thou cry unto me My Father? Thou art the guide of my youth, Jer. 3:4. Upon whom should the wife depend but upon her husband? Why! The Lord is married unto you, Jer. 3:14. Thy Maker is thy husband, Isaiah 54:5. And how is he married unto you? Why! In righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness, Hosea 2:19,20. Truly even this alone that you are his people, lays bond enough upon you to depend and trust upon your God; for what is it to be his people, but to choose him alone to be your God, and for to acknowledge him by trusting upon him, and loving of him, and obeying of him? If he be a God not worthy of your trust, you are a people not worthy of his love and care.

3. Because your God hath given unto you that choice grace of faith for this end, to act all along upon the Covenant of grace; that he hath given faith unto you, it is unquestionable; otherwise you were not his people; now your faith is given unto you for four ends.

One is for entrance, that you might become his people, and choose him for your God.

A second is for acquaintance, that you as such a people might hold communion with such a God.

A third is for discovery, that you might be able to find out and behold all the undertakings and promises of your good God.

A fourth is for reliance, that you might be able to trust upon him for all that good which he hath promised unto you.

Faith is the eye which is given for to see our good, and it is the feet which are given us to carry us to the fountain of our good, and it is the hand which is given to lay hold, to take, to receive all the good which our God hath promised us.

4. Because it concerns you above all people to honor your God; And how can you honor him, if you will not trust him? Faith hath (if I may so express my thought) all the glory of God in its hand; you cannot possibly put more honor upon God than by believing and depending on him; this is indeed to set him up as a God, as the original of all, &c.

5. Because you know his Name; How often have you found it good for you to draw near to God? And when you have laid the whole burden on his promises by faith, you have always found him a very faithful

and helpful God: Now saith David, They that know thy Name will trust in thee.

6. Have you any other to depend upon? Every creature (naturally) is in a state of dependency; it is weak and wanting, and an insufficiency to itself, and therefore it must lean upon some stronger prop than itself. And do not you find it so with yourselves? Find you no wants at all? Can you be a sufficiency unto yourselves under those wants? Will any or can any but God supply the wants of the people of God? Most of your wants are above all Creature helps.

2. You who are the people of God, should walk in an exceeding love of your good and loving God. Matth. 22:37. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 1 John 4:19. We love him because he first loved us. Deut. 10:1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Psal. 31:23. O love the Lord all ye his Saints.

There is a love of desire: O God, thou art my God, my soul thirsts for thee, Psal. 63:1.

Of delight: Delight thyself in the Lord, Psal. 37:4. In thy presence is fullness of joy, Psal. 16:11.

Of Admiration; who is a God like unto thee? Micah 7:18.

Of Satisfaction; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness, Psal. 17:15. Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us, John 14:8. Thy favor is better than life, Psal. 63:3.

Of Adhesion; never to part with God nor forsake him: I held him fast, I would not let him go, Cant. 3. I and you should love as with the choicest kind of love, (Federal love) so with the highest degrees of



love; you should love him more than all the world, and more than all your friends, and more than all your kindred, more than father or mother, sister or brother, and more than your nearest relation, than husband or wife, and more than all your possessions, and more than your own safeties, and more than your own lives, yea, and more than your own souls; you should love your God sine omnibus, & super omnia, without all, and above all, &c. And verily there are most choice, and most strong reasons for all this in the Covenant alone, because he is your God; for because he is your God, therefore

1. He loves you with an unutterable love, the purest and highest love, with a fatherly love, with a faithful love, with a tender love, with an everlasting love. The Schoolmen distinguish of amor gratuitus, and of amor debitus; our love is but of debt which we owe to God; God's love is a gracious gift unto us; we love him, but can add nothing to him; he loves us, and his love makes us up forever; he begins in love only from his love; and we love when he sheds abroad his love into our hearts; he loves, and receives nothing from us; we love, and receive all from him.

2. He blesseth you, provides for you, bestows all upon you, enricheth you, gives Christ, and Mercy, and Grace, and Peace, and Glory. Who would not love a God who is Goodness itself? And Love itself? And Blessedness itself? Who would not but love a God who is his God, who delivers from hell, who quickens from death, who pardons all sins, who cleanseth from all iniquity, who makes us near unto himself, who puts his Name upon us, who speaks peace to our consciences, who blesseth us with all blessings, who guides and keeps, and feeds us all our days, who will give eternal life at last!

3. You who are the people of God, you should walk in all manner of holiness before your Holy and Omnipresent God.

There is a holiness,

1. Of Disposition, which is the renewing of the heart by the Holy Ghost. Lev. 11:44. I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy, for I am holy. Ver. 45. I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the Land of Egypt, to be your God, ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. Lev. 19:2. Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

2. Of Conversation: 1 Pet. 1:15. Be ye holy in all manner of Conversation. 1 Thess. 2:10. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves amongst you that believe. Isaiah 35:8. And a high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. Luke 1:74. That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear. Ver. 35. In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

This holiness of Conversation consists partly,

1. In separation from all sinful and polluted ways, and courses of the world; Come out from among them, and separate yourselves, 2 Cor. 6:17. Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. 7:1. Walk not as other Gentiles walk, Ephes. 4:17. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, Ephes. 5:11.

2. In the exercising of ourselves in all holy duties and works, and that after a holy manner with godly fear and reverence.

3. In the managing of the civil works and employments of our ordinary callings with spiritual and holy hearts, and for spiritual and holy ends; so that whither we deal with God, or with men, whither

you deal in heavenly businesses, or in earthly, something of holiness flows out and appears in them both. Isaiah 23:18. Her Merchandize shall be holiness to the Lord. Now that the people of God (who have him to be their God) should be holy, and should live very holy lives, it may be thus demonstrated:

1. If you consider the scope and end of the Covenant, or of taking us into Covenant; the end of the Covenant is to glorify the riches of God's mercy and grace; (for the praise of the glory of his grace) and the end of taking us into Covenant, is, that we might glorify God who is so rich in mercy and grace unto us. See 1 Pet. 2:9, upon either of these accounts his people must be holy, and live holily; for should they live profanely and unholily, this would pollute the Name of their God, and extremely dishonor it, Ezek. 36:21,22, and cause his Name to be blasphemed, Rom. 2:24. It is the life of holiness which makes his Name to be glorified openly amongst men, as it is the life of faith which makes it to be glorified secretly in the heart. Matth. 5:16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

2. You are taken into Covenant, that there might be a near relation 'twixt you and your God, and that there might be a delight full communion between God and you; but holiness is necessary to both these; you must be sanctified if you will be near unto him; for unholiness is the greatest distance from God, who is holiness itself; neither will he have fellowship with you without holiness, because similitude is the foundation of communion; there can be no fellowship 'twixt light and darkness, nor 'twixt God and Belial, 2 Cor. 6:14. All your communions with God are in acts of holiness, as all his communions with you are by his holy Spirit.

3. The people of God are made high above all Nations, in praise, and in name, and in honor. Deut. 26:19. They are the excellent on the earth. Psal. 16:3. A precious people. Jer. 15:19. A peculiar treasure unto the Lord, Exod. 19:5. But then he adds in verse 6. And ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation. Why; How can you be above all other in praise, and in name, and in honor, if your hearts and lives continued in the same inglorious condition, and course of wickedness and sinfulness with others? Or how could you be said to be the excellent on earth, if your hearts and lives, were as base and common as the vilest on earth? No certainly, but it is holiness which raiseth your natures, and it is holiness which raiseth your lives; As God is said to be Glorious in Holiness, Exodus 15:11, so his Church (or people) is said to be glorious, when it is holy and without blame, Ephes. 5:27.

4. You have certainty and Testimony from your holiness, that you are indeed the people of God. As Jesus Christ was declared to be the Son of God, when with power he was raised from the dead by the Spirit of holiness, Rom. 1:4. So are we really manifested or declared to be the sons of God, when we are regenerated and renewed by the holy Ghost, Titus 3:5. Holiness is as it were the mark of Christ, and seal of the Spirit, and the Character of all the people of God.

4. You who are the people of God, should walk with uprightness before the Omniscient and Al-sufficient God. This is that which the Lord himself prescribed, when he made a Covenant with Abram, Gen. 17:1. I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect. And David presseth it upon Solomon, 1 Chron. 28:9. And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. So Deut. 18:13. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. Beloved! This is a special duty which concerns you who are the people of God; the Lord

your God doth insist upon this; and though he bears with you in many things, yet assuredly he expects this from all his people, To be upright, and to walk uprightly.

**Quest. But you may demand, What is it to be perfect or upright and to walk so before God?**

Sol. I answer, it is,

1. To walk without guile. This is the periphrasis of an upright man, that he is one in whose spirit there is no guile, Psal. 32:2. (that is) his heart is sound and real, there is truth in his inward parts; he is one who loves God with his very heart, and hates sin with his very soul: and so, to walk uprightly, it is to walk plainly; To walk before God in truth, as Hezekiah expresseth it in Isa. 38:3. Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, &c. It is not to make a show, a pretense, as if we would follow the Lord, as if we would obey his voice, as if we would order our conversation according to his Word; but it is unfeignedly to endeavor this, to walk in all well-pleasing before God; He that walks uprightly, he doth choose the ways of God for his ways, and sets up the Will of God (revealed in his Word) as the rule of his course, and cordially strives to come up unto that Will of God.

2. To walk with a single respect unto God, without mixture of ways, and mixture of ends; upright men are therefore styled simple men, Matthew 10:16. That is simple which is without mixture; which is not partly one thing, and partly another thing; partly gold, and partly dross; partly honey, and partly wax, partly mire, and partly water; but it is Homogeneal, all alike to the substance of it: So upright men are single or simple men; they have but one heart, and but one object, and but one way or path, and but one end or aim. God only is the great object of their hearts; and God's way only is the path of

their life; and God's glory is only the end of their working and walking; It is not sin and God, it is not the world and God, it is not a trade of sin and a trade of holy profession, it is not their own praise and God's glory, their own benefit and God's honor that they mingle together; This is hypocrisy: But it is God only whom they set up, and his ways only wherein they walk, and his glory only which they seek: And therefore the course of all their actions, hath a sincere reference and subserviency thereunto, so that God may have glory.

3. To walk uprightly, is to walk fully and wholly with God. Beloved, this is a very truth, That when a man's heart is false and unfound, there is then an inequality and disproportion 'twixt the Will of God and his heart; this heart cannot possibly extend itself to the extent of God's Will, nor raise itself to the height of God's will: the will of God seems too large, and too strict; someone thing or other it requires too much, and something or other it forbids too much; but if a person be upright, his heart and God's will be commensurable; though the act be short, yet the heart is not short; the heart of an upright man is as full of obedience, as God's Commands are of righteousness: and he strives to come up fully and wholly to the Will of his God. My servant Caleb hath followed me fully, Numb. 14:24. They seek him with their whole heart, Psal. 119:2. They are perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. 7:1. Let us go on to perfection, Heb. 6:1. They go from strength to strength, Psa. 84:7. I strive if by any means, &c. Phil. 3:11.

O Christians! This perfect walking with God, this becomes the people of God; and this is most pleasing to God, when your hearts indeed are set on God, and let out for God, and continually set on the Word of God; when your ways are still the ways of God, and your works the works of God, and your paths the paths of God: when there is no way of wickedness wherein you may be found: and when there is no path of holiness and righteousness wherein you are not to be found: when

you love your God with all your hearts, and serve your God with all your might: when you would not willingly do the least evil, but fear it; nor knowingly omit or neglect the greatest duty, but assay and comply with it: when your weaknesses are your griefs, and the highest pitches of holiness are your desires and aims: when though you fall, yet you will rise; and when you have got some ground, you must still go further: when you are exactly careful to do your utmost in the fruits of righteousness, and give glory to God alone; when you study your services, and his praises alone, this is to walk uprightly, this is to be perfect with your perfect God, this is to be wholly his, as he is wholly yours; this is to bestow all on him, who bestows all on you; this is to value the enjoyment of your God alone, as a sufficient portion and satisfaction that you need not at all to swerve from him, and this is to count your God most worthy of your hearts, and of your lives; this is the honor of your Covenant-Relation, the delight of your God, the beauty of your lives, the path of your peace, the joy of your conscience, and the fore-runner of your glory.

5. You who are the people of God, should walk without inordinate care before your careful, faithful, never-failing God. Matth. 6:31. Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewithal shall we be clothed? Verse 32. For your heavenly Father knoweth you have need of all these things. James 5:7. Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you.

I will tell you what your inordinate cares for the things of this life are.

1. They are your burdens: David calls them so, Psalm 55:27. They sit more heavy upon your spirits, than your wants do; they are like the guilt of sin in the conscience, which makes us to go heavy all the day long.

2. They are vexations. They pierce us through with many sorrows. 1 Tim. 6:10. Scratching, tearing, wounding thorns, as our Savior calls them.

3. They are vanities: As the King of Assyria distressed Ahaz, but helped him not at all: so our inordinate cares are fruitful troubles, but fruitless helps; They cannot add one cubit to our stature, Matth. 6:27.

4. They are Indecorums; fit for Heathens who know not God; nay, unfit for Christians who know and also enjoy God for their God.

5. They are dishonors unto you and unto your Relation; As if God were worse than an Infidel, that he will not provide for his own household.

6. They are very sins; they justle aside the glory of the Covenant, and the fidelity and sufficiency of divine providence.

But to let these things pass, I beseech you who are the people of God, to remember and consider twelve things in respect of your God, to remove your cares.

1. His sufficiency. He is able to supply all your wants, and to succor you in all your distresses.

2. His Omniscieny: He knows every want and strait that lies upon you; as all his works, so all your wants are known unto him; He knows that you have need of all these things.

3. His Authority: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; All the creatures, and all your helps are in his hands, and depend on his Command.



4. His Willingness: He is willing to do you good, or else he had never promised all good unto you; he is your Father.

5. His Engagement: He binds himself by Covenant to supply you. He must wrong himself if he should forget you.

6. His tenderness: His love (as you have often heard) is more to you than all the world.

7. His Bounty: He hath given you Christ, and grace, and will give you glory; and how shall he not with these give you all other things!

8. His Fidelity: He is faithful who hath promised; he never yet break his word, or did fail his people.

9. His extent of undertaking for all your life long: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. 13:5.

10. The accounts and reports of his careful provisions, by his own people, and their opinion of him. Gen. 48:15. The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, said Jacob. Psal. 37:25. I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

11. God undertakes even for your children and posterity also, and is it likely that he will fail yourselves? The generation of the upright shall be blessed, Psal. 112:2. I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee, Gen. 17:7.

12. He doth good to his enemies, therefore he cannot forget his friends; If he feeds the dogs, surely he will feed his children; If he provides for the Ravens, surely he will provide for his people.

6. You who are the people of God, should walk without inordinate fears, even upon this account, because you have God to be your God. Gen. 15:1. Fear not Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. Isa. 41:10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; Be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. 43:1. Fear not, for I have Redeemed thee, I have called thee by name, Thou art mine. Verse 2. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee. Verse 3. For I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel thy Savior.

There are seven fears against which the Covenant-Interest should secure the hearts of the people of God.

1. A fear what man can do.
2. A fear what Satan can do.
3. A fear what God will do.
4. A fear what we ourselves shall do.
5. A fear what ours shall do.
6. A fear what the Churches of Christ shall do.
7. A fear what death may do.

1. Your Covenant-interest and relation should secure you against the fear what man can do; Psal. 118:6. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.

We are sometimes afraid of the power of man, and why are we so? I, even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man, that shall be made as grass? And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, Isa. 51:12,13.

Of the rage and fury of man! And why are we so? Thou hast feared continually, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; And where is the fury of the oppressor? Isa. 51:13. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain, Psal. 76:10.

Of the plots and combinations of men! And why are we so? Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid! Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be for a Sanctuary So in verse 9. Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, &c. Verse 10. Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught, speak the word, and it shall not stand, for God is with us.

2. Your Covenant-interest and relation should secure you against the fears of what Satan can do. You are many times exceeding afraid of the dreadful power of Satan, as if he might command you, and force you to such sinful thoughts, and sinful acts which make your hearts to tremble; you think he is too strong for you, and you shall never be able to withstand him any longer, and your hearts are almost crushed and sunk with fear of Satan's power; but what can Satan do? Nil potest diabolus nisi missus vel permissus, He is but a creature, and he is a wicked creature, and he is a conquered creature, and he is a chained creature, and he is a cursed creature. Christ hath conquered him, and therefore you shall conquer him: all the victories of Christ do reach unto you; God doth chain him, and restrain his

power and working, Thus far he shall go and no farther; God will give you grace sufficient to resist, and withstand him, and will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, and at last, yea shortly, will bruise Satan under your feet. Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. He Rules the world which troubles and tempts you, but your God will not suffer you to be led into temptation.

3. Your Covenant-Interest and Relation should secure your hearts against the fears of what God will do; You see sometimes great changes and alterations, and judgments in the earth, how terrible God is to the inhabitants thereof, what desolations he makes, how he shakes the mountains, and makes the hills to fall down at his presence, his fire burns and consumes and goes on, and no man knows the power of his wrath, nor can say, when or where his indignation will end and cease; But in all the dark and dreadful dispensations of God's providence, the people of God have no cause to fear, for he hath an hiding place from the storm for them, and his chambers of protection for them, until the indignation be over; His eyes are over the righteous: it shall surely be well with them that fear before him: everything shall work for good unto them: and should public calamities involve you with other people, yet your God will either support you under them, or deliver you out of them, or translate you into a better place and condition, free from all sin and misery, and trouble, into the place of eternal rest and happiness.

4. Your Covenant-Interest and Relation should secure your hearts from the fear of what we ourselves shall do: what will become of us in the latter end! We oft times fear that we shall never hold out, and persevere in the paths of righteousness, and we fear that providence will not hold out, that we shall not have enough to sustain us all our days; But why do we fear these fears? Is not Christ the Finisher of our Fath, who is the Author of our Faith? And will not God perfect

the work which he hath begun? And are we not kept by his power through Faith unto salvation? And hath he not promised that he will never depart from us? And to put his fear into our hearts, that we shall never depart from him? And as for an outward enough and sufficiency for all our days; alas, why do we fear future supplies, who live every day upon present mercies? Our God hath said that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and that bread shall be given us, and our waters shall be sure; Jesus Christ yesterday and today, and the same forever: so your God is an all-sufficiency for all times, in all times, and unto all times; there is no end of his goodness, nor of his care, nor of his love.

5. Your Covenant-Interest and Relation should secure your hearts against the fears of what yours shall do, and what will become of them when you are dead; you have but little yourselves, and shall leave less unto your children; But O that we had more faith, for then we should have less fears! But remember a few things.

1. Be more careful what good you may do your children's souls, than fearful what good God will do for your children's bodies; if your children be only your children, they are then heirs of vanity and sin, and misery; but did you take care to make them God's children, they should be heirs of mercy and blessing.

2. Though you die, yet your God ever lives, whose care and bounty is not restrained to one person, or to one generation, but extends unto believers, and unto their seed after them. Gen. 17:7. And thou art the helper of the fatherless, Psal. 68:5. In thee the fatherless findeth mercy, Hosea 14:3.

3. Though you cannot find provision for your children after you, and therefore fear, yet you may find promises for your children, and therefore you should not fear; if you cannot leave them with a

portion, yet if you can leave them with a promise of God, it may very well quiet and satisfy you: and this you may; Psal. 112:2. The generation of the upright shall be blessed. Psal. 102:28. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

6. Your Covenant-Interest and Relation should secure your hearts against the fears of what shall become of the Churches of Christ, especially in times of heresies and seducements, and of threatening's, and endeavors to subvert the Ordinances, and all Gospel Ministrations; And truly many do fear (in respect of these) at this time; but we should not inordinately fear in respect of them: for there are no people in the world, that have Christ so near them, and God so engaged unto them, as the Church. The foundation of the Church is too strong for the gates of hell; and the Church of God will always be found a very burdensome-stone for all people; All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it, Zach. 12:3. And as for the Ordinances and Ministrations of Christ in his Churches, they shall continue as long as Christ hath a Church on earth; as long as the Covenant abides, a people of the Covenant shall abide, and as long as the people of the Covenant abides, the Ordinances for those people shall abide; no not all the corrupt opinions of men, nor powers of men shall ever be able to pluck the Sun out of heaven, nor drive out the everlasting Gospel from the earth. If anything should make us to fear the continuance of those amongst us, it is only our unthankfulness, and our unfruitfulness, and our contempt, and scorn of them.

7. Lastly, your Covenant-interest and relation, should secure your hearts against the fear of death; you should not fear to live, not yet to die, who have God to be in Covenant; for the sting of death is gone; it

is taken out by the death of Christ, 1 Cor. 15. Death separates soul and body, but it can never separate you from the love of God, Rom. 8.

The Covenant holds beyond death; it doth not bring you only into a present enjoyment of God, but it is to bring you into a full, perfect, and everlasting enjoyment of God in glory; the Covenant yields you the least part of your good, of your portion, of your happiness in this life; the greatest and fullest portion of good promised unto you by God in this Covenant, lies in the arrears, in the reserves, in the full possession of the inheritance after death; and then why should you fear to die, and go to take a full possession? Why should you fear to die, and to enter into the joy of your Master? Why should you fear to die, and go home to receive all the desires of your hearts, and all the eternal preparations of glorious blessedness for your souls?

7. You who are the people of God, and have him to be your God in Covenant, you should walk without offending of him, and without displeasing or grieving of your good God. Mal. 1:6. A son honoreth his Father, and a servant his Master. If then I be a Father, where is mine honor? And if I be a Master, where is my fear? Friends in Covenant carefully avoid mutual offenses and provocations, you should fear the Lord and his goodness, Hosea 3:5. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, Deut. 10:20. Seeing that Thou our God hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments! &c. Ezra 9:13,14, so seeing that the Lord is become our God, and hath delivered us from wrath, and made us to be his people, should we grieve him by sinning against him! Grieve not the Spirit of God by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption, Eph. 4:30. Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, Colos. 1:10. It were an excellent height if we could say unto God, as he spake unto his people in Micah 6:3. O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I

wearied thee? So if we could say, O our God what have we done against thee, and wherein have we displeased and grieved thee!

There are nine sins which if they be found in the people of God, they do extremely offend and displease their God.

1. Grosse transgressions; when their spots are not the spots of his children, Deut. 32:5. David's adultery displeased the Lord, 2 Sam. 11:27.

2. Murmuring complaints against the dispensations of their God, Numb. 11:1. When that people complained, it displeased the Lord; and the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled. Ver. 4. They fell a lusting, and wept again, and said Who shall give us flesh to eat? Ver. 10. And the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly.

3. Their manual divisions and contentions, and envying's, and evil-speaking's, and reproaching's of one another, these dishonor themselves, and grieve the Spirit, and offend their Father.

4. Spiritual pride, and loftiness of heart, being vainly puffed up with knowledge, or any spiritual attainments and enjoyments, foolish boastings.

5. Carnal security, and carelessness of their hearts and ways, and turning the grace of God into wantonness.

6. Unfruitfulness and barrenness under the Gospels Ordinances and helps.

7. Conformity unto the world, fashioning themselves thereunto, and complying with the ungodly.



8. Lukewarmness of spirit in the cause of God, and of the truths of Christ, and of the power of godliness, suffering all these to be opposed and blasphemed.

9. Particular unbelief's and distrusts, as in Moses case, &c. when their faith hath a special call to honor God amongst people in difficulties, &c. These and some other sins, if found among the people of God, do exceedingly displease and grieve him; and therefore be you very watchful against them, yea, and against all sinning's whatsoever; because,

1. Your God hath showed you exceeding riches of grace and mercy: There is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared.

2. Your relation to so holy a God, should make you to fear all unholy actions; you should be holy, as your heavenly Father is holy.

3. Your receipts have been high, and your returns should be answerable; you have received favor, and Christ, and the Spirit, and hopes of heaven, and should you offend your God after all this! O what ingratitude (worst of ingratitude) were this!

4. You will extremely darken your communions with God by it, and your heavenly relation by it, your Sun will set at Noon day.

5. You will break up the peace in conscience, and conscience will lay hold on you from all your interest comforts received.

6. God doh usually correct and chastise his people in this life very severely and sharply for their disobedience.

8. You who are the people of God, should walk with all contentedness and well-pleas'dness of spirit, for you have God

to be your God; saith David, Psal. 16:5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; and ver. 6. I have a goodly heritage: That man will be contented with nothing, who cannot find contentment in the enjoyment of all things.

There are three things which I desire you to take notice of.

1. That God is the portion of his people: Thou art my portion O Lord, Psal. 119:57. All the world is too low and too little to make up a portion for any one holy or godly man; he sets not out any estate as your portion but himself: If the Lord should say to a godly man I will give you all the world, and that shall be all your portion; O Lord, would he say, let others have that portion, but I beseech thee give me thyself.

2. That God alone is portion enough; all-sufficiency is (questionless) a sufficient portion; as Joseph said unto his brethren, Gen. 45:20. (by the command of Pharaoh) Regard not your stuff, for the good of all the Land of Egypt is yours; so may we say to all the people of God, Regard not, be not troubled so much for the poor stuff of earthly revenues, for the all-sufficient God is yours. The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore I shall not want, Psal. 23:1. He that wants nothing hath enough: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward, Gen. 15:1. He who is secured from all evil, and is blessed with all blessings, certainly this man hath enough.

3. That your fruition of God for your God, sweetens any outward portion, be it never so little; the little of earth with the enjoyment of God as loving, as reconciled, as accepting of us in Christ, as shining in his favor on our souls, as our God in Covenant; how satisfying, how delightful a portion is this! The small Ring with the rich Diamond, cannot that delight and please you!

**Object. O but I have very little of these outwards.**

Sol. A little of them is enough, much is but a superfluity, and is like the water that runs besides the Mill.

2. Your little is blest, it is the cluster of grapes with the blessing of the Lord; a little wholesome food is better than a feast that is poisoned; so, &c.

3. Your little will last. As the Widows Oil ran out still, and ran out so much as served to sustain her all the time of Famine, so God by little and little will preserve you all your days.

4. Though little in hand, yet still sufficient, and of the best in promise, which will rain Manna down upon you all the time of your journeying and travelling, until you come to Canaan.

9. You who are the people of God, should walk with all humility before God, Micah 6:8. What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

There are four goodly sights.

1. To see a pardoning God, and a mournful sinner.
2. To see a promising God, and a believing sinner.
3. To see a good God, and a thankful sinner.
4. To see a gracious God, and a humble sinner.

No people are raised so high as the people of God, and no people with such lowliness and humbleness as these.

To walk humbly, is to walk

1. With a sense of our own unworthiness; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant, said Jacob, Gen. 32:10. Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? Said David, 2 Sam. 7:18.

2. With a sense of our own insufficiencies: we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. 3:5. O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man to direct his steps, Jer. 10:23.

3. With a full acknowledgement of the grace of God, as the reason and cause of our all: By the grace of God I am what I am: And I labored more abundantly then they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me, said Paul, 1 Cor. 15:10.

4. With a low opinion of ourselves, as 1 Cor. 4:6. That not one of you be puffed up for one against another, verse 7. For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive. Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

And there are five Reasons which the people of God have to walk humbly.

1. Because they are all saved by mercy, and brought into their high relation by the mere love of their God: In his mercy he saved them; and in your blood he set his love upon you, and said unto you, live.

2. Because all the great enjoyments which they have, they are the mere gifts of grace: Ye are called by grace, and justified by grace, and adopted by grace, and renewed by grace, and saved by grace.

3. Because you continually live in a dependence upon God. All your actings are in his strength, and all your communions with him are by

his presence, and by his power; your graces, and your comforts, and particular abilities, would die in your hands, if he should but withdraw and leave you.

4. Because your God is a great God, and you are but Dust and Ashes before him: And besides that, he knows so much of you, that you have cause to be vile in your own eyes, and to lie low before him.

5. Because you do so little for so good a God: You make but poor returns in proportion to your exceeding great receipts: your best performances and acts of obedience, are so short to his mercies, that you need mercy still to pass you by.

You should walk with all cheerfulness, and gladness of heart, before your blessing and blessed God, Psal. 100:2. Serve the Lord with gladness, Deut. 28:47. Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and gladness of heart for the abundance of all things. O how cheerful should your life be, who enjoy such a God to be your God: This enjoyment should be like a good conscience, which is a continual feast: yet God is my God, and Christ is my Christ, and mercy and glory are mine: Yea, it should make you exceeding forward and cheerful in the services of your God: not calling them your burdens, but delights: you should rejoice in him, and rejoice to obey him, and delight to do his will, account it your meat and drink, and you should a bound in the work of the Lord.

11. You should be constant in walking before him: you should never be weary of him, nor of his works: you should think a short life too short for the serving, and the honoring of such a God: as the Martyr was troubled because he had but one life to part with for Christ; so should we, because we have no more lives, or no longer time of life to bless and praise our good and gracious God: you should serve him in holiness, and righteousness all your days, Luke 2. Surely goodness

and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, Psal. 23:6.

12. You who ate the people of God, should walk before him in all zeal, for the honor of that God who hath so much honored you, as to make you his people. What shall I do for my God! You should deny yourselves, and extend yourselves, and improve all your gifts, and graces, and powers for the services of his glory; you should not count your time, nor riches, nor honors, nor lives dear unto you, so that you might honor and glorify such a God as your God is, and is to you: you should speak, and pray, and study, and act, and enact for him, who is so good a portion, and will be your everlasting and blessed God.

#### SECT. XV.

There is yet one Use more which I would make from the consideration of the happiness of being the people of God in Covenant, and of enjoying God to be our God in Covenant.

And that Use shall be a Use of Exhortation, even unto them who are not (as yet) the people of God in Covenant; That they would not content themselves in that estate, to be Foreigners, and strangers, and enemies, but that they would beg, and strive to come into a Covenant-relation with God, that they would take him for their God, and submit themselves unto him as his people in Covenant.

Now this Exhortation I shall direct unto two sorts of sinners. 1. Unto such as to this day have obstinately refused to become the people of God. 2ly. Unto such who are troubled for their obstinate disobedience, and would fain become the people of God, but are

afraid that God will never admit them into Covenant, that he will never be a God to them, &c.

1. Unto such who hitherto have obstinately refused to become the people of God, and to own God for their God in Covenant. What is the Almighty that we should serve him, spake they in Job 21:15. Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? Said Pharaoh, Exod. 5:2. Let us break his bands asunder, and cast away his cords from us, Psal. 2:3. They would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his Laws, Isa. 42:24. I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you: I called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, ye have set at naught all my counsels, Prov. 1:23,24,25. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter, Heb. 11:24. This showed his contempt of worldly honors standing in Opposition to the enjoyment of communion with the people of God. But many refuse to become the sons of God, and to become the people of God, although they hear of the infinite happiness in being the people of God, and in the enjoyment of God to be their God; They look upon it as their great loss to part with their sinful lusts, and they look upon it as their exceeding prejudice and disgrace to be counted the people of God, and they look upon it as their heavy burden to be brought into the Covenant, and yielding up themselves unto God alone.

For such a sort of ignorant and perverse people, I would pray unto God that he would open their eyes, and convince their hearts, and awaken them from the sleep of death. And if they be capable of any faithful counsel and advice, I would present a few serious Considerations unto them, which perhaps may persuade them to hearken, and to desire to come into Covenant with God.

1. You are never able to stand out, and live under the Covenant of Works. There are but two Covenants which we must abide by; In one of them all men of necessity must be found: either in the Covenant of Grace, or in the Covenant of Works; These are like the two Masters of whom Christ doth speak, that one cannot serve them both either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Matth. 6:24. So no man can be under both these Covenants at once; if he refuse the one, he chooseth the other; and if he chooseth the one, he refuseth the other: If you refuse to come into the Covenant of Grace, of necessity you remain under the Covenant of Works; and then you are as surely lost and destroyed, as you now live: for the Covenant of works condemns and curses the sinner (cursed is everyone who continues not in everything that is written to do it, Gal 3:10.) And you are exceedingly sinful; the Law of God finds you so, and your own consciences testify against you as so; Neither have you any way to escape that curse of the Law, nor the wrath of God revealed against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness, but in the Covenant of Grace (because there only a Savior and mercy is to be found) but you perversely refuse to enter into that Covenant with God.

2. If you will not consent unto a Covenant-relation, it is but presumption to expect the Covenant advantages.

The Covenant advantages are the hopes and enjoyments of loving-kindness, of pardoning mercies, of the joys of the Holy Ghost, of peace in conscience, of special protection, of sanctified blessings, and of eternal glory and salvation. But these do necessarily presuppose a Covenant-relation (that is) That we must take God for our God, and become his people. For to none but these hath God ever promised, and on none but these hath God ever settled or intended to settle such choice blessings: For others God saith, What hast thou to do to



take my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed? If you will have none of me, you shall have none of my mercies; and if you will not be my people, I will not be your God. Never deceive yourselves with vain confidences, I will never pardon you, I will never bless you, I will never justify you, I will never save you: If the woman will not consent to marry the man, it is but a vain simplicity in him to presume of his interest in her estate, so, &c.

3. For any sinner who hears of this Covenant of grace, and yet excludes himself, (as everyone doth who refuseth to submit unto the terms of relation) this doth declare exceeding folly; O what folly is it to slight our only help, our only hope, our only remedy, our only salvation? To reject all happiness, and our only happiness.

Exceeding impiety: Certainly our hearts are unspeakably hardened, or are utterly Atheistical, or hellishly desperate, that we care not though we lose our precious souls, and forsake our mercies, and forfeit heaven: assuredly we have sordid thoughts of God, and of the happiness of enjoying God for our God, and of all that God promiseth to give, in that we refuse to be his people, and had rather enjoy our filthy and damning lusts.

4. Your condition is, and will be unspeakably miserable, helpless, and hopeless: And this appears in four particulars.

First, You will utterly deprive your souls of all hopes and pleas for mercy and glory.

Secondly, That you willfully do this, though God treats with you in a way of mercy and grace, for mercy and grace.

Thirdly, That you now stand alone, and must do so in your accounts before God, without a Mediator to answer for you; you alone must

answer God for all your sins, and for all your abominations.

Fourthly, That God will magnify the power of his wrath and justice upon you for despising of him, and of his grace, and of his mercy, and of all his glory, &c. of all sinners, you will fall under the heaviest condemnation.

3. Unto such who fain would be the people of God, but are afraid that God will never admit of them into Covenant, that he will never be a God unto them.

To these I have six things to present, which I would desire them carefully to remember.

1. Do not despair, though as yet you find not yourselves to be the people of God's Covenant; it is possible for you to be his people; And there are three grounds to keep you from despair.

1. One because God hath made them to be his people which were not his people: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but have now obtained mercy 1 Pet. 2:10.

2. A second, because God hath looked mercifully upon as grievous sinners as ye have been, and hath brought them into the Covenant, Ezek. 16:6. When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live, yea I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live, verse 8. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness, yea I sware unto thee, and entered into a Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.

3. Because you have an express promise that God will make you to be his people, which were not his people, Hosea 2:23. I will have mercy upon her, that had not obtained mercy, and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people, and they shall say Thou art my God.

2. Great sinners are not absolutely excluded from coming into this Covenant of grace; O Sirs, this Covenant is only for sinners, and this Covenant contains an infinite Mediator, and super-abundant riches of grace and mercy, so that the Lord gets him a Name, and a praise, and an honor amongst all the Nations of the earth; and God in this Covenant doth promise to pardon abundantly, to forgive iniquity, transgression and sin, to cleanse from all filthiness, and from all Idols, and to pardon all iniquities whereby we have sinned, and have transgressed against him; Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities, and made me to serve with thy sins; yet I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins: Thou hast spoken, and done evil things as thou couldest; she is gone upon every high Mountain, and under every green Tree, and there hath played the harlot, and I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me! So that it is not the greatness of former sins which make you utterly incapable of being received into this Covenant: Though a man's sins have been high in their guilt, and multiplied in the practice, and stretched out by many aggravating circumstances, yet if now his soul doth mourn over them, and lament; if now he is willing to give a bill of Divorce unto them, if he sees his former abominations, and loathes them, I dare assure him that God will take him into this Covenant; the Covenant of grace and mercy is set open for him; Come in saith God, I will be merciful unto your Transgressions, and I will receive you graciously, your sins shall be mentioned no more.

3. Though a sinner hath no deservingness in him, no worthiness at all, yet he may be received into this Covenant of grace: When a poor sinner hears of all that goodness which God is, and which God will extend to such as will enter into Covenant with him, and of all those mercies and blessings, &c. O saith he, I shall never have this God, and I shall never enjoy these blessings! What am I but a very sinful creature, worthy to be excluded, and to be denied, but unworthy to enjoy such a God, and to partake of such mercies; sins I have enough for which God may loath me, but worthiness have I none, to give me favor and acceptance in the eyes of God.

Sol. Let me give answer to remove this fear and this vexation out of the heart of the troubled and doubting sinner.

1. A personal worthiness is not expected, nor imposed by God for admission into this Covenant; he never said to any sinner, If you be worthy of mercy, then I will show you mercy; and if you be worthy to enjoy me, then I will be your God. Never did this come into the thoughts of God to make a new Covenant upon terms of worthiness on our part; nor in any one place of Scripture hath God let fall such a passage, or such a heavy condition upon the sinner; for then no sinner could ever have had any hope of coming into this Covenant; sinfulness and unworthiness being necessarily inseparable.

2. A personal worthiness is inconsistent with a Covenant of grace; for a Covenant of grace is a giving Covenant, and it is a freely giving Covenant; God loves you here freely, and he here forgives you freely: I will love them freely, Hosea 14:4. I am he that blotteth out thy sins for mine own sake, Isaiah 43:25. This were a strange thing indeed, that God should make a Covenant of grace to relieve the sinner against the Covenant of works, and yet should make our works the foundation and reason of his grace! No, saith the Apostle, There is a

remnant according to the election of grace; And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise works is no more works. God admits not into this Covenant upon the reason and account of works, nor doth he let out the good of this Covenant upon any such account; this were not to advance his grace, but to destroy his grace.

3. The acknowledging of our unworthiness is more proper and answerable to this Covenant, than a pleading or a fancying of our worthiness. I will go home to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and against thee, I am not worthy to be called thy son: Mark, he comes home confessing his sins, and acknowledging his unworthiness, and he was accepted and pitied, and embraced, and received, &c. O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy Names sake; for our backslidings are many, we have sinned against thee; so they plead: This indeed is the right posture for one who would be admitted into this Covenant, not to come like a proud Pharisee, but like an humble Publican, God be merciful to me a sinner; not to come as the Jews did for one to Christ, he is worthy; but as the Centurion did unto Christ, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under the roof of my house. O Lord, I have been a wretched sinner, and the greatest of sinners; I deserve nothing but wrath and hell; I beseech thee to look on me in mercy, for mercies sake pity me, for mercies sake own me, for mercies sake be my God, and make me one of thy people, &c. *Merita mea misericordia tua*, saith Bernard, my merits are only thy mercies! Thou art the Lord merciful and gracious, O save me freely, accept of me freely, &c.

4. It is not unworthiness which hinders any from this Covenant, but unwillingness; Not the want of deserts, but the want of a heart; for this covenanting is not a bargain, but a match, where willingness of

consent is only insisted upon; My son (saith God) give me thy heart, and hearken unto me and your souls shall live; and if you be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land. If a mighty Prince should offer himself to match with a poor maid, alas, it is not worthiness that he intends or expects, nothing doth he require of her but to be willing to take him; so when the Lord treats with sinners to come into Covenant with him, it is not their worthiness which he articles about; all that he requires is to be willing to take him for their God, and to be willing to become his people.

4. Though a sinner finds in himself a want of holy qualities, and many vile corruptions not yet mortified, yet he may come and be accepted into Covenant with God: If a poor sinner be willing to have his heart changed, though as yet he finds not that change: and if he be willing to have his sins mortified and subdued, though as yet he doth not find them so: this sinner may come, and desire to be admitted into Covenant, and God doth not except against him.

Objection. When we are persuading sinners to come into his Covenant, O no, say they! They are afraid, and dare not come as yet; but could they once find some change wrought in their hearts, and some power over their sins, and some strength to walk better before God, then they would hearken and come!

Solution. But do you indeed understand yourselves or this Covenant of grace, that you thus argue and dispute yourselves out of an interest in the Covenant? I pray you whence doth grace come? Out of what Spring doth it arise? Would you be God's unto yourselves, before you take God to be your God? Is your healing and salvation in yourselves, or of yourselves? In me is thy strength, saith God; Is it possible for the dead to quicken themselves? Is not our change only from the Spirit of the Lord? And is not the new heart, and new spirit

undertaken and promised in the Covenant? Will you presume to give yourselves, that which God only undertakes to give unto you?

Nevertheless a few words for your relief.

1. The first gift which God gives unto sinners, is himself in Christ; He doth not first give you grace and strength against sin, and then become your God; but first he becomes your God, and being so, he promiseth to give grace and glory to you; as communion with Christ is not precedent unto, but a subsequent of union with him; you have not the righteousness of Christ, and the redemption of Christ first, and after them the enjoyment of Christ himself; but first you have Christ, and after that you enjoy communion in all his benefits; So first God is your God, and then comes in all the graces of the Spirit, and power against sin, and strength for new obedience.

2. God doth not expect that you should bring, but receive; not bring holiness to him, and power to him, but receive holiness from him, and power from him; Doth the Physician expect that his Patient should bring physic to him, or receive physic from him? Do we bring water to the fountain? No, but we do fetch it from the fountain. The Lord doth not impose this on you, that you should first make yourselves holy, and then come into Covenant; but this is it which he saith, Take me to be your God, and I will make you holy, and I will subdue your iniquities: the giving, changing, strengthening, working part belongs to God; the craving, the willing, the receiving part belongs to you. God is willing to give these, and if you be willing to receive these, This is enough for admission into Covenant.

3. To say all: The qualities of grace are not the necessary antecedents for entrance into, but they are the gracious fruits and consequents of the Covenant. When you are brought into Covenant, then are all

graces brought into your hearts; then if you seek unto your God, and trust on him, he will send forth his Spirit into your hearts.

5. The knowledge of God to be our God in Covenant, is not preredquired before we take God to be our God in Covenant. I confess some knowledge of God is preredquired, as this, That God is willing to take a sinner into Covenant; till this be laid in, the sinner will never close with God; but to know that this God is my God, this is neither preredquired, nor is it possible for any sinner to attain unto this, before he doth take God to be his God in Covenant. Yet is this an ordinary perplexity and hindrance with many broken-hearted sinners; O if we could but be assured that God were our God, then we would venture to come into Covenant with him! And did we know ourselves to be his people, then we would close with him!

Beloved,

1. It is impossible to begin the Covenant with a reflexive act. Can any woman know such a man to be her husband, until she hath taken him to be her husband? Would ye build the top of the house before you have laid the foundation? Reflexive acts are the last acts; never are they the first acts in the Covenant; Nay, it were a very delusion and falsehood, to know that God is your God, before you take him to be so: he is not your God, neither are you his people, until you consent to take him for your God.

2. The only way to know your interest in the Covenant, is to accept of the Covenant: As to know that your sins are pardoned, the way to this, is to believe the promise of pardon; and to know that Christ is yours, the way is first to receive and embrace Christ by faith: So the way to know that God is your God, is first to take him to be your God, to become his people.



6. God will refuse none from this Covenant, who are indeed willing to have him to be their God in Covenant: as Christ spake in Revel. 22:19. Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely: so say I, Whosoever is willing to have God to be his God, and to close with God as God manifests himself a God in Covenant, let him come, God will be his God in Covenant.

**Quest. How is that? Will you say.**

Sol. Thus it is, The Lord saith, I am God Almighty; I am the Lord, the Lord, gracious, and merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; Will you accept of such a God to be your God? O with all our hearts! We are undone unless the merciful and gracious God be our God! And saith God, I am an holy God; I the Lord am holy; the Lord thy God is an holy God; I am of purer eyes than to behold sin, I hate and abhor it; and if you will have me to be your God, you must be holy as I am holy; your hearts must be holy, and your lives must be holy; you must be willing to renounce and forsake every one of your sinful lusts, and every one of your sinful ways; Are you willing to be holy in all manner of conversation? If your hearts can answer to the Lord; O Lord! I have been a sinful wretch, and I have a sinful heart, which is the burden of my soul! I am content to be made holy, I beseech thee make me holy; I should bless thee with all my soul, if thou wouldest be pleased to give thy holy Spirit to me, if thou wouldest change my heart by thy renewing grace, if thou wouldest cleanse me from all my uncleanness, if thou wouldest mortify and subdue in me every sinful lust and affection; And saith God, I am the great and mighty God, the Lord of all, the Lord of Lord's, and I give Laws to all my people, and will be feared and obeyed, and I will have you to set up my Will for your Rule, and I will have you to do the work which I appoint you,

and to walk only in such paths of righteousness and obedience as I require and prescribe.

Are you willing to receive the Law from my mouth? And to obey my will? And to do all that I command you? Though men dislike it, and men reproach you for it, if now you can answer, O Lord we are willing, thus to take thee for our God, and in all these respects to be thine, then God will own you as his people in Covenant.

**Quest. But O Lord, how shall we be able to compass this, and to attain all this?**

Sol. Nay, that is not the question saith God, but are you willing thus to take me for your God? If you be cordially willing thus to take me, I will be your God, and I am your God; and according to my Covenant, I engage myself unto you, to give you holiness, to change your hearts, and to give you mercy, to pardon your sins, and to give you grace and power to mortify your lusts, and to give you strength to obey my Will, to walk in my Statutes, and to do them all.

O Sirs, this willingness, such a willingness as this to accept of God to be our God, this is accepted, and this is enough to enter you into this gracious Covenant with God; and truly, this willingness to accept of God to be your God, comes from God's willingness, and God's goodness, and God's power, and God's grace to make you to be his people; None have this willingness wrought in them, but those only whom God will take into Covenant with him.

Some are willing in their straits, to have the merciful God to be their God, but they are not willing to have the holy God to be their God. Some are willing to have the gracious God, and the rewarding God to be their God, but they are not willing to have the commanding and ruling God to be their God; These indeed would not have God to be

their God in Covenant; but if you find willing hearts in all respects to close with God, as he wholly and fully manifests himself to be a God in Covenant, that he should universally form you up unto himself, fear not, come to him, he will certainly be your God.

#### SECT. XVI.

The last Use from this discourse of the Covenant, shall be of direction, what course any sinner should take that he may be brought into this Covenant of grace; The necessity and happiness whereof he hath heard so much.

The Directions which I would commend unto you for this, are these.

1. Go unto God, and beseech him to be your God, and to make you to be his people; for none can make God to be a God in Covenant unto him, but God himself; and none can take God to be his God in Covenant, but from the strength of God alone. Hence it is, that as to the first entrance into the Covenant, we (for our parts) are rather passive than active; and are rather Covenanted than Covenanting; God must make us to be his, before we can come to be his; yea he must make us willing to be his, before we can be willing to be so; and therefore (if you have observed it) not only the making of a new Covenant is settled and raised by the gracious Will of God, but the bringing of us into that Covenant, doth totally depend upon the gracious and powerful pleasure of the same God; I will be their God, and they shall be my people: As to bring in a sinner unto Christ, it is not sufficient that he is the effect of his purchase; but it is likewise required that he be the fruit of his conquest. Jesus Christ must by his Spirit rescue him out of the possession of sin and Satan; So to bring a sinner into Covenant with God, it is not enough that the sinner lies

within the intention of grace, but it is moreover requisite, that God do put forth the mighty efficacy of his grace to subdue the heart and will of the sinner unto himself.

For the carrying on of this Direction, I would lay down six Positions.

1. That there is not in any sinner a self-sufficiency to close with God in a way of Covenant; for as the Covenant of grace is a truth of mere supernatural Revelation (no light of nature reveals it, or discovers it) so the bringing of the sinner into this Covenant, is a merely supernatural work. There is nothing in the sinner actively to contribute towards it; nay, all that is in the sinner, is naturally averse and contrary unto it; his natural judgment doth reason against it, and contradict it; and his natural will doth resist and oppose it, unbelief being predominant in both; and therefore the work being only the work of a God, the sinner hath no way to take but to go to God to work his own work in him, and for him.

2. The heart of a sinner, however it be naturally averse to God, and to fall in with him, yet the disobedience and resistance of it, is conquerable and subanable by the Almighty power of God, with whom nothing is impossible, and for whom nothing is too hard; He can quicken the dead, and give sight to the blind, and ears to the deaf, and deliver from the power of darkness, and take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh; And as it is in his liberty to form creatures into what kind of being he pleaseth, so it is in his power to make any creature yielding unto any part of his Will as he resolveth: he can abase the pride of man's heart, and break the hardness of man's heart, and heal the stoutness and the stubbornness of man's will, and turn it which

way soever he pleaseth, and fashion it (by a Commanding Power) into the obedience of his own Will.

3. There is no sinner (for ought that I know, living under the Gospel) who can infallibly determine it, that God hath peremptorily excepted against him, and absolutely excluded him from the Covenant; (that is) That God will never be a God to him, nor will he ever make him to be one of his people: Although at the present a sinner may certainly know that he is out of the Covenant, and he is none of his people; yet he doth not know that God will never be his God, and that he shall never be one of God's people; because, First, God reveals no such thing. Secondly, God doth reveal that some who are not his people, shall yet be his people. Thirdly, God ordinarily calls them to be his people who were not his people. Fourthly, The times and seasons of that call are unknown to the children of men; even these seasons also doth God reserve unto himself, and keep in his own hand and breast; therefore we should pray to God to bring us into Covenant; for who doth know what his purpose of grace may be, and what his thoughts of mercy are towards him?

4. The sinner, although he doth not know the secret intention of God, yet he doth know the gracious invitation of God; to leave his sins, and to believe in Christ, and to come into Covenant with him, and that he will show mercy to him. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Isa. 55:7. I think that there is no sinner living under the Gospel, but he lives under an external call; the Covenant of grace is (in some measure) made known unto him, and the glorious riches of mercy and grace, and he receives many a summons to come into Christ, to believe, to

accept of God to be his God, and to be one of his people; and also he knows upon what gracious terms God is contented to be his God: Now, because God is pleased in and by the Gospel, not only to reveal the Covenant of grace unto sinners, but also to treat indefinitely with sinners, and to offer mercy, and life, and salvation unto them, if they will come in and accept of himself in Christ. Truly here is a very heartening, encouraging ground at the least, to pray him to be our God, and to make us to be his people.

5. God himself doth propound this very way of prayer and seeking of him, as a means to find him to be our God, and to make us to be his people. When he sets out himself in relation to this Covenant-work in Ezekiel 36, from verse 25 to 36: he adds in verse 37, thus saith the Lord God, I will yet be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them, &c. as if he should say, All this I promise to be unto you, and to do for you; and do you inquire of me, or pray unto me, and all this you shall receive from me, &c. So here in Isa. 55, having declared the Covenant which he would make with us from verse 3, to verse 6, and in particular, that Christ should have Nations run unto him that did not know him; he prescribes this duty of praying and seeking of him, verse 6. Seek ye the Lord whiles he may be found; and call ye upon him whiles he is near; as if he should say, Thus graciously do I represent myself what I will be; therefore seek me, and call upon me, and I will be thus unto you.

6. Nay, once more God doth promise expressly, that upon our praying he will be our God, and that we shall be his people. And truly this puts the clearest light, and fullest life into this Direction; See a place for this, Zech. 13:9. They shall call upon my Name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and

they shall say, The Lord is my God. But now remember one thing, that as prayer is a means for this work, so it must be a cordial and affectionate praying; not a formal superficial, careless form, but the desires of the heart must be in that praying, and the fervency and wrestling's of the heart: If your hearts were but set on this, to have God to be your God, and to become his people, and if you did seek this with your whole hearts: O God I cannot be satisfied until thou art pleased to become my God, &c. the Lord would certainly answer the desires of your hearts.

2. If you would have God to be your God in Covenant, you must then break your Covenant with sin.

There are two Covenants which are inconsistent with this Covenant of grace. 1. One is the Covenant of good works. 2. The other is the Covenant with bad works; If one will set up his confidence on his own good works, he makes void the Covenant of grace; and if one will set his heart upon his sin, saying, I will not leave my sins, I love them, I will not forsake them; This man disables himself, he doth debar and exclude himself; God will not be his God, he will not make a Covenant with him; and indeed this sinner will not make a Covenant with God.

There are three things which God stands upon if we will have him to be ours in Covenant.

1. He insists upon your wills; you must be willing to be mine, saith God, to be married unto me, to take me for your Husband.

2. He insists upon your hearts; you must love me, I must have your heart, your love must be mine.

3. He insists upon your service; you must be willing to obey and serve me; I must be your Lord, and you must be my servants.

But none of these will be, if you keep up a Covenant with sin: you will never be willing to be his, if you resolve to keep your sins; and you cannot love the Lord, if you love your sins; neither can you serve him, if you will obey sin as your Lord; There is an absolute incompatibility for this, both on God's part, and on your part, and on the Covenants part.

1. On God's part; for he cannot nor will not make any agreement with unrighteousness, nor hold communion with any who will hold communion with darkness; he is of purer eyes than to behold sin; much more than to agree with sin; it is contrary to his nature, it were dishonorable for him so to do, to admit a competition with that which he so much threatens; and which his soul doth hate and abhor.

2. On our part; your hearts cannot be brought to hold up a Covenant with God, and yet to hold up a Covenant with your sins; you cannot love God, and that which is contrary to God; you cannot love sin, and that which is contrary to sin at the same time; for if you love the Lord, you will hate sin; and if you love sin, you will hate the Lord.

3. On the Covenants part; the Covenant of God is to change the sinful heart, it is to subdue iniquity, it is to cleanse us from all our uncleanness, it is to make us an holy people unto the Lord; so that of necessity you must resolve on it to break off your Covenant with sin, if you will have God to be your God in Covenant, 2 Cor. 6:17. Come one from among them, and be ye separated saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, ver. 18, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty: Mark this place, it shows expressly the way of coming into the Covenant; you must not make agreement with darkness, nor



with Idols, you must separate from them, you must have nothing to do with any uncleanness, (that is,) you must resolve never to join yourselves to any sin, never to love or serve it; and then saith God, I will receive you; what's that? That is, then I will be your God, I will take you into Covenant, I will own you for mine, I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters: Are you sure that you will be so? Yea, for thus saith the Lord Almighty, Ezek. 11:18. They shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abominations thereof, verse 19. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, &c. verse 20. That they may walk in my Statutes, and do them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Therefore examine your hearts what sin lies there, which makes a breach, which keeps up enmity 'twixt you and God, and put it far away, &c.

3. If you would have the Lord to be your God in Covenant, then judge your selves for your ancient breach of the first Covenant with him, and for your sins since that, and confess your absolute unworthiness to be admitted and received into another Covenant with him.

O when a soul comes to be afflicted for sins, and to acknowledge itself unworthy of mercies, this soul is in a right posture for mercies. God made a Covenant with us in Adam, and stated life upon us in case of obedience; but we presently brake Covenant with him, and proved unfaithful, and dealt treacherously with him, fell off from him for a thing of naught, and all the days of our lives have we been sinning, and dishonoring and provoking of him, so that had we our desert, so far might God be from accepting of us into a new Covenant, that he might justly condemn us for our transgressing of the old Covenant; if we did seriously and sadly review these things, till our hearts were humbled within us, and that we saw our life to be the free gift of God again, and that we stood at his mercy only to

spare us and pity us, and accept of us; and in this posture come to God, and cry out, O save me for thy mercies sake: Lord, I have undone myself, I have left thee, I have lost thee, I have dealt unfaithfully with thee, I have sinned exceedingly against thee, I have gone far from thee; yet I come back to thee; I hear thou art a merciful God, though I am a sinful wretch; I hear that thou art a gracious God, though I am an unworthy sinner; I hear that thou hast made a new Covenant to relieve and succor them who have violated the first Covenant; I hear that this Covenant is full of grace and mercy, and pity, and help, and happiness; I come to thee to make peace with thee, to be reconciled unto me, to show me favor; I perish if thou reject me; I live if thou accept of me; I can bring nothing, I can challenge nothing; only thou sayst, That thou wilt have mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy; and may not a poor miserable unworthy sinner be made capable of thy mercy? May he not be received unto mercy? Why else didst thou give Christ? Why else didst thou set up a Covenant of grace? O Lord receive me graciously, and love me freely, and for thine own sake become my God, and make me to be one of thy people: Verily, this is a moving way, and this is a taking way, for God doth look upon the humble and contrite spirit, and he will hear the desire of the humble, He will prepare their hearts, and cause his ear to hear, Ezek. 16:61. Thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, &c. ver. 62. And I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

4. If you would have God to be your God in Covenant, then you must get faith; for God is a God in Covenant only with believers: and there are three degrees of faith necessary unto this work; one is a faith of acceptance; a second is a faith of dependence; a third is a faith of reliance; I will explain myself in all these.

1. A faith of acceptance is necessary to put us into the Covenant, and to find God to be our God; that is, we must have so much faith as to accept of Christ, and to unite us unto Christ; for in that union twixt us and Christ, in this relation of God to us is he to be found; By him we have access unto the Father, Ephes. 2. Out of Christ you shall never find God to be reconciled unto you, nor to be your God: As to Christ, God first is a God in Covenant, and Father in Covenant; so to us, God becomes our God and our Father upon our being in Christ. Christ received the Covenant for himself, and for all who are his; he is as it were the head, and the principal in the Covenant; all his come into Covenant under him as in relation to him.

2. A faith of dependence upon Christ particularly for his great satisfactions unto God; that is, we must depend upon the blood of Christ, and by faith offer that up as a satisfaction for all our sins and transgressions which have all this while kept God and us at distance and difference; his blood is the sacrifice by which God's justice is satisfied; and truly until divine justice be satisfied for our sins, there is no hope of a Covenant to be made 'twixt God and us; and therefore by faith look upon the blood of Christ, and offer up that blood by faith; Lord, here is the blood of the Covenant, here is the blood of Christ to satisfy for my sins, and to expiate my sins; now in this blood of his become my God in Covenant.

3. A faith of reliance upon the mediation of Christ as the atonement and peace, and reconciliation; Christ did make peace by his blood, and he did reconcile us by it, Colos. 1:20,21. And we who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, Ephes. 2:13.

I know not a more exact way to get God to be our God, than by getting into Christ, in whom alone our re-union with God is to be

found, and by whom alone God and we are knit together again; not without cause is he called the Mediator of the new Covenant, who undertakes between God and us, (as you shall hear ere long) he undertakes to take away all which may keep up the difference 'twixt us, and he undertakes to present all which may make a reconciliation betwixt us; he doth make the way so open, and so clear, that our entrance into Covenant will certainly follow, if once we were possessed of him by faith; his blood being shed for the remission of our sins, and likewise to procure a reconciliation 'twixt God and us; and therefore above all things strive for faith to unite you to Christ, and then by faith plead out the reconciliation purchased by Christ.

5. Apply yourselves unto the Ordinances of Christ, which are the means to work all these things in you, and particularly this faith which is so necessary, and so immediate to our admission into the Covenant. Ephes. 1:13. In whom you also trusted after that you heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; the Gospel is that Ordinance by which God makes known the Covenant of grace, and by which faith is wrought to bring us into Christ, and by him into Covenant with God, and by which our faith is so enlarged and confirmed, that at length we come to know that God is indeed our God in Covenant.

6. I will add one direction more as a help to bring us into the Covenant, and taking of God to be our God; and that is a serious meditation of God himself, and of the nature of this Covenant of grace.

1. A serious meditation of God; there is nothing in him to discourage you from coming into Covenant with him; and there is all in him to encourage you.

1. There is nothing in him to discourage you from coming into Covenant with him: He doth not in this Covenant treat with you for any personal satisfaction, for the wrong which you have done him, neither doth he insist for any goodness that you should work in your own hearts, nor doth he except against you for any unworthiness in you, nor doth he distinguish you away for the greatness of your former transgressions, nor yet doth deny you hope and access, although you have a long time denied him audience unto his gracious offers, nor doth he capitulate with you in your own name, but by a Mediator, who is most pleasing to him, and prevalent with him.

2. There is all in and from him to encourage you to come into Covenant with him; for he doth express himself to be a merciful God towards sinners; to be a gracious God to the sinners that come to him, to be a tender God easily moved at the tears and cries of those who would be his people; to be a willing God to accept of you, and to close with you; and therefore he first makes known this Covenant, and he first offers to treat with you about this Covenant, and he makes the terms of agreement as fair as grace itself can frame them; and he out of his own cost provided and sent Jesus Christ to be both the Messenger of the Covenant, and the Mediator of the Covenant; and besides all this, he affords unto you the Gospel to work faith in you, that so you may become the people of his Covenant; and moreover, he makes promises unto you of everything which belongs to the making of a people to be the people of his Covenant; yea, and he promiseth his own Spirit to them that ask him, by whose mighty operation we come indeed to be his people. Truly a serious meditation of all this, might conduce much to persuade our hearts to come in unto him, and take him for our God in Covenant.

A second meditation of the nature of this Covenant of grace, both as to the composition of it, and to the happiness in and by it.

1. This Covenant of grace is so modeled and framed with as winning and alluring a way for sinners, as possibly can be drawn out by the wisdom of a kind and good God. It is made with all advantages to the sinner, so that if there be any loosing or damnifying, it falls rather to God than to the sinner; all the expressions of it are upon the account of God's grace. And it is made with such tender respects to poor sinners, that all the active part to make them to be the people of God is undertaken by God himself; he undertakes to make us to be his people, to give himself, to give Christ, to give his Spirit, to give a new heart, to give the Spirit of prayer, to give the Spirit of faith, to give pardoning mercy, to give all: O how might all this (if seriously and rightly meditated upon) melt in our hearts to God, and make us willing to take him for our God!

2. And as the Covenant of grace is framed to allure in the sinner, so when the sinner is brought in, it settles upon him the only true happiness, and all true happiness with certainty, and to all eternity. As soon as ever you take God to be your God, and are become his people, immediately is blessedness settled upon you as your portion, and as your portion forever: Psal. 34:12. Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. Psal. 144. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.

## CHAP. V

And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. - Isaiah 55:3.

I Have discoursed of the Covenant of grace as it stands in opposition to the Covenant of works; and likewise of the vital nature of it, the very marrow and sum of it, in those expressions, I will be to you a God, and you shall be to me a people.

I am now in the third place to open unto you this Covenant in the adjuncts or properties of it, which do (as it were) blazon and enamel this Covenant, or set it out in beautiful colors to the eyes of us poor and distressed sinners; as God appeared unto Moses in his glory, when he made himself known unto him in his gracious Attributes; so this Covenant appears in wonderful glory when it is opened in the admirable adjuncts or properties of it.

There are twelve adjuncts given unto this Covenant.

1. It is a new Covenant.
2. It is a plentiful or perfect Covenant.
3. It is a bountiful and giving Covenant.
4. It is a free or gracious Covenant.
5. It is a well-ordered Covenant.
6. It is a pure or holy Covenant.

7. It is a sure or steadfast Covenant.
8. It is the last Covenant.
9. It is an everlasting Covenant.
10. It is the best Covenant.
11. It is a clear and open, and plain Covenant.
12. It is the only Covenant.

#### SECT. I.

1. This Covenant is a New Covenant; I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, Jer. 31:31. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, Heb. 8:8.

In Scripture the word (New) is diversely taken.

1. Sometimes that is styled New, which succeeds another; in Exod. 1:8, there arose a New King; in Acts 7:18, this New King is called another King: In this respect this Covenant is a New Covenant, it succeeds another Covenant, a former Covenant it follows the Covenant of works.

Quest. It may be argued Why the Covenant of works should be first, and the Covenant of grace next?

Sol. We may be satisfied concerning this order: First, from the pleasure of God, that he would have it thus. Secondly, from the wisdom of God, who by this order glorifies his justice in the one, and



his mercy in the other. Thirdly, From the capacity of man, who being at the first created righteous, was thereby fitted for a Covenant of works, and his created condition was unmeet for a Covenant of grace; but being fallen, his sinful condition became fit and meet for a Covenant of grace, and utterly unfit for a Covenant of works.

2. Sometimes that is styled New which is wonderful, unusual, the like not heard of before; The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man, Jer. 31:22. That a Virgin should conceive and bring forth a man-child, this was a new thing, it was wonderful indeed, so Isa. 43:19. Behold, I will do a New thing, I will even make a way in the Wilderness, and Rivers in the Desert; this was a new work, (that is) wonderful and unusual; In this respect also is the Covenant of grace styled New, (that is) it is a wonderful Covenant; how wonderful is it, that the Lord who was so exceedingly dishonored, and injured, and provoked by sinners, should yet so infinitely condescend to sinners, as to treat afresh with them, and to offer life unto them upon better and surer terms than before; and should promise such exceeding mercies, and give such a gracious Redeemer and Mediator!

There are four things wherein and for which God will be eternally admired. 1. In making this Covenant of grace. 2. In giving his only Son for a Savior. 3. In bringing any sinner to Christ, and into the Covenant. 4. In the glorifying of them that believe.

3. Sometimes that is styled New, which is excellent and very necessary, John 13:34. A New Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; this Commandment is a new Commandment; that is, it is a rare, an excellent, a necessary Commandment; so Rev. 2:17. To him that overcomes I will give a New name; that is, an excellent name, to be one of the sons of God, which is called a dignity, an

excellent privilege, John 1:12. In this respect also is the Covenant of grace styled New, it is an excellent Covenant, and very necessary.

It is excellent, consider it either comparatively; no Covenant like unto this; that Covenant of works falls exceeding short of it; and that Covenant with nature for the preservation of common life, is not to be compared with it.

Or absolutely in itself; it is all of excellencies; an excellent love, an excellent Christ, the most excellent mercies, and the only excellent happiness.

Or respectively unto us; our hopes, our helps, our comforts, our life, our eternal life lies in this Covenant; all the good which we do enjoy, or can enjoy, or shall ever enjoy, all our springs are in it.

4. Sometimes that is styled New, which is diverse from what it was before; 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; that is, he is not such a creature as he was before; he is renewed, he is changed into the image of the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3:18. In this respect also is the Covenant styled New, not only because it is diverse from the Covenant of works, (in the foundation and condition, and qualifications of the persons in Covenant) but also because it is diverse from itself, in respect of the administration of it, after that Christ was manifested in the flesh, and died, and rose again; from the different administration it is called Old and New.

Now it appears with open face, without any veil of legal Shadows and Ceremonies at all. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; and God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; and whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. It is now like a new Lease fairly written over with a new hand, and new seals, and new witnesses: Though this Covenant

be the same for substance in Abraham's and Moses time, yet (upon the coming of Christ) it is new for the manner of administration; it hath not those seals of Circumcision and the Passover, nor Sacrifices, nor Ceremonies, nor Types, and Legal Figures which formerly it had; it hath now the Mediator himself to deliver it, and his new seals of Baptism, and the Supper, and is established after a new manner, even by the blood of Christ: and hath many new institutions and adjuncts, &c.

This is the Covenant which God makes with us, even a New Covenant, a Covenant of life upon new terms, a Covenant which hath a new foundation, a Covenant which hath new promises, a Covenant which hath a new original, and spring, a Covenant which hath a new way of claim and title, a Covenant which gives new hopes, and a Covenant which hath new seals and confirmations.

Surely there is infinite reason for us poor and miserable sinners to bless the Lord even for this that he hath made all things New, and especially for making a new Covenant; had the Lord utterly left us, when we left him; had he held us to that first Covenant of works, and proceeded against us for the breach of that Covenant, we had every one of us forever been condemned and lost; but he was pleased to make a new Covenant with us, where mercy is to be found for sinners, and a Redeemer for transgressors, and a Mediator 'twixt himself and us, and our lives may yet be found in his grace and love, and Christ, and all this springing from his own grace and love! What should oblige our hearts, and raise our thankfulness if this doth not?

2. Then there is no reason for distressed sinners to sink and despair, although they have been Covenant-breakers, and are never able to recompense God, nor to raise up themselves; for this new Covenant is made for the refuge and support of such sinners: And herein God

reveals himself to be a God forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and to receive satisfaction for a sinner, though not from the sinner; I say for a sinner by a Mediator who hath likewise purchased reconciliation and favor, and mercy, and salvation for us.

3. Not to refuse this Covenant, this new Covenant; for as it is said of Christ, That there is no other Name given to us by which we must be saved, Acts 4:12, so there is no Covenant but this new Covenant which can relieve and save a sinner: as it was with men in the time of the Deluge and the Ark, all that got into the Ark were saved; and all who entered not into the Ark were lost; so all who get into this new Covenant, they live and are saved; and all who enter not into this New Covenant, shall die in their sins and perish.

## SECT. II.

2. A Second propriety of the Covenant is this, it is a very perfect, plentiful, and rich Covenant. And this will appear whether you will consider,

1. The Author of this Covenant.

2. Or the Mediator of this Covenant.

3. Or the Covenant itself.

1. The Author of this Covenant, who therein sets out all his gracious fullness; here you shall find him full of love, and therefore the Apostle calls his love, a great love, Ephes. 2:4, and an exalted love; God commendeth his love towards us, in that whiles we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, Rom. 5:8. And Saint John calls it a wonderful love; Behold what manner of love the Father hath

bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! 1 John 3:1. Nay, Christ himself calls it an inexpressible love. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c. John. 3:16. And the Apostle repeats the love of God as the character and pattern of all love; Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for us.

In mercy, in relation to this Covenant he is said to be rich in mercy, Ephes. 2:4. God who is rich in mercy; nay, to have riches of mercy. Ephes. 3:16. According to the riches of his glory; nay, to show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus, Ephes. 2:7, nay, to be exceeding abundant; 1 Tim. 1:14. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, abundant mercy, 1 Pet. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope; where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, Rom. 5:20. Sin doth exceedingly abound by way of extension, and by way of intension, in practice, in degrees, and in deserts; but the mercy or grace of God, it doth over-abound; it is more than enough for the pardoning of the greatest sinners; yea, of all the sins of all his people; his mercy is like himself, infinite and unsearchable: And therefore the Church cries out, Who is a God like unto thee? That pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, &c.

In goodness; not only full of an essential goodness, (which is his own eternal and infinite perfection) but also full of a Covenant goodness; O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Psal. 31:19. He is great in goodness, Neh. 9:35. He is abundant in goodness, Exod. 34:6. How great is his goodness? Zach. 9:17. The riches of his goodness, Rom. 2:4. No good thing will he withhold, Psal. 84:11.

2. The Mediator of this Covenant; how full and rich is Jesus Christ? Of his fullness do all we receive, he fills all in all: The Godhead dwells bodily in him, in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; there are the unsearchable riches of Christ; he is a perfect Redeemer, and is able to save to the utmost.

3. The Covenant itself: There is nothing left out, and there is nothing which can be added unto it; the wisdom and goodness of God have made it a complete storehouse and treasury of all the good, and of all the help which all the children of God have, do, or ever shall need. Here is grace, and here is glory; here is all things pertaining to life, and all things pertaining to godliness; here is for the life present, and for the life which is to come; here are all sorts of comforts for the distressed, and all sorts of helps for the needy, and all sorts of defenses for the exposed; here is the Sun, and the Shield, and exceeding great reward.

This is an exceeding stay and comfort to all the people of God's Covenant; other people are in want, and know not whether to go for help, or for any good; but you have a good God to go unto, and a good Covenant to go unto. Other people may know whither to go for this or that particular good, but they know not whither to go for all the good which they do need; they may go to one friend for counsel, and to another for alms, and to another for physic; but to whom can they go for mercy to pardon their sins, or for peace to ease their troubled souls? But you who are the people of God, you have a Covenant to go unto which contains all manner of good for all the conditions of your souls, and for all the conditions of your bodies. Here is mercy to pardon, and loving-kindness to comfort, and righteousness to justify, and grace to sanctify, and peace to quiet, and glory to save; here is food for the body, and raiment, and safety, and blessing, and defense; here is all; others may give, and find a little

help, and a little comfort, and a little provision; but you have a Covenant to go unto which can give you all things richly to enjoy, abundant goodness, abundant compassions, abundant mercies, abundant love, abundant grace, abundant joy, abundant consolation, and abundant salvation; all things, all good things are treasured up in this Covenant, and there they are in their perfection; not one good without another, but all good together; not a little of one, and a little of another, but every good in perfection and fullness; a perfect God, and a perfect Mediator, and perfect love and mercy, and righteousness, &c.

2. This is an exceeding encouragement unto you under any wants, or in any great distresses, to go by faith unto your God, who hath made a full and perfect Covenant with you. O thou distressed sinner, here is mercy enough laid up for thee, and here is peace enough, and goodness enough, and power enough, and grace enough, and help enough. God doth not promise unto you a little of his mercy, nor a little of his kindness, nor a little of the righteousness of Christ, nor a little of holiness, nor a little of spiritual joy; Psal. 81:10. Open thy mouth wide, (enlarge the desires of your hearts, you do not crave enough) and I will fill it, (I will plentifully answer, and satisfy you) Eat O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly O beloved! Phil. 4:19. My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. Heb. 4:16. Let us come boldly unto the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need; you have no cause to be dejected, either with the multitude of your wants, or with the depth and greatness of your distresses; nor have you any cause to doubt and fear the supply and redress of these; for God hath made a full, rich and perfect Covenant with you; whiles there are answerable supplies, and super-abounding helps, and these in a Covenant, and for you, there is more reason to set your faith on work to fetch in the supplies, than to set your fear on work because of your

wants; in all your distressed and needy conditions, be pleased to look on this Covenant, (seriously do so) bring your wants and distresses thither, and there shall you find proper helps, and plentiful engagements; and now stir up your faith to believe, and to take hold on God: Lord, here is the mercy which I need, and here is the exceeding riches of mercy which I do need, and here is the love, the great love, and here is the grace, the abundant grace, and here is the comfort, and the abundant comfort, and here is the strength, the greatness of that strength which I do need, here it is laid up for thee by me; I come unto thee in the Name of Christ, (whose I am) and I beseech thee abundantly to pardon me, to supply all my need according to thy riches in glory.

### SECT. III.

3. A Third property of this Covenant, is, that it is a giving Covenant; Gen. 17:2. I will make my Covenant between thee and me; in the Original it is, I will give thee my Covenant; as God spake unto Phineas, Num. 25:12. I give unto him my Covenant of peace; so he doth give a Covenant unto his people, Isa. 42:6. I give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. Isa. 55:4. Behold I have given him for a witness to the people; survey the Covenant all over, you shall find it to be a giving Covenant in all the particulars of it.

God gives himself to be ours, therefore he is called our Husband, Isa. 54:5. The husband gives himself to the wife, so doth God to us.

And he gives Christ; he gave his only begotten Son, John 3:16, and Christ did give himself, Gal. 2:20.



And he gives his love, Cant. 7:12. There will I give thee my love.

And he gives his peace. John 14:27. My peace I give unto you.

And he gives eternal life. John 10:28. I give unto them eternal life.

And he gives his Spirit. He will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke 11:13.

And he gives the new heart, and the new spirit. Ezek. 36:26. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.

And he gives faith; Unto you it is given to believe. Phil. 1:29. By grace are you saved through faith. It is the gift of God, Ephes. 28.

And he gives repentance. Acts 11:18. Then hath God given (or granted) unto the Gentiles repentance unto life.

And he gives mercy. 2 Tim. 1:16. The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus.

And he also freely gives us all things. Rom. 8:32. He gives grace, and he gives glory, Psal. 84:11.

And he gives unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by them we might be partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4.

This Covenant is a Covenant of gifts; all that God promiseth in it, is given; and all that God requires of us is given; and all that we are to give again to God, is first given unto us by God.

And there are two reasons, why this Covenant is an altogether giving Covenant.

1. One is our universal brokenness, and impotency, and insufficiency; our sinful fall hath so ship-wrecked and ruined us, that we have nothing at all left us; we are naked, and poor, and miserable, Rev. 3:17. Without strength, Rom. 5:6. Not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, 2 Cor. 3:5. What hast thou that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4:7. Such a broken vessel is the sinner, such a self-undoing, and destitute creatures; like the Prodigal who spent all, and had neither bread nor raiment, nor shoes, nor anything; and therefore his father must provide all, and give all; he must give him housing, and he must give him raiment, and he must give him shoes for his feet, and he must give him meat to eat, and wine to drink. Where the creature is universally miserable, and utterly impotent, there must be nothing but giving; Mercy must give all, or the sinner is undone.

2. Another is God's intention and purpose in this Covenant, and that in the praise of the glory of his grace, Ephes. 1:6, His intent in making this Covenant, is wholly and only to exalt himself, to proclaim his own glory; and therefore he will give all, and the sinner is to receive all, that all the glory and praise of mercy, of grace, of blessings, may be returned unto himself alone. Rom. 11:35. Who hath first given to him? And it shall be recompensed unto him again. Ver. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen.

If this Covenant be a giving Covenant, then the poor and needy may traffic at it. If it were a buying and selling Covenant (in proper sense) then poor sinners must despair; but it is a giving Covenant, and therefore poor sinners have hope; May not the poor (who keep no house of their own) yet go to the rich man's door where all is given?

When we survey our hearts and conditions, we find a world of wants, and when we survey the Covenant, we find a Heaven of supplies.

Objection. But then we fear, and dispute, and reason, But how shall we get this mercy, and gain that blessing, and enjoy that help? We have nothing, and we can bring nothing; the Well indeed is deep, but we have nothing to draw.

Sol. True, but yet God can give all, though you can bring nothing; and according to the tenor of this Covenant, He will give all, the greatest and the least; But will he give me food and raiment? Yes, he will give you bread, and he will give you double clothing.

O, But will he give me Grace? Yes, he will give grace and glory.

O, But will he give me Christ? Yes he will give his Christ, that greatest gift that ever was given to sinners; he is the gift of God; O but will he give me mercy to pardon my sins? And all my sins? Yes, he will show mercy, and will forgive all thy sins whereby thou hast sinned against him; O but will he give me Faith? Yes, he will draw you to Christ, and put forth an Almighty power to make you to believe; O but will he give me another heart? Yes, I will give thee a new heart, &c. O but I must pray if I would have these, and I cannot pray! Why? And it is his Covenant to give you the Spirit of grace and supplication; Let these things quiet your sorrowful and troubled souls; There is enough in the Covenant for you, and all that is there, is to be given.

2. Be content to come and receive, seeing God is pleased in this Covenant to be giving: He is all upon the giving hand, and we should be all upon the receiving hand; The giving work is God's work, and the receiving work is our work; he finds the gift, you must open your hand and take it. O what a blessed Covenant is this, wherein you may have all for asking and receiving! Mat. 7:7. Ask, and it shall be given.

James 1:5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and it shall be given him. John 4:10. If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

Now there are four qualities, which if you could get them, you would then be content and willing to come unto God, and beg of him, and receive of him what he will give (and without these you will not do so.)

1. One is poverty of spirit; you must be poor in spirit: the poor man speaks supplications, saith Solomon; It was poor Lazarus that came to the rich man's door; and it is the poor sinner (one who is truly sensible of his spiritual wants and miseries) who will come to the door of mercy, and cry out, O Father of mercies give me mercy! O God of grace give me grace! O give me Christ, &c. If you be rich and increased, and stand in need of nothing (as Laodicea was) if you have enough of your own; if you think that you are righteous, and need not Christ, and need not mercy, &c. you will never come to God, and beg him to give you these.

2. A second is humility of heart; a proud man scorns to beg, and scorns to receive; he will not be beholding to anybody; it is the humble man who will acknowledge mercy, and bless for mercy, and beg for mercy, and be glad he may have mercy upon receiving terms. God gives grace to the humble, and the humble are thankfully contented to receive grace from God.

3. A praying heart, will be glad to be receiving.

4. A fourth is Faith; Faith is a receiving grace; therefore believing is styled receiving; To as many as received him, he gave this dignity to

be the Sons of God, even to them that believe on him. Faith receives Christ, and receives mercy, and receives love, and receives righteousness, and receives blessings, and receives all the gifts of God. Though God hath all to give, yet you have no hand to receive, until you get faith.

3. Is the Covenant a giving Covenant? Is it such a Covenant wherein the Lord undertakes to give all the good mentioned therein? This then yields manifold comfort to the people of God, who are in Covenant with him.

1. If God undertakes to give all, then certainly he undertakes to find all good for us; If he undertakes to give a Christ, he must find out that Christ; and if he undertakes to give you mercy, he then must find out that mercy, &c.

2. If God undertakes to give all, then he must find all from himself, and of his own; Men many times give away that which is none of their own; but God gives nothing but what is his own, but what comes out of his own stock and treasury.

3. If God undertakes to give all in the Covenant, then you shall be surely helped; you have good reason to expect it, for your Father hath all to give; How much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask? Will not a father give to his poor child? Certainly your God is an infinite God, a most gracious and glorious God, and perfectly all-sufficient; he hath heaven and earth in his own possession; he hath all the good to dispose of which is good; he must needs be infinite in mercy, who can give all mercies, and infinite in grace, who can give all grace, and infinite in glory, who can give all glory, &c. For as this shows his infiniteness that he hath all good to give, so this shows his perfection, that when he hath given all this, yet there is no diminution made in his stock at all.

4. If God undertakes to give you all that is in his Covenant, then unquestionably he loves you. Indeed he gives many things to the wicked his enemies, whom he hates; but to undertake to give all the good in the Covenant, this proceeds from his great love, and from his special love; Doth not God love you, who is willing to give you his love? And to give you his Christ the Son of his love? And to give you all the graces of his Spirit, the fruits of his love?

5. If God undertakes to give you all, even the greatest of mercies, can you reasonably imagine that he will stick with you for the least of necessary mercies and blessings? How shall he not with him, freely also give us all things?

#### SECT. IV.

A fourth property of this Covenant is this, It is a free or gracious Covenant; By grace are ye saved, Ephes. 2:5. By grace are ye saved, Verse 8. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, 2 Thes. 2:16. Being justified freely by his grace, Rom. 3:24. I will love them freely; Hosea 14:4. Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, Revel. 22:17. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely, Revel. 21:6. He freely forgave them both, Luke 7:42. The things that are freely given unto us of God, 1 Cor. 2:12.

This Covenant is gracious or free in three respects. 1. For the constitution of it. 2. For the reception into it. 3. For the donations from it.

1. For the exceeding framing out, or constituting of this Covenant, when was it? And with whom was it? And whence was it? All these will plainly demonstrate, that this Covenant is a very free and gracious Covenant.

1. Consider the time when it was made and set forth; why immediately upon the fall; then when man-kind had sinned and transgressed the first Covenant; then when God might have glorified his justice upon all sinners, yet then was the time that he promised this Covenant; The seed of the woman shall break, the Serpents head, Gen. 3:15. Surely this must needs be gracious, then to set up a Throne of grace, when sinful man was to receive his sentence at the Bar of Justice.

2. Consider the persons with whom this Covenant is made; It was made not with fallen Angels, but with men; why not with them, as well as with us? No answer can be given but this of grace; I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious; and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; Nay, and why with fallen men at all? No answer can be given for this neither, but only the grace of God, and his own good pleasure; so it pleased him, and so it seemed good unto him.

3. Consider whence the making of this Covenant did arise; Did it arise from any goodness in any man? O no, All the world was found guilty before God, and every mouth was stopped by reason of sin, Rom. 3:19. Or did it arise from any desire or entreaty of man? Not at all; but as man first brought in sin and death, so God first thought of mercy and life. He is found of them that sought him not, Isa. 65:1. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help, Hosea 13:9. The Lord set his love upon you to take you into Covenant, &c. because he loved you, Deut. 7:7,8.

2. For the reception into this Covenant, here the graciousness or freeness of it will also manifestly appear.

Consider the persons taken or brought into this Covenant either absolutely in themselves, or respectively in their dealing towards God, or comparatively with others; As to all these considerations, this Covenant is a very gracious and free Covenant.

1. Consider the persons now taken into Covenant, what they were is themselves. The Prophet tells you what they were, in Ezekiel 16:3. Thy birth and thy Nativity was of the Lord of Canaan; thy Father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. Ver. 4. Thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. Ver. 5. No eye pitied thee to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion on thee; but thou wast cast out into the open field, to the loathing of thy person in the day that thou wast born. Ver. 6. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. Ver. 8. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Yea, and the Apostle tells us what persons they were, whom yet God took into Covenant. Titus 3:3. We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. Ver. 4. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards man appeared. Ver. 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. In these places we see that there can be nothing found in us, either as to our natures, or as to our works, which might move God to take us into Covenant; but



enough in both for him to reject us; and yet notwithstanding both, he is pleased to enter into Covenant with us, and save us; This must needs be grace and mercy.

2. Consider the persons taken now into Covenant, in their former respectiveness of state and actions towards God; The Apostle saith, That whiles we were yet enemies, Christ died for us; And when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. 5:8,10. Surely mercy shewn to enemies, must needs be free mercy; and to receive enemies into favor, this must be gracious favor; yet to do this to enemies even in their hostility, for God to take his enemies into his hands of mercy, and become a singular friend to them, even in the time of their raging and fighting against him; this must needs be of grace. It was remarkable favor in David, to spare the life of Saul his enemies much more in God, not only to spare the lives of sinners and enemies, but to give them their souls and his Christ, and his mercy, and his salvation. You read of those in Acts 2:23, they were men who had by wicked hands crucified and slain the Lord Jesus; and verse 13, at the present were mocking at the Apostles, as if they had been a company of drunkards; These men are full of new wine; Yet these men, and at this time, and in this posture, God laid hold on by his grace, and convinced them, and humbled them, and gave them faith, and brought them into this Covenant with himself, as you may see from verse 37, to 47. The like you read of Saul, when he was raging and waxing mad, and breathing out persecutions against Christ, and against the Church of Christ; Being in this woeful wretched posture, the Lord takes hold of him, and left him not until he had brought him into this blessed Covenant of grace and mercy.

3. Consider persons comparatively with other persons; you shall find that the taking of any person into Covenant is gracious and free; in

comparing of persons with persons, ordinarily God passeth by those on whom we should fix admiration, and look at some cause and reasons of pre-acceptation, and chooseth those, and brings in those in whom nothing at all is to be pre-supposed. Sometimes he passeth by the greater persons, and takes in the meaner persons, he passeth by the wise, and takes in the foolish; he passeth by the mighty, and takes in the weak; he passeth by the noble, and takes in the base. 1 Cor. 1:29. Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. Ver. 27. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak things of the world. Ver. 28, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not. Ver. 29, that no flesh should glory in his presence. So sometimes of persons, whereof some are more notorious and wicked, and vile, and others are not so abominable; he is pleased to leave the lesser sort of sinners, and to bring in the vilest of sinners; Publicans and Harlots were brought in into the Kingdom of God, when the superstitious and righteous Pharisees were excluded; Paul the chiefest of sinners was taken in, and others were left; Mary Magdalen was brought in, and others past by; and why doth God do this, but that men should acknowledge that it is no worthiness of the sin; that brings him in, nor any unworthiness of the sinner that shuts him out? But all springs from the grace of God alone; that he brings not in any sinner upon his own account, but only upon the account of free grace.

3. Lastly, the Covenant is free as to the dispensations and donations of it; what is that? That is all that drops out of this Covenant; all that good flowing from it, and running down upon us, are only gracious flowing's, only free bounties and gifts. The Papists talk of a meritum de congruo, whiles we are in the state of nature; and of a meritum de condigno, after we are in the state of grace. But we know no merit but that of sin which deserves damnation; and the merit of Christ

which deserves salvation; All our standing, and all our expectation it the grace of God, that is the reason of all our enjoyments; God doth not give us Christ because we deserve a Christ, but because he is pleased freely to bestow Christ upon us; God doth not forgive our sins for our own sake, but for his own Name sake. God doth not love us for anything in us, but he loves us freely, because he is pleased to love us; God doth not save us for any works of ours, but he saves us for his mercies sake; God doth not bless us for our goodness sake, but he blesseth us only for his Christ's sake, and his promises sake: God doth not justify us for the sake of our own righteousness, but he justifies us freely by his own grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Rom. 3:24.

Objection. But some may say, God is not free in doing of his people good, because he hath by promise bound himself to do them good.

Solution. I answer. 1. It was the freeness of his grace to make all those promises. 2. Though he binds himself in promises to do us good, yet he doth not accomplish those promises upon the reason of our goodness or deserts, but upon the account of his own mercifulness, and goodness, and graciousness.

Obj. But he promiseth many things conditionally, and lets them out upon such and such conditions, and herefore not freely.

Sol. I answer.

1. Every kind of condition is not opposite to grace, as I shall shortly demonstrate unto you.

2. Whatsoever condition he makes with his people for the enjoyment of any good, he doth freely give, and work that condition in them.

3. No condition on our part hath any reason of merit in it, which is the thing opposite to grace, but it is only a means by which we come certainly to enjoy that which God is pleased graciously to give; In this respect we are said to be justified by faith, and to be saved by faith, and yet we are also justified by grace, and saved by grace; Faith you see is put in as a condition, and yet it excludes not grace; Nay, because by faith, therefore by grace; for our faith and God's grace can well agree, though God's grace and man's deserts can never agree.

Now lets make a little Use of all this.

Is the Covenant which God makes with us a gracious Covenant? O what cause have we poor and unworthy sinners to bless God for all this! O Beloved! It is grace which is the life of this Covenant, and which is life to our souls; it is not all the love that is promised in the Covenant, it is not all the mercy that is promised in the Covenant, it is not all the holiness that is promised in the Covenant, it is not all the comforts and joys, and peace, and blessings which are promised in the Covenant, it is not that eternal life, and glorious salvation promised in the Covenant, it is not Jesus Christ, and all the purchases of Christ drawn into this Covenant; none of these, nor all these would be any hope, or any encouragement, or any life at all unto us, were the graciousness of the Covenant left out. If the Lord should say unto us, Here is the sweetest love that ever sinner tasted of, but you must deserve it; alas, then I cannot expect it. Here is the precious Christ, the Author of salvation, but you must deserve him; alas then I shall never enjoy him; here is pardoning mercy to forgive all your sins, but you must deserve it; O then I shall never partake of it. As he said *Tolle meum & tolle Deum*, so say I, *Tolle gratiam & tolle omnia*; take away grace, and take away all; then take away Christ, and take away God, and take away mercy, and take away heaven, and take away hope, and take away all; the sinner is utterly lost upon any

account, but that of grace only; it is this graciousness which makes him capable, and makes him hopeful; here is a loving God, and he will love you freely; here is a merciful God, and he will pardon you freely; here is a converting God, and he will receive you graciously; here is a good God, and he will bless you graciously, &c. Now the sinner begins to have hope, and begins to hearken; If there be a Covenant of grace, why should I despair? If it be altogether gracious, if it be raised by grace, and published by grace, and admits and receives by grace, and lets out all by grace, there is yet hope that I may escape perishing, that I may be delivered, that I may find mercy and favor; grace looks for no worthiness, and grace passeth by all unworthiness, and grace may look on, and pity and help the greatest of sinners; blessed be God who hath sweetened all his mercies, and all his undertakings, and all his blessings, and all his giving's, with freeness and graciousness.

2. Is the Covenant which God makes with us, a free and gracious Covenant? Then stand out no longer; be aliens to God no longer, be strangers to his Covenant no longer; grace makes your way clear and open; it beats down all the mountains that did stand in your way.

It is said of Abraham, that against hope he believed in hope: so against all the unhopefulness from yourselves, you should believe from the hopefulness in the Covenant of grace; yea, and above hope, believe in hope; when you consider the greatness of the blessings in the Covenant, they seem to be above hope; but when you consider the graciousness in the bestowing of them, they are now under hope; Ho, all you that hear me this day, hearken unto me; The graciousness of the Covenant will prove unto you either your sweetest salvation, or else your heaviest condemnation; if it doth not prove a strong encouragement to bring you into the Covenant, it will certainly prove the heaviest and bitterest aggravation upon you for standing out

against the Covenant. O beloved, yet be serious and wise, and make in to God! You may be received graciously; your sins have been exceeding great, but the Covenant holds out more exceeding mercy joined with more exceeding grace. Rom. 5:20. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; If you come in to God, his Covenant is to forgive all your sins, and to forgive them freely. Your worthiness is none at all, and yet you may come in, and God according to his Covenant will love you freely; you may have all freely, a God, a Christ, love, mercy, forgiveness, the holy Spirit, then new heart, the salvation of your souls freely. Therefore,

1. Refuse him not, and do not trifle away your precious souls, whiles you have a day of grace, and a Covenant of grace tendered unto you to come in; Beware you refuse not him that speaketh, neither neglect so great salvation. God neither will, nor possibly can fall lower or easier than he doth with you in his gracious Covenant.

2. Fear not whether you shall be looked on, or received of God: he saith he will receive you graciously; If a company of poor men were invited by a rich man, Come and I will give you money, and receive and feed you freely, you shall have all your wants supplied freely, would they be afraid to accept the offer? Do not make another Covenant than God is willing to make with you; neither make any other Articles than God himself hath annexed unto this Covenant; he saith it is a gracious Covenant; say not you it is not so; he hath said he will receive you graciously a say not you but he will not; he saith that he will love you freely, and justify you freely, and save you freely; do not you say, But God will do none of these; O no! God is truth itself, and he will perform the truth to Jacob, and his mercy to Abraham, Micah

7:20. Therefore fear not, but catch and take hold on this grace of God.

3. Come in and make thy supplications to God. Come in and confess thy sins, and thy unworthiness, and cry out unto God in the Name of Christ, O Lord, I have sinned against thee, and I am unworthy to be made one of thy people; but yet look on me graciously, and bring me into the Bond of thy Covenant; Thou sayest thou wilt give all, and all freely; O save me freely, and love me freely, and justify me freely! Freely give me Christ, and freely give me faith, and freely give me mercy, &c.

3. Is the Covenant which God makes with us a gracious Covenant? Then let all who are brought into Covenant remember two things.

1. To be humble all their days; you differ indeed from other men now, and you have a different relation from them, and different conditions from them, and different enjoyments from them, and different hopes from them; I, but who or what made you thus to differ? Nothing in you, nothing of your own; you were in the same lump of sin and confusion, and in the same common Rode of destruction with other men; it was the mere grace of God that made the difference; it was his free love, and his free mercy, and his free Spirit, and his free call, and his free giving of Christ unto you, and of faith unto you; therefore do not bless yourselves but grace; nor glory in yourselves but in grace; was it not the root which bred and bare the branches? Glory in the root, but do not glory in yourselves; glory in the grace of God which is the only root of your lives, hopes, enjoyments, all.

2. Remember still that you are in a Covenant of grace. The Covenant is not a Covenant of grace only, whiles you are brought in, but it is a Covenant of grace after that you are brought in unto it; you could find nothing to rest on before; nor must you find anything to rest on

but the grace of God, after that you are got into the Covenant of grace; you shall find wants still, and weaknesses still, and unworthiness still; but withal remember that you are under a Covenant of grace still; what's that? My meaning is, that God will still deal with you in a gracious way, and you may go unto him still upon his own gracious terms, and (as so) expect continual helps and supplies from him. Save me for thy mercies sake, said David. Receive us graciously, said the Church; As your admission into the Covenant owes itself wholly to the grace of God, so your pleading and expectations, and confidences must still look at the same grace; for as he loves you freely, so he blesseth you freely: and as he hath done you much good already upon gracious reasons, so he will continue to do you good, and good all your days upon the same terms.

O how vainly and simply do we trouble and disquiet our own souls, as if the gracious Covenant were sometimes free, and sometimes not free; that some of the things promised in the Covenant must drop out freely, and yet other things must be pumped out by something of our own; that the lesser mercies are free, but the greater mercies must come off upon harder terms and conditions; that our coming into Covenant, this is all of grace; but our receipts from the Covenant, these are not so! Truly these are many times our thoughts; but the Lord knows that the thoughts of man are vain, and these are so; for as we are found by grace, and made by grace, so we live, and are brought up by grace till we come to glory. And as our admissions into the Covenant are only gracious, so all our receptions are so, and must be so all our days, that God alone may have all the glory.

## SECT. V.



5. A Fifth property of this Covenant, is this, It is an ordered Covenant, a well-ordered Covenant. 2 Sam. 23:5. He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure: This Covenant is not a casual, sudden, rash, confused, indigested work, but it is an ordered work; it is made upon the counsel, and wisdom, and love, and care of the infinite and perfect God, and still so managed and carried on.

There are five things which do show that this Covenant is an ordered Covenant, and a well-ordered Covenant.

1. The adequate suitableness or answerableness of it to all and every one of the sinners wants, and straits, and miseries, and necessities, and desires. Let any want whatsoever befall a sinner, let his strait and necessity be what it may be, yet here is a help, and here is a remedy, and here is a suitable succor for him in this Covenant. Doest thou want a reconciled God? Here he is; doest thou want a Christ? Here he is; doest thou want faith, holiness, patience, meekness, love, any spiritual grace? Here it is; dost thou want peace and rest, and ease, and joy, and comfort for a troubled conscience? Here it is; dost thou want anything which respects thy soul? Here it is; or anything that respects thy body? Here it is; take any sinner under any want at any time of his life, the Covenant contains an answerable help, and therefore it is an ordered Covenant, and a well-ordered Covenant; that Common Wealth is well-ordered, where no wholesome Law, and no wholesome Remedy is wanting for the people.

2. The right placing of all persons, and of all things in this Covenant; things are well-ordered, when they are well-placed; a thing out of place is out of order; when the Master is in his place, and the servants in their place and the children in their place, now the family is rightly ordered. Now in the Covenant all the persons are set in

their right places; Christ keeps his place as Mediator, and God the Father keeps his place as a Donor, and the believing sinner his place as a receiver; here it is revealed what Christ is to do, and what the Father will do, and what the believer is to do; and all things are set in their right place, not promiscuously and confusedly, but with an orderly regard unto sinners; everyone hath a right proportion set out, everyone hath a right portion set out; here is hope for one that despairs, and here is ease for one that is laden, and here is peace for one who is broken-hearted, and here is mercy for one that is penitent, and here is a Christ for one that hath faith, and here is redemption for one in bondage, and here is righteousness for one that is ungodly, and here is graciousness for one that is unworthy, and here is riches for one that is poor, and here is help for one that is needy, and here is strength for one that is weak, and here is balm for one that is wounded; mercy is well-ordered, and comfort is well-ordered; and a Mediator well-ordered, and righteousness well-ordered, &c.

3. The motions or workings of all things in this Covenant to the right end; when everything acts to its right end, this shows a right ordering; now in this Covenant everything works to the right end, which is to the praise and glory of God's grace; God himself works for this, and Jesus Christ works for this, and every good thing given and received works for this, and every believer who is brought into Covenant works for this. Christ is given, and mercy is given, and grace is given, and glory is given, and because all is given, therefore all exalts the glory of God's grace. Christ is the surety, and Christ is sent, and Christ died, and Christ made satisfaction, and Christ made peace, and Christ purchased all for the sinner, and this also exalts the grace of God towards sinners; the sinner is called by grace, and made a believer, and as a believer he receives all by grace, and he acts in the strength of grace, and is led on and preserved by grace, and what

he is, he is by grace, and what he works, he works by grace, and what he hopes for, he hopes for by grace, and that which he rests on is grace, and what he magnifies and sets up, is not himself, nor anything of his own, but only the grace of God.

4. All the good of the Covenant is dispensed in a right season; and this also shows that it is a well-ordered Covenant: when things are out of time, they are out of order. If Snow or Frost should come in the time of Harvest, this would be disorderly; and if physic should come when the person is dead, this would be disorderly. Things are well-ordered, when they come neither too soon, nor too late, but in the very season when we need them, and when they will do us good: And after this manner are all the dispensations of this Covenant; they are let out, and come in the very time and minute of our need. When a poor sinner knows not what to do, then doth Christ appear, and then doth mercy appear, and then doth help appear: Isa. 41:17. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. 2 Cor. 6:2. He saith I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; when David's heart was overwhelmed and ready to faint, then God took him up and comforted him: And when the Church was as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, then saith God, with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee; when Ephraim was ashamed, and even confounded, then saith God, My bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy on him; when Paul was pressed above measure, and his own strength was found insufficient against Satan's temptations, then he received an answer, my grace is sufficient for thee. O beloved! Thus is the Covenant ordered that you shall have mercy in the fit time, and help in the best time, and deliverance in the best time, and answers to your prayers in the best time; though you have not your desires presently answered, yet your God is a

gracious God, and therefore intends your good; and he is a wise God, and therefore knows the best time; and he is a faithful God, and therefore will lose no time.

5. This Covenant is so framed, that there is still a strong foundation of hope and confidence for a poor sinner; and by this it appears that it is a well-ordered Covenant; here is a firm foundation laid.

1. For the admission of poor sinners; If a Christ and Mediator, if mercy in all the abundance of it, if free grace in all the glory of it, may be esteemed a fair foundation for hope and confidence, here every one of them stands ready to make way for the sinner, I will satisfy for all his sins, and make peace for him, saith Christ the Mediator; I will forgive and abundantly pardon all his sins, saith the merciful God; I will love him freely, and receive him graciously, saith the God of love and grace.

2. For the impetration and assecution of all the good that a poor sinner doth need or can desire: For in this Covenant there is a Christ who merits all, and a God who promiseth to give all, and hath bound himself to perform all, and who rejoiceth over his people to do them good, and accounts it his praise and honor to accomplish and perform unto them all the good which he promiseth unto them, and puts them upon it still to call, and still to trust, and still to receive from him.

3. For the preservation and continuation of them in this Covenant; for the Lord hath sworn the everlastingness of it, and he gives all effectually to hold up and maintain an everlasting union and communion 'twixt himself and his people, and keeps them by his own power through faith unto salvation, and charges none other but Jesus Christ himself to look to them, and to keep them in his Name; and he undertakes this charge, and will fully execute it, and

faithfully; and therefore as he conquers all the enemies of his servants, (sin and Satan, and the world) so he furnisheth them with all graces accompanying salvation, and still strengthens those graces until they come to receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls; and surely this Covenant must needs be well-ordered, which opens a way to receive in poor sinners, and which hath reasons within itself, and upon which the received sinner may with confidence plead for all good, and which will keep them forever fast with God.

Is the Covenant of grace an ordered Covenant, and a well-ordered Covenant? Then certainly the wisdom of God is in it, as well as the goodness of God: the goodness of God is in it, as to all the mercies and blessings wherewith this Covenant is furnished; and the wisdom of God is in it, as to the placing and disposing, and dispensing of all those mercies and blessings: Therefore take heed of displacing that order which God hath set in his Covenant; we do displace the order of the Covenant, and consequently do presume to correct the wisdom of God, when

1. We do apply and interest ourselves in the benefits of the Covenant; before we do apply God himself, and interest ourselves in him; to lay hold on his mercies before we lay hold on himself; to appropriate the purchase of Christ before we do embrace and appropriate Christ himself; this is to disorder and displace the Covenant, which first propounds God himself, and Christ himself to be received, and then the portion of all good things promised after this.

2. We do disjoin the things in the Covenant which God hath ordered to come together; as when we will have the mercy of the Covenant, but not the repentance of the Covenant; and the hope

in Christ, from faith in Christ; and the promised salvation without the promised holiness which leads unto that salvation.

3. We do expect the gifts of the Covenant, without the reasons of the Covenant; upon the account of our goodness, and not upon the account of God's graciousness.

4. We do limit God in the dispensations of his Covenant; in his answers, helps and blessings, to our time, and to our measure, and to our haste, and do not submit and leave these to the times of his wisdom and faithfulness.

Is the Covenant of grace an ordered Covenant, and a well-ordered Covenant? Then let no man ever think to enjoy God, or any good from God's Covenant, but in that way which God himself hath declared; you must believe and repent, &c.

Is the Covenant an ordered Covenant? Then doubt not of the enjoyment of mercy and blessedness, you who are his people; but come with confidence unto your God, who hath ordered love, and mercy, and peace, and comfort, and blessings, and happiness for you.

## SECT. VI.

6. A Sixth property of this Covenant, is this, it is a holy Covenant, Luke 1:72. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant. Dan. 11:28. His heart shall be against the holy Covenant. Psal. 105:42. He remembered his holy promise, &c. The Covenant is styled holy in sundry respects.

1. In respect of the parties interested in the Covenant; viz. God and his people, both of them are holy; God is holy, he is a holy God, Josh.

24:19. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. Rom. 4:8. His people are holy; that thou mayst be a holy people to the Lord thy God. Deut. 26:19. The people of thy holiness. Isaiah 63:18. The holy people. Dan. 12:7. To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. 1. Cor. 1:2. A holy Nation, a peculiar people, 1 Pet. 2:9. The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. 1 Cor. 3:17. Although before we are brought into the Covenant, we are a wicked and unholy, defiled and polluted people; yet when we are brought into the Covenant, then we are made holy, we are changed and washed, and sanctified, and are made partakers of his holiness.

2. In respect of the condition of the Covenant; faith (as you shall hear shortly) is the condition of this Covenant, and true faith is a holy faith; building up yourselves in your most holy faith, Jude ver. 20. Purifying their hearts by faith, Acts 15:9. Which are sanctified by faith, Acts 26:18. Faith unites us to the holy Christ, and to the holy God, and draws holiness from Christ, and sets up that holy Christ in our hearts.

3. In respect of the matter promised in the Covenant; holiness is one principal thing promised in it. God doth promise to give his holy Spirit, Luke 11:13, and to cleanse us from all iniquity, Jer. 33:8, and from all unrighteousness, 1 John 1:9, and to refine us with refining fire, Mal. 3:2. Jerusalem shall be holy, Joel. 3:17, and to sanctify us and purify us; I am the Lord who sanctifies you, Lev. 20:8. The God of peace sanctify you wholly, 1 Thes. 5:23. I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth, John 17:19. By the which will we are sanctified, Heb. 10:10. The change of a sinful heart, the giving of a new heart, and a new spirit; the taking away the heart of stone, and the giving of a heart of flesh; the work of regeneration, and of renovation, these are expressly the matter in the Covenant.

4. The Author of this Covenant doth expressly command holiness; Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. 1:16. Speak unto all the Congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy, Lev. 19:2. Whatsoever things are pious, whatsoever things are lovely, &c. think on these things, Phil. 4:8. This is the will of God, even your sanctification, 1 Thes. 4:3. Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. 7:1.

5. This Covenant doth exceedingly encourage holiness; Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, Matth. 5:8. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Psal. 119:1. Being now become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6:22. God is glorious in holiness, Exod. 15:11. The Saints are the excellent on the earth, Psal. 16:3. Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice, Psal. 50:5. This honor have all his Saints, Psal. 149:9. He will keep the feet of his Saints, 1 Sam. 2:9. The Lord forsaketh not his Saints, Psal. 37:28. He preserveth the souls of his Saints, Psal. 97:10. He delivereth them out of the hands of the wicked, *ibid.* The Saints shall judge the world, 1 Cor. 6:8. When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, 2 Thes. 1:10.

6. All about the Covenant respects holiness, and makes for holiness; all that work of renovation promised in the Covenant, all that deliverance promised in the Covenant, is, that now we should serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness; all the mercies promised lead to holiness, to the love of God, to the fear of God, to repentance; all the glory and happiness there promised, take in holiness as a way thereunto; the Christ there is made unto us sanctification as well as redemption; the Spirit of Christ is there to sanctify, and there to comfort and seal us; the two broad seals of the Covenant have



holiness written in them; baptism is a Laver of regeneration, and the Lord's Supper seals a further communion with Christ in his graces, in his life, and in his death, in his death, and in his resurrection; what shall I say? Every Covenant Ordinance is instituted either for the begetting, or for the increasing and perfecting of holiness. Nay, let me add one thing more, every dealing of God with his people in Covenant, it is to further holiness; his dealing in the way of promises, is that by them that we might be made partakers of the divine nature. 2 Pet. 1:4. His dealing with them in his calling of them to Christ, is that they might be new creatures, 2 Cor. 5:17. His dealing with them by his Spirit, is that they might be born again, John 3:3. His dealing with them by afflictions, is that their sins might be purged away, Isa. 27:9, and that they may be partakers of his holiness, Heb. 12:10.

7. The Covenant is very strict against all unholiness, against external unholiness in Conversation, and against internal unholiness in affection or heart; 2 Cor. 6:17. Be ye separate and touch no unclean thing. Jude ver. 23. Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. 1 Thes. 5:22. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Rom. 8:9. Abhor that which is evil. Psal. 97:10. Ye that love the Lord, hate evil. Titus 3:11. The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; ver. 12. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. 2 Cor. 7:1. Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Gal. 5:24. They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

**Quest. Now if you should demand why God makes a Covenant which is thus holy?**

Sol. I answer: first, because his Covenant must be suitable to his own nature, the which it were not, if it were not holy. His nature is

holiness itself, and he will never set up a Covenant to make us unlike himself.

2. He sets up a Covenant to show and communicate his love unto us, and therefore it must be a holy Covenant, to purge away our sinfulness, which he is of purer eyes than to behold, and which his soul hates.

3. He makes a Covenant with us, that he and we might have a communion together; that we might have fellowship with the Father, and the Son; but what communion can there be 'twixt light and darkness?

4. He makes this Covenant, to restore us again, and to repair his own image in us, and to conform us unto himself; but our conforming unto him, is by the transforming of our minds, by changing us into his own image, from glory to glory, by making us holy as he is holy.

5. It would be infinite dishonor to God if his Covenant were not a holy Covenant, it would not be worthy of him. God intended in making this Covenant to magnify himself in praise and glory; but he should lose all praise and glory, if he had made a Covenant which were not holy, to which would dispense with holiness; unholiness being the only dishonor to God, and the pulling down of his glory; God in this Covenant promiseth riches of mercy and grace, and glory to his people; but how absurd and dishonorable were it thus to do, if his people should continue a vile and profane, and sinful, and sensual people? If there were no difference 'twixt the precious and the vile.

6. He makes a Covenant and brings people into it, that so they may be made meet to be partakers of the glory that is prepared and shall be revealed; unless the Covenant were holy, and did work holiness,

we could never be fitted and prepared, nor made meet for a glorious enjoyment of God, and communion with him; seeing that everyone who hath that hope purifieth himself as he is pure, 1 John 3:3. And without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12:14. And except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God, John 3:3.

If the Covenant be a holy Covenant, then no unholy person hath as yet an interest in the Covenant. You are pleased in the having of all that mercy, and of all that goodness, and of all that graciousness, of all that happiness in this Covenant: O but you have no portion in God, nor in any of these, if you be unholy persons; for all unholy persons are out of this holy Covenant: I do not say that an unholy person is simply excluded from hopes of being brought into the Covenant; but this I say, if a person still remain unholy, he is still out of the Covenant, because all actually in Covenant with God are made holy, they have a new heart given unto them: There are two things show persons are not in Covenant.

1. Privative unholiness.
2. Counterfeit holiness.

1. Visible unholiness shuts men out of this Covenant.

Now there are seven things which do show that a man is (as yet) absolutely unholy.

1. When his heart doth secretly loath the Majesty and presence of holiness; he looks on holiness as his enemy, that would rent off his heart from sinful lusts, which he doth infinitely prize and favor.
2. When he loathes the generation of the Saints; utterly declines their fellowship, and can by no means agree with persons of holiness, even

upon this account only, because they are so, but opposeth, disgraceth, reproacheth them, and is glad if he can make them odious.

3. Who can reproach the beauties of holiness, and offer despite to the Spirit of grace, making holiness the peculiar object of his scoffs and mocks, and derision, these are the Saints, the holy ones, &c.

4. Who will rather venture the loss of God's favor and mercy, and the promises of salvation, than that he will forsake his sinful lusts and unholy ways; hates to be instructed and reprov'd, and reformed.

5. Who therefore opposeth and would subvert and supplant all the Ordinances of Christ, because they press and urge holiness, and because they discover and reprove unholiness, and will not suffer him to go on quietly and desperately in paths of profaneness and ungodliness; resists the Holy Spirit in his motions.

6. Who counts it a disgrace for him to be holy, or to be esteemed so.

7. Who lives in open profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, perjury, lying, &c.

2. Nay, not only visible and open profaneness discovers men to be out of the holy Covenant, but also formal and pretended, and counterfeit holiness; for the Covenant is really holy, and all persons in the Covenant are really holy, and the Covenant promiseth and worketh in them not a seeming, not a counterfeit, but a real and solid holiness.

Now there are six signs of a man who hath not real holiness, but only a counterfeit holiness.

1. Though he be taken up with the performance of some holy duties, yet his heart was never thoroughly humbled for his former unholy undoing's: His unholiness either in the long want of holiness, or in the long opposition of holiness, or in the long practices of unholiness, never was a burden to his soul, nor lay heavy, never wrought trouble nor shame in him.

2. Though in his outward profession he seem to be holy, yet there is no renewing work of grace upon his heart, his heart is not renewed nor changed, but hath the same old lusts still, and the same old love unto them, and delight in them. There is no difference 'twixt himself and himself, no war at all, but all is at peace within him, which shows that he never had holiness in truth; true holiness will displace the affections, and change your souls, and make a separation and an opposition, &c.

3. Though the man seems to be holy, yet he will not be more holy; he hath got into his circle from whence you shall not stir him; he hath put on his form of holiness which his wise forefathers left him, and who so is short of that, he counts him naught; and who so exceeds that, he counts him precise and vain-glorious; that man was never holy, who strives not to be more holy.

4. Though the man seems to be holy, yet he doth not cordially delight in holy persons; his companions if they be not profane, yet they are vain and empty, fruitless and helpless to his soul: If a person be godly and holy indeed, then to except against this, and find fault with that in him, shows his ungodliness is displeasing to him, and he is as weary of him, as the Israelites were of Manna.

5. Though he seems to be holy, yet he allows himself in some way of wickedness, in pride or covetousness, or in uncleanness, or some other sinful way, he holds it fast, and will not forsake it.

6. Who cannot sit quietly under a soul-searching Ministry which strikes at superstition and formality, and hypocrisy; but would raise his heart to higher principles, and better affections, and a more spiritual way of serving God, than a mere opus operatum.

O now this persons soul is stung; and have I not all this while known how to serve God? And must I now learn a new way to heaven?

Well, think of these things both sorts of you, for neither the one nor the other are interested in this Covenant of grace, which is a holy Covenant, but you are yet an unholy people.

Is the Covenant a holy Covenant? Then behold the parting way, behold the reason why so few men are persuaded to hearken, and to enter into Covenant with God; we stand wondering what the reason is or may be, that a company of sinners hearing of that infinite happiness to be enjoyed in the Covenant of grace, and hearing of the manifold blessings comprised in it, of the joy unspeakable therein, of the peace that passeth all understanding, of the full forgiveness of sins, and of the sweet manifestations of the love of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit, and of the assuring's of eternal salvation unto all the persons who enter into this Covenant; I say, we wonder that after all this, there are so few who inquire the way, or embrace the way of entering into such a Covenant where God makes over himself in such a gracious and glorious manner to his people; but here lies the stick, here lies the bar, here lies the great exception against the Covenant; viz. it is an holy Covenant.

Demand of persons, and if it were fit of every person here this day.

Would you not be the people of God's love? Would you have God to love your souls? Yes, we would; and would you not be the people of God's mercies? Would you not have God mercifully to pardon all

your sins, and all your transgressions? O by all means; and would you not be the people of God's blessings? Would you not have God to give you his love freely, and his mercy freely, and his Christ freely, and salvation freely? That we would:

What is that which hinders then? Why, verily nothing but this holiness; O but God will give this holiness as freely as he gives his mercy, but we care not for it; O but God will give you riches of mercy with it, but we care not for it; O but it is the means to bring you to glory, but we care not for it; O but God himself is a holy God, and his people must be holy as he is holy, yet we care not for it; O but you shall never have God to be your God, nor mercy to be your mercy, nor Christ to be your Savior, nor heaven to be your inheritance, unless you are willing to be holy but we will not be holy.

**Quest. It is a very considerable question, why of all the terms that God stands for, (in respect of the Covenant) this of holiness is disliked?** And of all the good things which God doth promise in his Covenant, this of holiness only is excepted against; and of all the Attributes wherein God manifests himself to men, though they seem content and willing to imitate God in many of them, (as in love and mercy, and goodness, &c. yet they are so averse to the holiness of God, which (if it be lawful to make comparison) is one of the highest glories of God.

Sol. Surely there are choice reasons to be given for this peculiar opposition and exception against holiness.

1. One reason may be this, the nature of the sinner; he loves sin, his heart is set upon it, he serves it, he is married unto it, he delights in it; now such a nature is an enmity against holiness, it stands in a peculiar opposition and contrariety unto it; it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be subject, saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:7, so say I,

it is enmity against the holiness of God, it is not subject unto it, nor indeed can be.

2. Another reason may be this, The nature of holiness; holiness is that work of God which utterly subverts the state of sin, breaks down all the powers of it, crucifies the body of it, separates 'twixt the heart and sin, changes the heart of the sinner, turns the love of sin into the hatred of sin, and the delights in sin, into sorrow for sin; makes us new creatures, will not suffer the sinner to enjoy his old lusts, and his old ways, brings a new frame of Spirit, and a new course of life; it is absolutely contrary, and it is utterly destructive of the sinful condition, and straitly binds the whole man to the whole will of God; and all these things are grievous unto a natural man.

3. A third reason of it may be this, The obloquy and scorns, and reproaches, and persecutions of the world against holiness; the men of the world draw their arrows, and spit all their venom against holiness, they hate it, and deride it, and oppose it, and discountenance and defame it, and load it with all sorts of defamation; and carnal men love the world, and fear the world; they love the praise of the world, and the peace of the world, and the ease of the world, and the favor and opinion of the world; men must suffer reproaches and persecutions, and troubles, if they will be holy; but they cannot suffer in their names, nor in their delights, nor in their profits, nor in their friendship, and therefore they will not be holy: I say no more to you but this, if you will not be holy, then you profess you will not be the people of God, and that you will not have God to be God, and he will not be your God, nor shall you be his people, and hence it follows that he will never show mercy to you, nor peace to you, nor his salvation to you; get thee a portion wherein thou canst, but in him, but in his mercy, but in his Christ, but in his glory, thou shalt never have part nor portion.



Is the Covenant of God a holy Covenant? Here then is lively comfort for all holy persons; let men judge of you as they please, and deal with you as they list, and oppose you as they do, yet this is your comfort, God is your God, and you are his people.

Beloved! Never dispute it, nor fear it, if you be an holy people, God is your God in Covenant; for, 1. Holiness is in none but such as are in Covenant; 2. All in Covenant have holiness wrought in them; holiness is a Covenant gift, it drops only out of the Covenant of grace, and everyone in Covenant resembles that God with whom he is in Covenant; he is holy, as his heavenly Father is holy; And let me tell you, if you have a share in the holiness of the Covenant, you shall have a share also in the happiness of the Covenant; if the holy God be your God, then the merciful God is your God, and the loving God is your God, and the blessing God is your God, and the blessed God is your God, and the everlasting God is your everlasting God: Nay, let me settle this comfort yet closer upon your hearts, though as yet you want much in the degrees and measure of holiness, yet if there be holiness in truth wrought in you, be it never so little, yet if it be true holiness, it is a true character that God is your God, and that you are his people in Covenant.

Quest. That is the thing which we so much fear, how may it be known! When there is yet so much rubbish of sinful corruption dwelling in us?

Sol. For answer to this, remember that there are six things which do show that your holiness is true holiness, though it may be but weak and little.

1. True holiness (though never so weak) it fetches off the heart from all sin, and sets the heart against all sin, it works in compliance with all sin; it takes off the heart from the love of every sin, and raises in

the heart an opposition and conflict with every sin, though as yet it cannot expel all sin, yet it will oppose all sin; though as yet it cannot conquer all sin, yet it will conflict with all sin; the least degree of light opposeth all degrees of darkness; as the least spark of fire is contrary to a Sea of water.

2. True holiness, though it can do but little, yet it is an universal conformity to all the Will of God. There is an answerableness 'twixt the whole Will of God, and the least and weakest true holiness; it approves all the holy and good Will of God, it sets up all the Will of God, it delights in all the Will of God, it strives to come up in all well-pleasing in all things to all the Will of God.

3. True holiness is perfecting holiness; though it be not perfect holiness, yet it is perfecting holiness; it prays, and hears, and looks up to the holy God to sanctify us wholly, to pour out his holy Spirit, to make all grace to abound; it sets up the holiness of God as a pattern, and strives for a fullness of holiness; to be holy as he is holy, 1 Pet. 1:15,16. To purify ourselves as he is pure, 1 Joh. 3:3.

4. True holiness makes us to prize and love holiness wheresoever we find it.; and the more holy, the more love; to love a holy God, a holy Christ, the holy Ghost, the holy Scriptures, the holy Sabbath, and all holy duties, all holy persons, be they rich, or be they poor; be they useful to us, or be they strangers to us; holiness loves all holiness.

5. True holiness is another nature, a divine nature; and makes the greatest change, and alteration in the soul, that it is capable of; It changes a man's heart, and life, service, will, affections, and all. The man is a new creature, and is changed into the Image of Christ, 2 Cor. 3:18.

6. True holiness is exceeding powerful: there is a mighty power in it; A man never is able to come up to the Will of God, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? To deny himself, to hate every sin, to love all good, to delight in the Lord, to walk with God, till he find working in him the power of holiness.

Is the Covenant of grace a holy Covenant? Then strive to be holy persons; bewail your former unholiness, and want of holiness, and oppositions, and contempt's, and reproaches of holiness; and as you desire to enjoy God for your God, and the mercies, and comforts, and hopes, and happiness of the Covenant, so desire to be holy. If holiness be one of the great ingredients, if it be the lively testimony of the people in Covenant with God, if it be the express Will and Command of God for all in Covenant with him, if it be the excellency of your natures, if it be the necessary and certain way of happiness; then be not ashamed, be not averse to holiness anymore, &c.

**Quest. And what is to be done, that we may be holy?**

Sol. I will tell you what is to be done.

1. Beseech the holy God to make you holy; holiness is attributed to God. 1. Essentially; he is holiness itself. 2. Infinitely; there are no bounds of his holiness. And 3. Causally; and therefore Christ prayed for his Disciples to his Father, John 17:17. Sanctify them, &c. And the Apostle for the Thessalonians, 1 Thes. 5:23. The God of peace sanctify you. And God hath promised to give his holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke 11:13. And he hath sanctified those that were very unholy. 1 Cor. 6:11,12. Such were some of you, but you are washed, but you are sanctified. And besides all this, this prayer is well-pleasing to God, Lord, make me holy, I would not grieve and dishonor thee anymore, I would not be vile.

2. Attend the holy Word, and wait upon God therein to work holiness in you. John 15:3. Ye are clean through the Word which I spake unto you John 17:17. Sanctify them through thy Word, thy Word is truth. The Word is compared to cleansing water; to Fullers soap which whitens; to refining fire which separates the dross, and purifies the metal; the hearts of sinners are changed by it; so was Paul's; and so those Jews in Acts 2,3,4.

3. Get Faith to unite you to Christ, who is made Sanctification to us, 1 Cor. 1:30. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17.

4. Make use of the promises, as 2 Cor. 7:1.

#### SECT. VII.

A seventh property of this Covenant, is this, It is a sure and steadfast Covenant. Deut. 7:9. The Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God which keepeth Covenant with them that love him. 2 Chron. 6:14. O Lord God which keepest Covenant. 2 Sam. 23:5. He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Psal. 19:7. The testimony of the Lord is sure. Psal. 93:5. Thy testimonies are very sure.

That is called sure,

1. Which is not a lie, but a truth; In this respect the Covenant is a sure Covenant. It is no lie, Psal. 89:35. I will not lie unto David, Hab. 2:7. At the end the vision shall speak and not lie, Titus 1:2. In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began: It is a truth, Micah 7:20. Thou wilt perform the truth unto

Jacob. Psalm 132:11. The Lord hath sworn in truth. Psalm 91:4. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

2. Which will not fail, but will certainly come to pass; it will be accomplished, it will answer hope, and expectation every way. In this respect also the Covenant is sure. Psal. 89:33. I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail. Hab. 2:3. It will surely come; though it tarry, wait for it. Jer. 32:41. I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this Land assuredly. Verse 42. I will bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. 1 Kings 8:56. There hath not failed one word of all his good promise.

3. Which alters not: In this respect also is the Covenant sure. Psal. 89:28. My Covenant shall stand fast with him. Verse 34. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Isa. 54:10. The mountains shall remove, and the hills shall fall down; but my mercy shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace fall away, saith the Lord that hath compassion on thee. 2 Cor. 1:20. All the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

There are two things unto which I would briefly speak concerning this property of the Covenant, namely the sureness or certainty of it.

1. Quest. How it may be demonstrated, That the Covenant of grace is a sure Covenant.

Sol. There are six things to demonstrate or clear it. Viz.

1. This Covenant depends upon the counsel of God, and the purpose of God, and love of God, immutable and sure grounds; these are (as it were) the springs and the foundations of the Covenant of grace, viz. God's love unto us, his counsel wisely and deliberately contriving for

us, and his purpose resolving and intending everlasting good unto us.

Now everyone of these is sure and certain; The love of God is unchangeable; whom he loves once, he loves forever; I have loved thee with an everlasting love, Jer. 31:3.

The counsel of God is immutable, wherein (speaking of this Covenant, Heb. 6:17) God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel (confirmed it by an oath.)

The purpose of God is sure. So the Apostle, 2 Tim. 2:19. The foundation of God standeth sure; that foundation of God is his election, which is compared to a foundation, because it is that upon which all our good and happiness is built, and because as a foundation it abides firm and sure.

2. This Covenant hath as firm and sure Ingredients as can be desired.

There is in it,

1. The presence of what is necessary to the certain performance of the Covenant. There are two things necessary thereunto. 1. The power of God. 2. The Will of God; if God be able, and if God will perform his Covenant, it is then sure. Now let us consider both these in reference to the Covenant.

1. The power of God; power is necessary to give a being unto all undertakings; If a poor man promiseth much, yet there is no certainty of it, because though he be very willing, yet he is very unable; the engagement exceeds his stock of ability. But God is able to perform all the good promised to his people in the Covenant. Rom.

4:21. Abraham was fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able also to perform.

For the clear understanding of this, remember four particulars.

1. There is not any one promise of God, but hath the power of God accompanying it, and engaged for it; whether for temporal things, see an excellent place for this, Numb. 11:18. The Lord will give you flesh and you shall eat. Ver. 19. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor ten, nor twenty, but a whole month. Verse 20. And Moses said verse 21. The people are six hundred thousand footmen, and thou hast said, I will give them flesh for a whole month; Shall (ver. 22.) the flocks and herds be slain for them to suffice them? Or shall the fish of the sea be gathered together for them? As if he had said, But art thou able to make this promise good? The Lord said unto Moses, verse 23. Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not; he did make it good. Or whether the promise be for spiritual things, there is the power of God accompanying it, Micah 7:18. Who is a strong God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity. He is able to pardon all our sins, and able to change our hearts, and to subdue our iniquities, and to write his Law in our hearts, and to make all grace to abound, and to keep us from falling, and to preserve us to his heavenly glory; We are kept by the power of God.

2. This power is a supreme and over-topping power; it is an exceeding power; a power that cannot be hindered; If he will bless, who can curse? If he be with us, who can be against us?

No creature can raise up and stay it; it is such a power as bears down all before it. All that Pharaoh could do, could not make or hinder the power of God from delivering his people according to his promise; nor all the Kings could hinder their possessing of promised Canaan.

3. This power is independent; it takes not in any assistance to help it, but is alone sufficient to itself, and unto all its works, and unto all the purposes of God; there is enough of his power as to creation, so to conversion, and pardoning, and blessing.

4. This power is an enduring power; it still abides in strength; Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, Isa. 59:1. His power remains the same forever.

2. The Will of God in reference to the Covenant, to perform what God hath promised. Micah 7:20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob. Jer. 33:14. I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel. 1 Thes. 5:24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it. Phil. 1:6. He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

God was never forced to make it, or to enter into this Bond, but out of his own accord willingly became ours; and this willingness was not extrinsical, depending upon the persuasion of another; but it was intrinsical, arising only from his own entire love unto us.

Quest. But the question may be concerning the kinds of God's Will, as to the performance of this Covenant.

Sol. For answer unto that, take these particulars.

1. The will of God for the performance of his Covenant, it is a peremptory and perfect Will; it is a Will resolved, a Will of purpose, or according to purpose; not an incomplete Will, it may be I will, and it may be I will not; not a wishing, but this is my purpose, my decree, I am resolved on it to bless my people, to bring upon them all the good of my Covenant.



2. This Will is grounded on itself; it is a well-guided Will; it doth not depend on anything in us, for then it might not be sure; but only the good pleasure of his Will which is most sure. Ezek. 36:22. Not for your sakes O house of Israel, but for mine holy Name-sake. Isa. 48:11. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it. Deut. 7:8. Because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand.

3. This Will is fixed and unalterable; must not the Covenant then be sure? Psal. 89:34. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Verse 35. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David.

And this willingness he hath expressed,

1. In his promises; yea, promise upon promise, that he will bring upon them all the good that he hath promised them, Jer. 32:42, and Jer. 33:14, and Micah 7:20, &c.

2. In his Oath to all this; I have sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David, Psal. 89:35. He confirmed it by his Oath, saith the Apostle in Heb. 6:17, and an Oath for confirmation is an end of all strife, ver. 16. Luk. 1:72. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant. Ver. 73. The Oath which he sware to our Father Abraham; surely God will not break his word of promise and lie; surely God will not break his Oath and be perjured.

3. This Covenant is gracious; and therefore it is sure, as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 4:16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; The former Covenant was not sure, because it was of works, and rested upon our

own strength and performance; but this Covenant is sure because it is of grace, and rests not on any sufficiency in us, but only on the goodness and the sufficiency of God's grace; God in this Covenant doth promise to give us all things freely, to work all our works in us and for us; not to deal with us according to our deserts, but according to the riches of his mercy.

4. This Covenant is confirmed by the blood of Jesus Christ, which is called the blood of the everlasting Covenant, Heb. 13:20. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of sins. Heb. 9:15. For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the Redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. Ver. 17. A Testament is of force after men are dead.

It is called a Covenant, and a Testament.

1. A Covenant in respect of God, and a Testament in respect of Christ.

2. A Covenant in respect of the manner of Agreement; and a Testament in respect of the manner of confirming. Jesus Christ died as a Testator, and by his death confirmed the Testamentary gift before made of life and salvation.

5. I might add more demonstrations of this truth, as the sealings of the Spirit, and the sealings of the Ordinances, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which are the seals of this Will, and the sealings of the people of God in their continual experience of the truth, and certainty of the Covenant, in the performance of the Covenant. Psal. 105:8. He hath remembered his Covenant forever. Psal. 119:65. Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy Word.

## **2. Quest. Why God makes a suit Covenant with his people?**

Sol. The reasons are these.

1. Certainty is a ground of faith; We are commanded to believe, and to be persuaded, and to stand, and rest, &c. and to rejoice in believing, Rom. 15:13. If the Covenant were uncertain, and unsure, your faith would never be certain and sure. Heb. 10:22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; But how could we draw near in that full assurance of faith; Surely by believing, and being fully persuaded to enjoy what God hath promised, unless there were a certainty in the Covenant, viz. That God will certainly perform what he hath promised unto us? There cannot possibly be a certainty of faith upon uncertain promises.

2. Certainty is a ground of peace; this Covenant is styled a Covenant of peace, because it settles, and quiets, and establisheth our hearts; yea, and the Covenant breeds perfect peace; it stills all the fears, and doubts, and thoughts of heart, and therefore it must needs be a sure Covenant; and being so, we have strong consolation, Heb. 6:18.

Two things are necessary to the settling of peace in the soul; either 1. An actual fruition. 2. A certain expectation. Were the Covenant uncertain (it may be God will be my God, it may be he will not be my God; it may be he will pardon my sins, it may be he will not pardon my sins; it may be he will save my soul, and it may be he will not save my soul) this uncertainty on God's part, would leave an uncertainty on our part; and either of these uncertainties, would certainly leave us to an uncertain, distracted, unsettled conscience; O I can never be sure that God will be mine, that mercy shall be mine, &c.

3. Certainty is the ground of hope and of patience; God would have his people to hope in him; and to wait for him; to hope in his mercy,

and to wait for his promise. Psal. 130:7. Let Israel hope in the Lord. Lam. 3:26. It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. 1 Pet. 1:13. Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end; and therefore the Covenant is sure, and must be so, for hope is upheld by a sure and steadfast Anchor, Heb. 6:19, and patience by a sure word of promise; wait for it, for it will surely come, Hab. 2:3. God saith it twice in Joel 2:26,27. My people shall never be ashamed, and my people shall never be ashamed, and Isa. 49:23. Thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me; and Rom. 5:5. Hope makes not ashamed. O but we should be ashamed of our hope, and ashamed of our patience, if we should look for a God, and wait for a God, who either could not help us, or else would fail us.

4. The certainty of the Covenant, is the great glory of the Covenant; it is more glory to God to make a sure Covenant, than an unsure Covenant; to be certain in his word, than uncertain; to be a faithful God, than an unfaithful God; and we glorify him more upon the account of the sureness of his Covenant; here is mercy promised, and this mercy is sure; all the mercies in this Covenant are the sure mercies of David; here is Christ promised, and this Christ is a sure foundation, Isa. 38:16. Here is grace and glory promised, and they are sure; and here are necessary outward blessings promised, and they are sure waters. O how this exalts the goodness of God! All of it is sure, and our poor souls, if they come into Covenant, shall surely enjoy all the good thereof, mercy, and grace, and righteousness, and joy, and peace, and spiritual life.

5. God makes a Covenant that is sure, because he would draw the hearts of his people to himself alone. There are four things which will draw and fix the heart where it can discover them.

1. One is goodness; this is the good which I need.
2. A second is fullness; here is all the good which I need.
3. A third is freeness; all this good is to be had freely.

4. A fourth is certainty; I shall not fail of any part of this good; why these are apt to work on the heart, and to draw it, and to fix it: and all these God puts into the Covenant which he makes with his people: it is good, it is full, it is free, and it is certain; I will do you good, saith God, and I will do you all good, and I will do it freely, and I will do it assuredly; why then to whom should we go? Thou hast all the words of eternal life; on whom should we trust but on thyself alone, O Lord, who art so full a goodness, and so sweet a graciousness, and so unquestionable a faithfulness and truth!

6. This Covenant which God makes with his people is sure, because none of the people of God shall ever have cause (just cause) to complain of him, or to blame him; David in a distempered fit mutters out (Psal. 77:8.) Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? But he corrects himself for this in verse 10. I said, This is my infirmity, &c. But if indeed God should not make good his Covenant, if that should fail, if it were unsure, then many bills of complaint would come in against him; Lord, thou didst hold out a word of promise, and commandedst me to rest on it, and saydst, Thou wouldst not fail me; and lo I have quit all other confidences, and cast all my hopes upon thy Word (which thou saydst was sure and faithful) and yet thou hast deceived and wronged me; O no, none shall ever be able thus to complain of God, or to charge him, being truth and faithfulness itself.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people a sure Covenant? Then behold hold what a privilege it is to have God to be our God, and for any of us to be the people of his Covenant. Herein they do excel all other people, namely that their Relation is higher, their condition is better, their hopes are greater, their possessions are sweeter, and their supplies are sure.

Wicked men (who are out of Covenant) have nothing sure; their lives are unsure; They shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, they shall be chased away as a vision of the night, Job 20:8. Their pleasures and delights are unsure; They take the Timbrel and the Harp, and rejoice at the sound of the Organ, and in a moment they go down to the grave, Job 22:12,13. Their wealth and riches are unsure; Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world, and increase in riches; surely thou didst set them in slippery places, how are they brought into desolation as in a moment? Psal. 73:12,18,19. Their honors and greatness are unsure; Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling places to all generations; They call their Lands after their own names: nevertheless, man being in honor abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish, Psal. 49:11,12. Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish forever like his own dung: they that have seen him shall say, Where is he? Thus Zophar in Job 20:6,7. Their hopes are unsure; The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape; and their hope shall be as the giving up of the Ghost, Job 11:20. Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web, Job 8:14. The expectation of the wicked shall perish, Prov. 10:28. Their possessions are unsure; Thou fool, this night shall they take away thy soul, then whose shall all those things be which thou hast provided? Luke 12:20. When wicked men are in dangers, they are not sure of preservation; when they are in troubles, they are not sure of

deliverance; when they are in straits, they are not sure of help; when they are in terrors of conscience, they are not sure of mercy; when they come to die, they are not sure of salvation; nothing is sure unto the wicked, but wrath and destruction; But now on the contrary, all things are sure in the Covenant for the people of God. The love in the Covenant is a sure love; and the mercies in the Covenant are sure mercies; and the peace, and the joys, and all the blessings of it are sure; yea, the meanest as well as the greatest, even his bread, and his waters are sure, and eternal life is sure, &c.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people a sure Covenant? Why may not this be a great encouragement unto troubled and distressed souls, to come into Covenant with God? Not to stand off through fears and disputes (but I shall not be accepted, but I shall not find mercy) but to come in with faith and confidence.

There are five things which may in a special manner, affect and encourage poor broken-hearted sinners to venture in, and to close with God in his Covenant.

1. One is the thoughts of God towards them his thoughts are thoughts of mercy and peace towards you, Jer. 29:11.
2. A second is the affectionate compassions of God for them. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word, Isa. 66:2.
3. The designation of Christ is in reference unto them; The Lord hath anointed me (saith Christ, Isaiah 61:1) to preach good tidings to the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted.

4. A fourth is the particular calls and invitations of God directed unto them. Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him come, and take the waters of life freely, Rev. 22:17.

5. A fifth is the several assurances which he is pleased to give unto them. You shall not be rejected, saith Christ; Him that comes to me, I will in no wise reject, saith Christ, John 6:37. You shall not be despised, saith God himself. Who hath despised the day of small things? Zach. 4:10. Nay, you shall be graciously accepted; I will love them freely, Hosea 14:4. And you shall surely find mercy; I will surely have mercy on him, said God of Ephraim, Jer. 31:20. And though your sins have been many and great, yet they shall certainly be pardoned; If the wicked will turn from all his sins, &c. he shall surely live, and not die; All his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him, Ezek. 18:21,22. Why, what sweeter encouragement than this, You shall find mercy? And what stronger encouragement than this, you shall surely find mercy? God will be your God, and he will certainly be so; he will lovingly receive you, and certainly he will do so; and he will pardon all your transgressions, and certainly he will do so. Plenitudo gratiae, & certitudo gratiae; these should work off all fears and troubles in our hearts, &c.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people a sure Covenant? Then blessed are the people who are in Covenant; for all the good in the Covenant is sure to them, and shall be theirs assuredly; God is surely their God, and he hath said unto them as once to Jacob (Gen. 32:12) I will surely do thee good.

Peruse (I beseech you) all the Covenant of God, and consider what riches and treasures, and mercies, and blessings, and hopes, and



Reversions, and promises you find there; either you are possessed of them all, or shortly shall be possessed of every one of them; all is laid out upon you, or is surely laid up for you; what you have is sure, and what you want is sure also; you have sure possessions, and you have sure promises.

Beloved, though nothing out of the Covenant is sure, yet all things in the Covenant is sure; not only sure certitudine veritatis in a way of truth, but also sure certitudine haereditatis in a way of performance; not only sure quoad causam & ration pacti as to the cause and the nature of God's Covenant, but sure also quoad effectum & ration facti as to the effect and fruition of them; you shall have all the mercy, and all the grace, and all the glory which God promiseth. You may have a man's promise, and a man's Bond, and yet you may not be sure, for the man may die, or his estate may fail and break; but it is not so here in God's Covenant with you; he never dies, and he never breaks (he is an eternal infiniteness and all-sufficiency) and his Word abides the same forever; yea, one may be an heir to a great estate, yet he may not be sure to enjoy that great estate; either death, or miscarriages, or violence may deprive him of the right; but the people of God are sure heirs of all the promised good in the Covenant, and they shall not fail to enjoy all; they have the promises of all good, and they have promises that God will assuredly perform all his promises, and they have his Oath annexed unto those promises, Heb. 6:13, when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself. Ver. 14. Saying, Surely, blessing, I will bless thee; as if he should say, Surely, surely as I am God I will bless thee; now what shall we say to these things? How good is our God! How rich is his Covenant! How blessed are the people who have the Lord to be their God in Covenant! The Covenant is good, and the Covenant is full, and the Covenant is sure; Then if

the Covenant be a Covenant of blessings, and blessedness, you who are in Covenant are blessed, and shall be surely blessed.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people a sure Covenant? Then you who are the people interested in this Covenant, hearken unto a few instructions.

1. In the apprehension of your wants, and of the suitable good which God hath promised unto his people, pray, and never cease; seek, and ask, and knock; if you find your names written in the Covenant, and your supplies written in the promises, now pray without ceasing, pray without fainting; you are sure to speed, and therefore be sure to pray: your labor is not in vain in the Lord, said the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15:58. So say I, your prayers unto the Lord shall not be in vain; consider that place in Isa. 45:19. I said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain, I the Lord speak in righteousness; as if he should say, I never did put you upon fruitless service; you never lost your labor when you sought me; whensoever you sought me, you did find me; I have been still as good as my word, I the Lord speak righteousness; I do not deceive any, but what I promise to be unto them that seek unto me to do for them, that I will be, and that I will certainly do for them.

There are three reasons why we should make our requests known unto God, why we should pray unto him, and hold, and keep up prayers.

1. One is, because he is only the fountain of all good.
2. A second is, because he hath promised all good.
3. A third is, because he will surely perform all the good which he hath promised. Psal. 57:2. I will cry unto God most high, unto God

that performeth all things for me. Verse 3. He shall send from heaven, and save me; God shall send forth his mercy, and his truth. Mark the place, David is resolved to pray unto God to draw nigh, and to call upon him for help; and why will he do so? Because God is the most high God, he is able to help me, and because God hath promised me help, and he will perform all that he hath promised me; yea, he will certainly do so, for he will send forth his mercy and his truth; that is, I shall certainly enjoy the mercy which he hath graciously promised, and will truly perform. A beggar will many times ask where he is not sure to receive an alms, he will hazard many a request; but it is not so with you who are the people of God; you never hazard one prayer which you make, if it be grounded upon the promise made to you; and the reason is because the Covenant is sure, and God is faithful who hath promised; what the Apostle spake about well-doing, in Gal. 6:9. Let us not be weary of well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not; that I say of praying, be not weary of praying, (say not it is in vain) but continue praying for the mercy, for the grace, for the help, for the comfort which your souls do need; for in due season you shall reap if you faint not; when you sow the seed in the earth, you shall find it to come up and bring forth in the season of it, not as soon as you sow it, yet in the due season you shall hear of it again; so sow your prayers in heaven, (prayers are the seed which the soul doth sow) and you shall reap in due season, though you be not presently answered, yet when the season of answering comes, you shall certainly be answered.

2. Look out for more than as yet you have received and do enjoy: Beloved! This you shall experimentally find, that the more you do study your own hearts, the more wants and weakness you shall find in them; and the more that you study the Covenant of grace, the more riches of grace, and mercy, and glory you shall find in it. As the Queen of Sheba, though she heard much of the wisdom of Solomon,

yet she found more than as much more when she came and conferred with him; so besides all the good which you have heard in the Covenant, or have received from the Covenant, if you would search further into it, you should yet find those unsearchable riches of Christ, and such depths and heights of love and mercy, that you never espied before; there is much more grace, and much more love, and much more mercy, and much more peace than ever your souls as yet tasted of; you shall find greater things promised, than ever you as yet have partaken of.

**Object. You will confess so there are.**

Sol. And sit you still, and stand you complaining, and will not you make out for them? Do not you know,

1. That the whole Covenant is your portion, that God hath promised to give all unto you, to give grace and glory, and to with-hold no good thing from you?

2. That all is sure in the Covenant, that there is no difference of any good which God hath promised as to the graciousness, and as to the certainty of giving; why, all the good of the Covenant is freely given unto you, and shall certainly be given unto you; and therefore you who are the people of God, be not satisfied with the little which you have, but enlarge your hearts, and enlarge your desires, and enlarge your confidences, for there is much more in the Covenant, than as yet you have got out of the Covenant; and there it is laid up for you, and it will be as surely performed as any blessing which hitherto you have enjoyed.

Beloved! The Covenant is not sure in one part and unsure in another part; this mercy promised is sure, but that mercy promised is unsure; the lesser is sure, but the greater is unsure; but all of it, and all in it

are sure; pardon of lesser sins is sure, and pardon of greater sins is sure, yea, pardon of all your sins is sure! And as a pardoning mercy is sure, so healing mercy is sure, and helping mercy is sure; God will as certainly heal and renew your hearts, as he will pardon your sinful doings; and God will as certainly subdue your strong corruptions, and powerful temptations, as he will do you any other good, and he will as surely give you peace in conscience, and Christ, and eternal life, and the joys of the holy Ghost, as well and as certainly as he hath given any truth of grace to you. You think this may be had, and that may be had, but you seldom come up with faith to believe that all shall be had; O Sirs, we frequently forget that the Covenant of God is a sure Covenant, and sure in all things; but let us strive to raise our faith unto that height, and to that latitude, that all the Covenant is sure; there is not one word of it which it shall fail, God will surely perform all his good promises of the Covenant; what you possess, you think is sure, yea, and all that God promiseth is sure; and therefore stir up your hearts, and look up to God with as much confidence for all which yet you want, be it never so much, and never so great, for God will surely make good all his Covenant to you; you have found the Covenant sure in many things; O but the Covenant is sure in all things; all the promises of God are Yea and Amen, &c.

3. Be not discouraged, nor despond, nor despair, for the Covenant is sure; there are four times when our hearts are very apt to fail us.

1. One is long delays of earnest prayers; See Psal. 22:1. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? Verse 2. O my God I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not, and in the night-season, and am not silent.

2. Another is, seeming dislike and discouragement of seeking; Lam. 3:7. He hath made my chain heavy. Ver. 8. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayers. Matth. 15:23. He answered her not a word. Verse 24. I am not sent but to the lost sheep of Israel. Ver. 26. It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs.

3. A third is, a sensible contradicting or denial of our requests; as Hezekiah spake, for peace I have great bitterness: So when we pray for peace in conscience, then we feel more distress and trouble in conscience; and when we pray against temptations, then we find more powerful and violent temptations; and when we pray for deliverance from sin, we then feel more strong assaults and turbulent motions of sin.

4. A fourth is, when God's dealings of providence seem quite opposite to his undertakings in his promise. Judges 6:12. The Lord is with thee thou mighty man of valor, said the Angel to Gideon. Ver. 13. And Gideon said unto him, If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where are all his miracles which our forefathers told us of? Did not the Lord bring us out of Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hand of the Midianites, neither hast thou delivered thy people at all, Exod. 5:23. And so David, to whom God promised a Kingdom, but instead thereof, he was banished the Kingdom, and his life was sought for, and pursued by Saul; whereupon he concludes instantly that all men are liars, Psal. 116:11. In all these cases (and many more) we are very apt to be discouraged, and to question (at least) the sureness of God's Covenant, and to cry out with David, Psal. 77:7. Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Ver. 8. Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?

Ver. 9. Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Nevertheless, notwithstanding all these contingencies, and seeming contrarities, and manifold delays, and strange dealings of God with his people, his Covenant with them is sure, and it shall certainly be performed; as no work of man, so no work of God doth or shall frustrate the Covenant of God with his people.

Therefore for the better support of your hearts under all these dealings of God with you, carefully remember a few positions.

1. They are trials of our faith, but no testimonies of God's unfaithfulness; He that sits in darkness, and sees no light, let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon the God of Jacob, Isa. 50:10. We think that we dare to rely on the word of promise, as a truth of God, as a sure word which will not fail us. Now God by these contrary dealings, tries the faith of his servants; there is still my promise to hear, and to do you good, and here to your sense and feeling is something directly contrary unto it; Can you in this condition glorify my good and faithful Word? Though all these clouds arise, yet the Sun will break forth; though all this befalls me, I shall yet see him to be the help of my countenance, and my God; his Word is a tried Word, I will not fail; God who cannot lie hath promised: Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him, Job 13:15, why, Beloved! This is one principal end of God's dealing with us, in ways contrary to his promises, namely, to try and to demonstrate what our faith is in his promises.

2. They are reasons of our patience, but no characters of God's change; be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises, saith the Apostle in Heb. 6:12. God is pleased to hide himself from our prayers, and seems to neglect them, in this he

tries our faith; and God is pleased many times to delay his answers, in this he exercises our patience; he will be acknowledged not only as a good God, but also as a wise God, and his delays are not his denials, but only his trials, and therefore hear himself speaking in this case, Hab. 2:3. The Vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, Micah 7:7. I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me.

3. They are discoveries of many men's hypocrisy, but no evidences of God's mutability; You shall have a company of men boast of their strong faith in God, and of their great love to God, and how they trust in him with all their hearts; this they speak in the days of their prosperity; but let the Lord put forth his hand upon them, let him but blast their Jonah 's Gourd, let him cut off those arms of flesh upon which indeed they do depend, let him but break down their creature-supports, and comforts, and hopes, and hold out never so many suitable and faithful promises; why, they have no hopes; a word of promise is of no life or support at all unto them: This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait for the Lord any longer? Said that wicked Prince in 2 Kings 6:33. Behold his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him, Hab. 2:4.

4. They are many times the displaying's of the best men's infirmities, but no tokens of any uncertainty in God's Covenant: The best men though they may attain to the knowledge of the truth of that grace in their hearts, yet they may be much deceived as to the measure and strength of that grace; and as many other things can declare this unto them, so do these delays and respites, and contrary dealings of God, much, very much show it: Alas, what expressions (in such cases.) have fallen from the lips of precious men? What complaints? What impatience? What charges of God himself? What disputes?



What exceeding weaknesses? Psal. 116:11. I said in mine haste All men are liars; thus David in that condition. Jer. 15:18. Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail? What a sad expression is this? Jonah 4:3. Take away I beseech thee my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. Verse 9. I do well to be angry, even unto death. Job 3:3. Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night wherein it was said there is a man-child conceived, &c.

You see what strange weaknesses God doth discover in the hearts of his own people by delays, by his dealings with them in ways sensibly contrary to his promises, by which they come more fully to know themselves, and to be humbled before him, and to seek unto him for more assistance; and notwithstanding all this, yet the Covenant of God is sure to his people, he will yet perform all the good which he promiseth unto them, though under all this they may discern their own weaknesses and unworthiness.

5. They do serve for the greater demonstration of his truth, and are no diminutions of it at all; that notwithstanding all visibly contrary workings, and notwithstanding all the fears and doubting's, and contrary opinions of his own servants, yet God will be true, though every man be a liar; his word shall stand, and his Covenant be found true and sure, Psal. 31:22. I said in my haste I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

4. Then be upright, do not use any indirect ways or sinful shuffling's; what need of these? The Covenant contains as much good as you need, and it is sure for the performance of all, Psal. 37:3. Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Ver. 4. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give

thee the desire of thine heart. Ver. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

#### SECT. VIII.

8. The eighth property of this Covenant is this, It is the last Covenant, it may be called the last Covenant in a twofold respect.

1. Because it succeeds a former Covenant, and removes it; See Heb. 8:13. In that he saith a new Covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth, and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away.

2. Because no Covenant shall ever succeed this; If any Covenant should succeed this, it must be a Covenant either of works, or of grace; not a Covenant of works, for that would bring us all under a curse, and make our condition utterly desperate; nor a Covenant of grace, because more grace cannot be shown in any other Covenant than in this; here is all grace, and all mercy, and Jesus Christ with all his righteousness, Mediatorship, merit, purchase; this Covenant is so perfect, and is so every way accommodated to the condition of sinners, that nothing can be altered, nor can be added, nor mended, therefore it is the last Covenant.

O therefore take heed what you do; stand not off, refuse not to come into this Covenant, sin not against this Covenant, for that he offers it no more, it is the last Covenant; no hope, no mercy, no love, no Christ, no acceptance, no life but in this.

## SECT. IX.

9. The ninth property of this Covenant is, It is an everlasting Covenant; so the Text, I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, Isa. 55:3. Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Gen. 17:7. I will stablish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, for an everlasting Covenant, to be God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 2 Sam. 23:5. He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, &c. Psal. 105:9. Which Covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac. Ver. 10. And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a Law, and to Israel for an everlasting Covenant. Isa. 61:8. I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with them. Jer. 32:40. I will make an everlasting Covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good. Heb. 13:20. Through the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Hosea 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me forever. Psal. 48:14. This God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.

All the things of the Covenant are styled everlasting, viz.

1. God is an everlasting God, Rom. 16:26.
2. Jesus Christ is the everlasting Father, Isa. 9:6. And a Priest forever, Heb. 6:20.
3. The Holy Ghost is the eternal Spirit, Heb. 9:14, and he abides with us forever, John 14:16.
4. The mercy of God is everlasting, Psal. 100:5, his mercy is everlasting; and Psal. 103:17, it is from everlasting to everlasting

upon them that fear him; and Psal. 136, from verse 1 to 26, six and twenty times it is there said, his mercy endures forever.

5. The goodness of God is everlasting, it endureth continually, Psal. 52:1.

6. The love of God is an everlasting love; Jer. 31:33. I have loved thee with an everlasting love.

7. The kindness of God is everlasting, Isaiah 54:8, with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

8. The righteousness of the Covenant is an everlasting righteousness, Dan. 9:24.

9. The forgiveness in the Covenant is everlasting, Jerem. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Micah 7:9. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea.

10. The grace or holiness of the Covenant is everlasting; it is called abiding seed, 1 John 3:9, and the immortal seed, 1 Pet. 1, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; it is living water, John 4:10, springing up to everlasting life, ver. 14.

11. The joy of it is everlasting, Isa. 51:11, and none shall take it from us, John 16:22.

12. So is the Consolation of the Covenant, 2 Thess. 2:16. Who hath given us everlasting Consolation and good hope through grace.

13. The life of the Covenant is everlasting John 3:16, he that believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life; 1 John 2:25. This is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life.

For the opening of this excellent and comfortable adjunct of the Covenant, remember,

1. That the word everlasting hath two acceptions; it doth denote;
  1. Sometimes a long duration; in which respect the old Covenant clothed with figures and ceremonies, is called everlasting, because it was to endure, and did endure a long time.
  2. Sometimes a perpetual duration, and a duration which shall last forever; in this respect the new Covenant is everlasting; it shall never cease, never be broken, never be altered.
2. And it is an everlasting Covenant in a twofold respect.
  1. Ex parte faederantis, in respect of God, who will never break Covenant with his people, but is their God, and will be their God forever and ever.
  2. Ex parte confaederatorum, in respect of the people of God, who are brought into Covenant, and shall continue in Covenant forever and ever; you have both these expressed in Jer. 32:40. I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me. Mark the place, it shows that the Covenant is everlasting on God's part, and also on our part; on God's part, I will never turn away from them to do them good; and on our part, They shall never depart from me; how so? I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not

depart from me, (even that fear spoken of in ver. 39, that they may fear me forever)

There are three things which I would deliver concerning the everlastingness of the Covenant.

1. Some clear demonstrations of it from the Scripture.
2. The reasons why the Covenant of grace is and must be everlasting.
3. Some useful applications of this unto ourselves.

1. The demonstrations of the everlastingness of the Covenant, in respect of the people in Covenant; I shall present unto you four arguments to demonstrate that it is so.

1. The first argument I will take from the consideration of God himself in relation unto his people, as 1. His election of them. 2. His love to them. 3. His power for them. 4. His presence with them. 5. His promises to them.

1. The election of God, all the people in the Covenant are the elect of God; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, saith Christ, John 17:6. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts 13:48.

Now there are three things in election.

1. It is a gracious decree not depending on any forinsecal causes.
2. It is an unalterable decree, not raised on any mutable causes.
3. It is an effectual decree, letting forth and communicating all the things which will infallibly bring unto salvation; Rom. 8:30. Whom he did predestinate; which if it be so, then certainly the

Covenant is everlasting, forasmuch as everlasting life, and all that conduceth thereunto is unalterably decreed in God's election, and from that effectually communicated unto all in Covenant.

2. The love of God; that God doth love his people, is most clear in the Scriptures; but after what manner doth he love them? We read five things of God's love to his.

1. That God doth love his people after the same manner that he loves Jesus Christ himself, and with the same love. John 17:23. That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Ver. 26. I have declared unto them thy Name, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

2. That God doth love his people with an insuperable, and with and inseparable love. Rom. 8:35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or perils, or sword? Ver. 37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Ver. 38. I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come: Ver. 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 our Lord.

3. That God doth love his people with a most gracious love, with a love kindled only from love. Deut. 7:7,8. The Lord did set his love upon you, because the Lord loved you. Hosea 14:4. I will love them freely, that is, upon the sole account and reason of my own love unto them; yea, his love was the only impulsive cause why he entered into Covenant with them, and by oath engaged himself unto them; Ezek. 16:8. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy

time was the time of love, and I sware unto thee, and entered into Covenant with thee saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.

4. That the Lord doth love his people with a most tender love; therefore he is said to betroth them unto himself in loving kindness, and in mercies, Hosea 2:19. Loving kindness is a most affectionate love, and mercies are tender bowels of love; his love is more tender than the tenderest love of the mother to her sucking child, Isa. 49:15, yea, his love is such to his people, that he delights in them, Isa. 62:4, and rejoiceth over them, ver. 5, and doth rest in his love, Zeph. 3:17.

5. That the Lord doth love his people with a love from everlasting, and to everlasting. Jer. 31:3. Yea, I have loved them with an everlasting love. Hosea 2:19. I will marry thee unto myself forever in loving kindness.

Certainly the Covenant 'twixt God and his people must hold and continue forever, it must last forever, where there is such a love of God to his people, viz. such a love to them as to Christ himself; such a love from which nothing shall be able to separate; such a love as depends only upon his own love, and which is so tender, and so affectionate, and is everlasting. If a Covenant made only by love, and if a people brought into that Covenant only by love, and loved at such a rate and height, even to the giving of the Son of God to save them; I say, if yet such a Covenant may be broken, and if such a people may be cast off, then is the truest and faithfulest love, and bond never to be trusted more, neither can be sure, if this love be not sure.

3. The power of God in relation to his people in Covenant, which is a securing and preserving power.

1. A securing power; it secures their union with, and relation unto Christ, and that forever; peruse that excellent place in John 10:27.



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Ver. 28. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. Ver. 29. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand: Here is a description of such as are believers, and are in Covenant, (they are called the Sheep of Christ) and such as he knows and owns to be so, and they hear his voice and follow him; here is also a description of their sure and safe condition, they shall never perish, they shall never be parted from Christ, ver. 28, and here is a description of the cause or reason thereof, viz. the greatness of the power of God, (He is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my hands) as if he had said, If these should miss of heaven, and if these should perish, it must be for want of power in me, that I am not able to keep them; some other power there must be which is stronger than the power of God, by whose hand they are held and kept; but my Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of his hands, therefore they shall never perish, but they shall have eternal life; and if so, then the Covenant 'twixt God and his people is an everlasting Covenant.

2. A preserving power, that God preserves his people, the Scripture doth abundantly testify unto us, and if I can make it evident that he by his power preserves them unto everlasting glory, I think then that the everlastingness of the Covenant will appear unto you; and for that see 1 Pet. 1:5, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation: Mark, he speaks of the people, (whom ver. 2, he calls the elect of God the Father, and sanctified by the Spirit; and ver. 3, begotten again) and of those he saith that they are kept; by what power? By the power of God; by what means? Through faith; unto what? Unto salvation, until they come to receive that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fades not away, which is reserved in heaven for them, ver. 3, 2 Tim. 4:18. The Lord shall deliver me from

every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdom. 2 Thess. 5:23. I pray God your whole spirit and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ver. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it: why, what can more clearly demonstrate the everlastingness of the Covenant with the people of God than this? That they are kept by the power of God unto salvation; that they are preserved unto his heavenly Kingdom; that God will preserve their whole spirit, and their whole soul, and their whole body blameless unto the coming of Christ.

4. The presence of God with his people; he is so present with his people, that he is said to be nigh unto them, and to be with them; and to go along with them, and to hold them in his hand, and to hold their hand, and to bear them up, nay, so as to dwell in them, and walk in them; and this presence it is a watchful presence: Isa. 27:3. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day; and it is such a powerful presence, you need no other, and no more but God's presence; if he be with you, who can be against you? I will tell you, God's presence is enough to comfort you, and it is enough to strengthen you, and it is enough to uphold you, and it is enough to raise you, and it is enough to protect you, and it is enough to save you: If God be present with your hearts, this is enough to make your graces to act: If God be present with your graces, this is enough to strengthen them, and enough to preserve them. Now God is present with every one of his people, as to their bodies, as to their souls, as to their graces, and in a special manner, and forever; I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; the Lord is round about his people for evermore, &c.

5. The promises of God; these also do clear the everlastingness of the Covenant, which I shall show unto you in six particulars.

1. God doth promise to work in his people whatsoever conduceth (on their part) to the perpetuity or everlastingness of the Covenant. There are five things which will make us steadfast and firm in Covenant.

1. One is a real work of grace on the heart; (when the heart is indeed changed or renewed) though counterfeit grace will fail, yet real grace is permanent: And God hath promised this unto his people, Ezek. 36:26. A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you.

2. Another is a sincere heart; though hypocrisy be vanishing, yet sincerity will continue; there is faithfulness and steadfastness in sincerity, and God hath promised to give this heart unto his people, Ezek. 11:19. I will give them one heart, and one way, Zach. 8:3. Jerusalem shall be called a City of truth; and ver. 8. They shall be my people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness. Isa. 1:22. Then shalt thou be called the City of righteousness, the faithful City.

3. A third is entire and exceeding love; this will hold out unto the death; yea it is stronger than death; and this hath God also promised to give his people. Deuteronomy 30:6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

4. A fourth is the fear of himself (which is the beginning of wisdom, and the deliverance from sin) this also God promiseth to give unto his people in that Covenant. Jer. 32:40. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

5. A fifth is sound faith. 1. Of union. 2. Dependance; both these he promiseth. They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth fast forever. John 6:45. They shall be

all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the father cometh to me. Zeph. 3:12. And they shall trust in the Name of the Lord. Hab. 2:4. The just shall live by his faith.

2. God doth expressly promise to keep his people from falling away from him, and that he will never leave nor forsake them. 1 Sam. 12:22. The Lord will not forsake his people for his great Name-sake, because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people. Psal. 37:24. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Ver. 28. The Lord forsaketh not his Saints, they are preserved forever. Psalm 94:18. When I said my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. Hosea 14:4. I will heal their backslidings. 2 Thess. 3:3. The Lord is faithful who shall stablish you.

3. God doth expressly promise to strengthen and increase their grace; The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger, Job 17:9. The path of the just shall be as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. 4:18. He will make all grace to abound; he will work in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure; Those that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God; they shall still bring forth fruit in old age.

4. God doth promise to confirm his people unto the end, and to finish the work which he hath begun in them. 1 Cor. 1:8. He shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus. Phil. 1:6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it (will perfect it) he will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ.

5. God doth promise to break down all which might else cause his people to break off the Covenant; There are but five causes

supposable for the breaking off that Covenant on our part, and God removes every one of them from his people.

1. One is the power of sin; but God hath promised to subdue our iniquities, Mic. 7:19. And sin shall not have dominion over us, Rom. 6:14.

2. A second is the power of Satan; but God hath promised, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape. 1 Cor. 10:13. He hath promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his people. Matth. 16:18. He hath promised, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpents head, Gen. 3:15, and that he will bruise Satan under our feet, Rom. 16:20, and resist the devil, and he shall fly from you, James 4:7.

3. A third is the power of the world; but said Christ to his Disciples, John 16:33. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world; and 1 John 5:4. Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even over faith.

4. A fourth is the supposed liberty and inconstancy of man's will; that a man (if he will) he may cast off his God, and give over to be one of his people; but this God promiseth to remove, by giving of his own Spirit, which shall cause us to walk in his Statutes, and to keep his Laws and to do them, Ezekiel 36:27, and Jeremiah 32:39. I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever.

5. A supposition that God will subtract or with-draw his grace from his people; Neither shall this be; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance; so Rom. 11:29. And Mary hath

chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her, Luke 10:42.

2. A second Argument to demonstrate the everlastingness of the Covenant 'twixt God and his people, shall be taken from several considerations of Christ and believers who are the people in Covenant.

1. Christ's suretyship.

2. Christ's Mediatorship.

3. Christ's union with them.

4. Christ's love.

5. Christ's intercession.

6. Christ's promises and preparations for them.

1. The suretyship of Christ; in Heb. 7:22. Christ is said to be made a surety of a better Covenant; (so I conceive the word should be rendered, viz. Covenant, and not Testament; for a surety is not of a Testament, but of a Covenant) A surety is one who is engaged and stands bound for another, and is responsible for him; as Judah for Benjamin, Gen. 43:9. I will be surety for him, of my hands shall they require him. And in matters of contract 'twixt person and persons, a surety is taken in for this very end, That the contract may be made sure and good, may not fail, but be truly and perfectly performed; and the surety is a distinct person undertaking and engaging in the behalf of him who is of himself the more weak and insufficient contractor. As to this consideration, Christ is styled the surety of the Covenant, because he is a third person engaged not so much for God, as unto God on our behalf, that all that we are obliged for in

Covenant unto God, shall be truly and faithfully made good and performed; He (as our surety) stands bound to fill us with those graces, to give us those affections, and to supply us with such a sufficiency of strength, as forever to cleave unto the Lord in dependence and love, and to walk before him in truth, and to serve him in holiness and righteousness all out days.

2. The Mediatorship of Christ; you know that he is styled the Mediator of the Covenant, Heb. 12:24. You know that this is one difference 'twixt the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace; that had no Mediator, but this hath; there God dealt with Adam as a righteous person, and Adam had no other bottom and foundation for his standing, but his own created righteousness; as long as he kept that, the Covenant remained; and when he lost that, the Covenant was broken, for there was no Mediator to make up the breach. But now for the Covenant of grace, there is a Mediator, upon whose shoulder the weight of the Covenant rests; and as long as that Mediator lasts (which is forever) so long that Covenant of grace shall last; This Mediator is Jesus Christ, who (as Mediator) doth confirm the Covenant by satisfying for sin, and making peace and reconciliation, not suffering any enmity and difference to remain between God and his people; but he doth (if I may so express it) keep up the League 'twixt them both, by his merit with the Father, and by his Spirit with believers; by his Priestly Office he establisheth peace with God; and by his Kingly Office he establisheth the hearts of the children of God; his very Office (as Mediator) is to unite God and us together, and to preserve that union forever; if at any time we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins; and when we are weak, he then puts out his strength to conquer temptations for us.

All these things considered, it is clear, that because of Christ's Mediatorship, the Covenant of grace must be everlasting.

3. The union 'twixt Christ and the people of the Covenant. That there is an union 'twixt Christ and believers, is most evident in Scripture; I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine, so the Church speaks of Christ, Cant. 6:3, in respect of which union, Christ and believers are styled the head and the body, Eph. 1:22. A foundation, and a building, Eph. 2:20,21, 1 Pet. 2:4,5. A Vine and the branches, John 15:5. A husband and wife, 2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:32. And Christ dwells in us, and we in him, John 6:54. He lives in us, Galatians 2:20. (Christ liveth in me) and we live in him, Col. 3:3.

This union 'twixt Christ and us, it hath two properties.

It is,

1. Unio arcta, a very near union; so near is that union, that (in a proportion) it doth answer the union 'twixt Christ and God his Father (John 17:22. That they may be one, even as we are one) and that we are entitled with the very Name of Christ himself, 1 Cor. 12:12, and that we are said to die with Christ, and to live and rise with Christ; and our sufferings are styled his sufferings, Col. 1:24, and the persecution of Christians, the persecution of Christ; Acts 9:4,5. Why persecutest thou me?

2. Firma, a very firm and lasting union; therefore our marriage with him, is called an everlasting marriage, Hosea 2:19. And Christ saith of every believer (who hath union with him) that he dwells in him, John 6:56, that he will not lose him, ver. 39, that he hath everlasting life, ver. 47, that he shall not die, but live forever, ver. 50,51.



And indeed by virtue of this union with Christ, all believers do enjoy an everlasting influence, and an everlasting communion with God in Christ, &c.

4. The love of Christ unto believers who are the people of God in Covenant, the Scriptures are very high in the expression of it; John 15:9. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. Ephes. 5:2. Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor. Rev. 1:5. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. John 13:1. Having loved his own, he loved them to the end. Ephes. 3:19. The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

His love is a fruitful love, a watchful love, an entire love, a faithful love, a helpful love, and a preserving and upholding love; is it imaginable that Jesus Christ having so much love to die for his people that they might not perish, will after that leave them unto themselves, that they may break the Covenant, and so perish?

5. The prayers and intercession of Christ; the intercession of Christ is everlasting; He ever lives to make intercession; he is our Advocate who appears for us, and our Intercessor who speaks for us; and his prayers and intercession do prevail with the Father; Thou hearest me always, Joh. 11:42. Now you may read of four Petitions which Christ did put up for his, for their constancy and perseverance in the Covenant. Luke 22:32. I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Joh. 17:11. Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those that thou hast given me. Ver. 20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. Joh. 17:24. 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, before the foundation of the world.

6. Christ's promises and preparations, and what are these? Rom. 8:1. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Mark 16:16. He that believeth shall be saved. John 3:16. Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 14:2. In my Fathers house are many Mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.

7. I might add to all these the work of Christ on the hearts of believers, in destroying the works of the devil, in crucifying of their lusts, in healing of their natures, in quickening of their graces, in conquering of temptations, in drawing out their affections, &c.

8. The titles of Christ. 1. Our Rock. 2. Our life. 3. Our peace. 4. Our hope. 5. Our Shepherd. 6. Our Father. 7. Our friend. 8. Our Brother. 9. Our Head. 10. Our Husband. 11. Our King. 12. Our Savior.

Verily the Covenant must needs be everlasting 'twixt us and our God, who have such a Christ so engaged for us, so mediating for us, so strictly united to us, so exceedingly loving of us, so continually watchful, and careful, and helpful, ever loving, ever praying, ever helping, and resolved to save us.

3. A third Argument to demonstrate the everlastingness of the Covenant, shall be taken from the Spirit of God, which everyone hath who is in Covenant with God; Ezek. 36:27. I will put my Spirit within you.

Now there are ten works which the Spirit of God doth for all the people of God.

1. He doth change their hearts; 2 Cor. 3:18. We all beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2. He doth mortify their sinful lusts; Rom. 8:13. If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body.

3. He makes known the things of God unto them, and teacheth them all things; 1 Cor. 2:10. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. 1 Joh. 2:27. Teacheth you of all things.

4. He doth powerfully enable them for all the works of obedience. Ezekiel 36:27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them.

5. He doth dwell in them. Rom. 8:11, and he dwells in them forever. Joh. 14:17, and dwelling in them, he makes them a fit habitation for God, Ephes. 2:22.

6. He doth guide and lead them. Joh. 16:13. The Spirit of truth, he will guide you into all truth. Rom. 8:14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.

7. He doth sustain or uphold them. Psal. 51:12. Uphold me with thy free Spirit.

8. He helps them in their infirmities, Romans 8:26, and supplies them, Phil. 1:19.

9. He bears witness that they are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ, Rom. 8:16,17.

10. He Seals them unto the day of Redemption. Eph. 4:30, and moreover abides in their hearts; he is the earnest of their inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased possession.

4. A fourth Argument to demonstrate the everlastingness of the Covenant 'twixt God and his people, shall have respect to some considerations in the people of God.

1. They are born again; not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever, 1 Pet. 1:23.

2. They are partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1:4, and of the life of Christ, 2 Cor. 4:11.

3. They are the house built upon the Rock, which fell not, because it was built upon a Rock, Mat. 7:25, and that Rock is Christ, who is a sure foundation, Isa. 38:16.

4. They are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of Christ, Colossians 1:13. And his Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom; unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne is forever and ever, Heb. 1:8.

5. Their hearts are superlatively set on God, and only on him; Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none that I desire upon earth besides thee; God is my portion forever, Psal. 73:25,26.

6. They are strengthened with might by his Spirit, and rooted, and grounded in love, Ephes. 3:16,17.

7. They are the Pillars in the Temple of God, and shall go no more out, Revelations 3:12.

8. They are the inheritance of God, his portion, his peculiar treasure, and purchased with the blood of Christ, 1 Pet. 1:19. He would never pay so dear a price for them, and then put them off; Isa. 49:25. And Israel mine Inheritance. Zach. 2:12. The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion. Deut. 32:9. The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. Psal. 135:4. The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

9. The commands and ways, and communions with God, are no burdens to them; not grievous, because they are born of God and love him; 1 John 5:3. But pleasing and delightful. The Law of God is written in their hearts, Jer. 31:33, Psal. 119:16. I will delight myself in thy Statutes. Ver. 24. Thy Testimonies are my delight. Cant. 2:3. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste.

10. They hate evil, Psal. 97:10, and loath their abominations, Ezekiel 36, and have crucified the flesh, with the lusts and affections thereof, Galatians 5.

11. They are a people who live by faith, and are much in prayer, that God would work all his works in them and for them, that he would not leave them, nor forsake them; that he would preserve and uphold, and confirm, and stablish them unto the end. They work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

2. The reason why the Covenant which God makes with his people, is an everlasting Covenant, and shall be so.

1. There are reasons for this in respect of God.

1. His Wisdom hath contrived this Covenant in a way of everlastingness, which appears in three particulars. 1. He lays the foundation of it not upon ourselves, but Christ; not on our will and power, but on the power and sufficiency of Jesus Christ. 2. He engages himself for himself, and for his people, to keep them unto himself, and from falling, and to continue them to be his people forever; not only to give them grace, but to preserve that grace; not only to begin a good work, but also to finish it. 3. He promiseth mercy to pardon the sins of his people, and grace to heal their backslidings.

None of these were in the Covenant of works, and therefore that lasted not; but all these are in the Covenant of grace, and therefore it is everlasting.

2. His purpose; his purpose in making of this Covenant was to exalt, and glorify, and magnify the greatness of his love, and the riches of his grace and mercy unto his people. Now there are four things which magnify God in these. First, his graciousness, freely to make us to be his people. A second is his goodness, in the plentiful blessing of his people. And thirdly his faithfulness, that he will surely bless his people. And fourthly his everlastingness, that he will never forsake his people, and never will turn away from doing of them good.

Why, this exalts his mercy indeed that it endures forever; and his love indeed that it continues forever; and his grace indeed, that as it is free, so it is everlasting.

2. There are reasons for this in respect of his people. I will mention a few of them.

1. The everlastingness of the Covenant, is a just reason of full and perfect thankfulness; Psal. 100:4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his Courts with praise; Be thankful unto him, and bless his Name. Verse 5. For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting. Psal. 136:1. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever.

2. His people have cause now to trust on him forever. Isa. 26:4. Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Psal. 62:8. Trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before him, God is a refuge for us, Selah.

Is the Covenant (which God makes with his people) an everlasting Covenant? Then that opinion is very false, which delivers out unto us such a Covenant of grace as is mutable, and alterable, and may be broken off, and cease between God and his people.

That a man may be made a child of God, and yet may become the child of the Devil; that he may be grafted into Christ, and yet may be broken off from Christ; that he may have true faith and grace, and yet he may lose true faith and grace; that he may find love and mercy from God, and yet may so sin, as actually to forfeit (and that forever) all the love and mercy of God. Certainly this is a very sad assertion, that any person should be translated from death to life, that he should be delivered from the power of Satan, and translated into the Kingdom of Christ, that he should be effectually called, and become a believer, and thereupon a Son of God, and heir of glory; that he should for a while believe and rejoice in his God, and be sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, and yet upon a sudden (notwithstanding all the love and promises, and engagements of God unto him in Covenant) his Sun should set at noon-day, he and his God should

part and be utter enemies again, that he should cast off God from being his God: and God should forsake and cast him off from being any of his people; and as it is a sad opinion, so it is an opinion utterly inconsistent with this truth of the everlastingness of the Covenant of grace. A relation which ceaseth to be, that relation is not everlasting; and that agreement or Covenant which is broken and frustrated, that Covenant is not everlasting; to be temporary, and to be everlasting, are questionless, inconsistent; neither will that evasion of a temporariness on our part, and everlastingness of the Covenant on God's part, any way patch up the business, because there is no such Covenant of grace which God hath made with his people. Jer. 31:31. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Ver. 32. Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt, which my Covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; Mark the place, God makes no such Covenant as shall be broken on our part, but such a Covenant as shall hold and be kept on our part, as well as on his part; verse 33. But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people, &c. And cap. 32:40. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

The principal (if not the only) ground of this breaking and falling opinion, is a supposition of a power in the will of man, according to the pleasure and use whereof, the Covenant of God's grace must stand or fall, must continue or break off.

And to speak plainly according to the Arminian doctrine, all the stability, and state of a sinners salvation, is made to depend upon the



will of a sinner; the election of God, the conversion of a sinner, the beneficial Redemption by Christ, the perseverance in Christ and grace; all of these do lie at the mercy of the will of a poor sinner; and truly I must confess, that if the Covenant of grace had no surer foundation than man's will, it may quickly cease to be an everlasting Covenant. But we read of other and better foundations (for the perpetuity of this Covenant) than man's will; we read that it is grounded on the immutable counsel of God, and on his absolute promises, and on his Oath, and on the blood of Christ confirming and establishing of it, and on his power, and intercession, and presence, and love, and Spirit, and faithfulness.

But as to the opinion of these men (which indeed is none other, but that of the Pelagians, and Papists, and Arminians) Give me favor to speak a few words.

1. It is very improbable that God would make a new Covenant with us, and state the stability and everlastingness of it upon the will of us sinners; for hereby,

1. There should be no difference (as to the ground of safety and certainty) 'twixt this Covenant of grace and that of works; for if Adam had improved the power and liberty of his will, he had continued, and had enjoyed the life which God promised unto him. Now wherein doth the grace of this Covenant exceed the other of Works, if eternal life be left unto the pleasure of our will, as formerly it was to Adams?

2. Nay it should be harder, and more unsafe for us to be in the Covenant of grace, than it was for Adam to be in the Covenant of works; because in that condition Adams will was created with a perfect righteousness, and conformity, and sufficiency to have continued in that Covenant; but we are fallen with him, and

have lost that perfectly inherent righteousness; and the grace which comes in the room of it, is very weak and imperfect; so that as to the perpetuating of the Covenant, we should be extremely disadvantaged in comparison of our imperfect holiness, with his perfect righteousness; and thus we by grace should have only a less power and strength to continue in Covenant with God, than Adam had.

3. God undertakes more for our part in this Covenant, than he did for Adam in that Covenant; for there he did give a sufficiency of righteousness, and so left man unto himself; but here he doth not only call us to be his people, and give us grace to make us to be so, but also promiseth and engageth his own power, and his Christ, and the Spirit of grace to assist and uphold, and preserve, and confirm, and stablish us unto the end.

Surely then it is not probable that he would leave the issue of so much mercy and happiness to the power and sole pleasure of our own will.

4. That God should glory so much in making this Covenant with his people, and please to speak so much of his great kindness, and riches of grace and mercy, and of what he hath done, and will do for them; and yet when all comes to all, it is no more but this, if your will pleaseth, you shall enjoy all this.

2. It is very incongruous to make the Covenant thus to depend (for the lastingness of it) on the power and pleasure of man's will; it would rob God's grace of all the glory for our abiding in the Covenant; for as the sole blame would be ours, if we did break the Covenant; so the sole praise and honor must be ours, if we (by our own wills) do continue and perpetuate the Covenant; God will give this, and will give that if we continue steadfast in his Covenant; and

that steadfastness depends only upon the power and pleasure of his will (God, say they, nowhere promiseth that gift absolutely, but we must look for that in ourselves) And I beseech you now tell me, where the glory of our perseverance unto glory must light; shall the grace of God have it? No, it is not the fruit or work of God's grace determining; then the man must have it, who did so manage and stir, and improve his will as to hold out to the end; and thus by placing the lastingness of the Covenant upon the power of man's will, the creature gets away the glory from the Creator; and God's grace which should reign in this Covenant, must lose the Crown unto the supposed power and pleasure of man's will.

3. It is very uncomfortable to ground the lastingness of the Covenant upon the power and pleasure of man's will; for hence it will necessarily follow, that you cannot (till the very last minute of your breathing) come to any certain conclusion of your state in grace, nor of your portion in glory; Why so? Because it is in the power of your own will, whither you will stand or fall, hold fast, or break off relation with God; it may be you will, it may be you will not; perhaps your own corruptions may be too strong for you, or Satan's temptations, or something from the world, and then your hearts fall off from God, and you are lost forever; so that it is impossible (by this doctrine) ever to have any settled comfort, fixed peace, or steadfast hope; because all the happiness of your estate is but conditional upon the good behavior of your own wills, which is very changeable.

Obj. But therefore we will pray the more to God, that our wills may not be led aside from him, but keep fast to him and his ways.

Sol. True, and this is indeed a direct course to stand fast in the Covenant; but then consider, that this course will break the neck of

that opinion which makes the lastingness of the Covenant to depend upon the sole power and pleasure of man's will.

For when you pray to God for his grace, and his strength, and his continued presence, that you may (thereby) continue with him in Covenant, you do herein deny your own power and sufficiency, and you do acknowledge that you are strong in his strength, and not in your own might; and consequently that the lastingness of the Covenant doth not depend on the power of the will, but upon the presence, and power, and assistance of his grace, and so fall in with us, that the Covenant is everlasting; not in respect of man's will, but in respect of God's grace.

4. I will add one consideration more; it is not possible (I speak ex hypothesi, in reference to the Will, and Power, and Truth of God revealed in the Covenant) that the people of God really brought into Covenant with him, should break off the Covenant with him, and so make it mutable and void on their part; Suppose but this, that the Covenant shall not fail nor cease on God's part (that God will be but true to perform what he hath promised unto his people) I then affirm that it is not possible that the Covenant should fail on our part; my reason is this, Because the full performance of the Covenant on God's part, doth essentially and naturally include the performance of it on our part, and prevents all breaking and voiding of the Covenant.

God in this Covenant doth promise unto his people,

1. That he will be their God forever.
2. That he will never cast them off.
3. That he will never forsake them.

4. That nothing shall separate from his love.
5. That he will never turn away from them to do them good.
6. That if his people transgress, he will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless his loving kindness he will not take away from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail.
7. That he will be merciful to their transgression, and will heal their backsliding.
8. That he will give them his Spirit which shall cause them to walk in his Statutes, and to do them.
9. That he will give them a heart to fear him forever, and that he will put his fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from him.
10. That he will confirm his people unto the end, and that he will perform or perfect the good work which he hath begun in them, until the day of Jesus Christ: and that he will preserve their whole soul and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I say, grant me but this supposition, That God will be faithful to make good these promises unto his people (which the Scripture peremptorily saith he will, and that it is impossible for him to lie, Heb. 6:18, and God who cannot lie hath promised, Titus 1:2) it will hence necessarily follow, That it is impossible the Covenant should be broken, and made void by the people of God: For upon the performance of these promises on God's part, the Covenant comes to be performed on his people's part.

I know not well what can be replied to take off the edge of this Argument, unless we think to ward the blow by the distinction of absolute and conditional promises. But,

1. If I mistake not, these men will not acknowledge any promises of God (unto us) for absolute promises, but all of them must be conditional, and respective to the will of man.

2. Secondly, what avail any conditional promises as to this case? What room or place have they here, as if the Covenant should be everlasting, if it were everlasting? Or the people of God should still continue in Covenant, if they did continue in Covenant, or as if God would give them an heart to fear him forever, if they did fear him forever! Or that they should never depart from him, if they never did depart from him.

This Tautology is worse than his, *Sub montibus illis Inquit erant & erant sub montibus illis.*

And thus by what I have delivered, it doth manifestly appear that the Covenant of Grace is not an alterable, fading, ceasing Covenant, but everlasting, both in respect of God, and also in respect of the people of God.

But yet some are afraid that such a certain everlastingness of the Covenant would make the people of God too secure and presumptuous in venturing to sin against God! Seeing that the Covenant shall still hold twixt them and God.

I answer, Surely these men are more afraid then hurt, and plainly discover their ignorance concerning that heavenly frame of spirit in the people of God, and also of the nature and virtue of heavenly certainty and assurance.

The people of God have the laws of God written in their hearts, and their hearts are circumcised to love the Lord their God, and they know their own self weakness and insufficiency, and are taught to fear the Lord and his goodness, and to live by faith, and to be watchful in Prayer, that so they may be preserved from every evil way. Yea, and the more they are assured of the immutability of God's love, and of their relation unto him, the more are their hearts knit in love unto him, the love of Christ constrains them, 2 Cor. 5:14, and the more conscientiously tender are they to walk in godly fear and reverence, and in all well-pleasing before him, and to answer everlasting love with everlasting love.

I now proceed to a second Use from this adjunct or property of the Covenant. Is the Covenant which God makes with his people an everlasting Covenant? Then happy are the people who are in this Covenant.

Beloved, It is everlastingness which makes hell to be hell, and heaven to be heaven: As the misery of misery lies in the lastingness, and everlastingness of it, (and it will be thus dreadful, and it will be thus forever and ever) so the happiness of happiness lies in the everlastingness of it. This God is our God forever and ever. This makes the enjoyment of God to be a most happy enjoyment: His mercy endures forever, he loves us with an everlasting love; O what happiness is this to be the children of love, and to be the people of mercy forever? Jesus Christ yesterday, and today, and the same forever; this is happiness indeed, that Jesus Christ is ours, and that we are his for everlasting! Everlastingness doth include in it three things.

1. One is a privation of a contrary estate, and of a contrary Relation forever: For if the estate or relation be changed, it cannot be

everlasting: and this shows the singular comfort and happiness of the people of God, that their estate and relation shall never fall into a contrary estate and relation. They are in the estate of life, and they shall never fall into the estate of death; They are in the estate of salvation, and they shall never fall into the estate of condemnation. They are the children of God, and the members of Christ, and they shall never pass into a relation contrary to this: Because every everlasting estate and relation is a perpetual absence or privation of a contrary estate.

2. A second is, a continuation of the same being and relation: for whatsoever is everlasting that must continue, it must not be broken off? If it be broken off, it is not everlasting.

O what a happiness is this that your Sun never sets; that your day still continues, your God still continues, and still continues to be your God! Your God still loves you, and his love still continues towards you; Jesus Christ still continues, and he continues still to be your Redemption, your Righteousness, your Peace, and your salvation.

3. A third is, an endless perpetuity: you can never come to the end of everlastingness: you may see an end of your worldly riches (they fly away) and you may see an end of your friends (they die away) and you may see an end of your lives (man dies and wasteth away, and man gives up the Ghost, and where is he? Job 14:10.) But you shall never see an end of the everlasting Covenant: Time is the measure of all the world, but everlastingness is the measure of the Covenant of Grace; as long as everlastingness lasts, and as far as everlastingness goes, so long doth the Covenant last, and so far doth the Covenant extend. Everlastingness hath no end, and the everlasting Covenant hath no end: why! This heightens, and this sweetens the Covenant of grace! God is our God, and we are his people to everlasting, without



end: Though afflictions fall in, though losses, though persecutions, though death itself, yet the Covenant goes on and lasts. God is your portion forever, he hath married you to himself forever in loving-kindness, and mercy, and judgment, and faithfulness.

O Christian, what canst thou have more then to have God to be thy God? O Christian! What wouldest thou have more, then to have God to be thy God forever? A sure enjoyment, a perfect enjoyment, and an everlasting enjoyment: These are the utmost of thy desires.

Is the Covenant an everlasting Covenant? This may then serve as a Cordial unto the people of God, especially in two cases. 1. One of fear of falling away from God. 2. Another of desertions, when they question whether God be not fallen away from them.

1. The everlastingness of the Covenant is or should be a cordial unto the people of God, against their fears of falling away from God.

How often do we hear these complaints; and doubts, and misgivings? Indeed the Lord hath showed me great mercy; He did not leave me to my sinful heart and life, he did pity and call me, and brought me in to Christ, and made me one of his people, who aforetime was none of his people! But I still find such a body of sin, such a law in my members warring against the Law of mind, so many sinful corruptions within, and so many strong and violent temptation without, and so much weakness and insufficiency in myself, that fear I shall never hold out unto the end, I shall one day fail, and lose all my interest in God, and in Christ, and grace.

To this sad complaint I would briefly speak three things.

1. There is a twofold fear: There is a fear of unbelief, and this is a vexing, and distressing, and disabling fear, it loosens our confidence

in God, and in his promises: It is a naughty fear, and beware of it, and resist it, and bewail it: And there is a fear of tenderness and jealousy, in regard of the Natural deceitfulness of our own hearts, and of the supernatural weakness of our own strength, this is a good fear; and blessed is the man that thus feareth always: The weak child feareth, and thereupon cries out to the Parent to take him, to hold him, to support him, and by his fear of falling he is preserved from falling. So the child of God fears, and thereupon he cries out unto his God! Lord help thy servant! Forsake me not, make haste to deliver me! Keep me, who cannot keep myself; establish my goings, Thou hast promised to keep and preserve the feet of thy Saints; This fear is that fear which God hath promised to put into the hearts of his people that they shall not depart from him; And indeed this fear is their strength; the more of this fear, the more safe they are. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall; Thou standest by faith, Be not high-minded but fear, work out your salvation with fear and trembling?

2. Your standing or continuing in the Covenant, doth not depend upon your own strength, nor doth God leave you unto that, but it doth depend on his strength, and on his power, Ephes. 3:16. That he would grant you (according to the riches of his grace) to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, Mic. 4:5. We will walk in the Name of the Lord our God forever and ever, Zach. 10:12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord: Though your strength be insufficient, yet the strength of your God and of your Christ is sufficient for you. 1 Pet. 1:5. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 2 Cor. 12:9. My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

3. The Lord is able to keep you from falling, and to preserve you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, Jude ver. 24. Nay and he will keep you from falling: Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, Psal. 56:13. Thou hast delivered my feet from falling, Psal. 116:8. He will keep the feet of his saints, 1 Sam. 2:9. When I said my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up, Psalm 94:18.

2. The everlastingness of the Covenant should be a Cordial to the people of God in the time of desertions, when they are apt to question whether God be not fallen off from them, and hath forsaken them? But consult these Promises, and you may find these fears removed, Isa. 49:14. Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Ver. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet I will not forget thee. Ver. 16. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, Thy walls are continually before me. Isa. 54:7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. Ver. 8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Ver. 10. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people an everlasting Covenant? Then bless God (and not yourselves) for your standing, and for your continuing in Covenant with him.

There are three things for which we should bless God. 1. For his restraining grace. 2. For his converting grace. 3. For his confirming

grace, that he will, and doth keep you steadfast to himself in Covenant.

O beloved! We could never keep ourselves, nor establish ourselves; were it not for the goodness, and the power, and the love, and the faithfulness of our God, we should break with God, and turn aside from him, and leave all: truly it is almost a wonder that the people of God do hold out in keeping Covenant with God, considering

1. The daily and frequent discouragements which they meet with in the world, the continual scorns, and threats, and persecutions, and affronts to their persons and godliness.

2. The manifold allurements, snares and temptations unto sin, and sinful ways, by wicked example, and promises, and hopes, and connivences: wickedness in judgment, in practice, is a general infection; the common air is infected with this plague; it is therefore the more hard to keep our health.

3. The malice of Satan and his power and subtlety is exceeding great: he desires to sift and winnow us as wheat, he threw down the third part of the Stars: he helped to break the first Covenant: There is not any one of the people of God but may say of him as David of his enemies, Psal. 118:13. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the Lord helped me.

4. How strongly some of the people of God have been hazarded in the lasting part of the Covenant? Solomon, Peter, Asa, insomuch as many from their falls have erected the Doctrine of the Apostasy of the Saints.

5. Those many remaining Principles for inconstancy and failing: as spiritual pride, unbelief, hypocrisy, and worldliness, much of every

one of these still in our hearts.

6. Add to all these the exceeding weakness in all our graces. How little faith, how weak love, and how apt to be shaken, and offended! Truly we must acknowledge that what we are, we are by the grace of God; and that if we be strong, we are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and that it is the Lord who keeps us by the strength of the Covenant to continue steadfast and faithful to the end, &c.

Let none abuse this sweet heavenly truth of the everlastingness of the Covenant twixt God and his people; as therefore to venture upon great transgressions, and say God will raise me again, and show me mercy again, for his covenant lasts for ever, Let me do what I list, &c.

To such I would present a few words.

1. That of the Apostle in Rom. 2:2. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Psal. 130:4. There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. Rom. 6:1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Ver. 2, God forbid. This were indeed to turn the grace of God into wantonness, as the Spider turns the sweet juice into poison.

2. That of the Apostle to the Church of the Ephesians, Ephes. 4:20. But you have not so learned Christ. Verse 21, if so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus.

3. Though the Covenant doth last twixt God and his people forever, yet there are weighty Reasons for them to take heed of sinning against their God.

1. They do exceedingly dishonor their God by their sinning, and cause his Name to be blasphemed, as Nathan charged it on David, 2 Sam. 12:14.

2. They make an unkind return to their most kind God: Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise: doth this answer his love and goodness to you, to choose you for his people before other people?

3. They do exceedingly grieve their God and Father. This, that the people of his grace should deal thus with him, is a grief unto him, as he was grieved with that generation forty years.

4. Though the Lord will not cast off his people when they do transgress, yet he will visit their sins with stripes, Psal. 89:32. And those stripes may be very sharp and heavy, as David found them; and though David did not break his neck by his fall, yet David break his bones, and a wounded Spirit who can bear? Prov. 18:14.

5. Though the union continue twixt God and his people, yet (upon their great transgressions) the comfortable communion will be interrupted and darkened, they shall lose the joy of their salvation, Psal. 51:12.

6. Though God will raise his people again, yet it will cost them dear for the cure of their wounds and bruises, and to put their bones in joint again. They shall know that it is an evil and bitter thing thus to sin against a God in Covenant, &c. It may cost them many tears, and fears, and prayers, and conflicts, and waiting's, &c.

Is the Covenant which God makes with his people an everlasting Covenant? Then let all the people of God be so wise as to use all the means to continue the Covenant in an everlastingness on their part: God worketh our lastingness in the Covenant by means: You find in Scripture that Spiritual means are subordinate to Spiritual ends, and that certainty of issues doth take in a necessity of means. The Covenant is everlasting; and that it may be so, therefore doth God put his people upon several ways and duties to perpetuate the Covenant, and to assure themselves it shall be so.

There are ten things which if you carefully heed, you may be confident of the everlastingness of the Covenant.

1. Keep up a humble fear; I will put my fear into their hearts, Jer. 32:40. Blessed is the man that feareth always, Prov. 28:14. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2:12. Fear your wants, crave supply, and grow in faith.

2. Be adding of grace to grace, and give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure; for if you do these things you shall never fall, 2 Peter 1:5,10.

3. Strive after and keep up an exceeding love of your God, a superlative love; This will keep you fast: Saw you him whom my soul loveth? I found him whom my soul loveth, I held him fast, and would not let him go, Cant. 3:3.

4. Keep your hearts with all diligence: Look to them, watch them still, be mending of them, and minding of them; unite or join my heart unto thee said David. Let them be much in meditating of the goodness of your God; love of your God, kindness of your God. Take delight in God alone, and in his ways, as the Wife in the Husband.

5. Be conscientiously diligent in attending upon the public Ordinances. 1 Thes. 5:19. Quench not the Spirit, verse 20. Despise not Prophesying. Acts 20:32. I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified: The Ordinances are your strength. They 1. Give you a sight of God's will and ways. 2. Keep up tenderness in conscience. 3. Open more fully the love of God unto you. 4. Quicken your hearts. 5. Increase your faith. 6. Heale your corruptions. 7. Convey help from Christ. 8. Direct and establish your goings.

6. Be much in prayer, that you may be kept and held fast by God unto the end, Psal. 119:8. I will keep thy Precepts, O forsake me not utterly. Verse 33. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes, and I shall keep them unto the end. Verse 116. Uphold me according to thy Word that I may live. Verse 117. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe, and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

7. Remember Jesus Christ his love to you, his promise to you, and live by faith upon him: Take hold of his strength, and then you shall walk up and down and not faint. Remember that he is the Author and finisher of your faith.

8. If you offend never so little, return speedily to your God, and judge yourselves, and sue out for more grace, for more strength, for more sufficiency from Christ; let not any enmity live, humble your souls and make peace.

9. Beware of Seducing and Erroneous Doctrines, do not affect to hear them: Cease my son, (Prov. 19:27) to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge! Beware lest you also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness, 2 Pet. 3:17.



10. Get much experience of the exceeding love of God to you in Christ: Every day get a sight of his gracious favor, and be often in the consideration, 1. Of what he hath done for you. 2. What he is to you. 3. What he will bestow on you.

## SECT. X.

10. A Tenth property of this Covenant is this, It is the best Covenant: Better than any other Covenant, Heb. 7:22. Jesus was made a surety of a better Covenant. 8:6. He is the Mediator of a better Covenant which was established upon better promises. There is (you know) the first Covenant (the Covenant of Works) and there is the second Covenant (the Covenant of Grace) which is divided into the Old Covenant, and into the New Covenant: Now here I shall briefly open two things unto you.

1. That the Covenant of grace which is the second Covenant, is a better Covenant than the Covenant of Works which was the first Covenant.

2. That the New Covenant (under which we live) is a better Covenant then the Old Covenant under which the Fathers did live.

1. The Covenant of grace is a better Covenant then the Covenant of Works: This will appear if you do consider ten particulars.

1. The Covenant of Grace hath a better foundation than the Covenant of Works: The foundation of the Covenant of works was that power of will and righteousness wherewith Adam was created: he stood upon his own bottom, and was left unto his own sufficiency, like the Prodigal child, Luke 15, he had all his goods in his own hand. But the

foundation of the Covenant of Grace is Jesus Christ: he is the sure foundation-stone laid in this building, Isa. 28:16, and our salvation is laid upon one that is might, upon one who is able to keep, and to save to the utmost: Not our strength, but Christ's strength; not our undertaking, but Christ's undertaking; not our will, but Christ's Mediatorship and Suretyship is the foundation of the Covenant of grace.

2. The Covenant of grace hath better terms; All the Articles of it are promises: nothing is there required of us, which is not promised unto us by God: yea that which was required in the first Covenant as a condition, is in this Covenant turned into a promise, viz. Obedience to God's Commandments, Heb. 8:10. I will put my Law into their minds, and write them in their hearts, And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And that which is required in this Covenant as a condition, it is likewise promised, Joh. 6:45. They shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

3. The Covenant of Grace hath better admissions (I speak in respect of us) then the Covenant of Works. The Covenant of works would not admit any person unless he were righteous and inherently righteous, and perfectly righteous: (The Covenant of works was never made with the sinner, but with the righteous) it condemns and casts out the sinner, but never doth accept of him or let him in. But the Covenant of grace doth admit sinners: if any sinner be rightly sensible of his sins, and of his wants, and imperfections, God calls out unto him, Hearken unto me and your souls shall live: And he that hath no money, come buy and eat, Isa. 55:1,3.

4. The Covenant of grace hath more favorable proceedings with the parties brought into Covenant, than the Covenant of Works: The

Covenant of work is very sharp and quick, the least transgression (therein) doth undo the party (whether of Omission or of Commission) Cursed is everyone that doth not continue in everything that is written in the law to do it, Gal. 3:10. That one sin of the Angels hath undone them forever. That one sin of Adam brought him under the sentence of death.

The Covenant of Works had no mercy to show, it proceeded only in a way of justice. But the Covenant of grace is not so strict and quick: it is a very favorable Covenant: I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, saith God, Heb. 8:12. And if any man sin; we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, 1 Joh. 2:1,2. If my people which are called by my Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, Then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin, 2 Chron. 7:14.

5. The Covenant of grace hath better promises; the Covenant of works (so far as yet I do understand it) had but one grand promise annexed unto it, and that promise also was but conditional, viz. A promise of life upon the condition of fixed Obedience: life should be continued as long as obedience was continued. (Do this and live) But the Covenant of grace contains better promises, and more promises; it doth contain a promise of life upon better conditions than that of working: Life is promised upon believing (Believe and thou shalt be saved) and besides that, it contains promises of all the things that shall bring us unto that life; promises of holiness, promises of strength, promises of perseverance in grace: And promises against all the things which might break us off from the Covenant, and from the fruition of promised life and salvation.

6. The Covenant of grace is more indulgent than the Covenant of works: Those services which will not be accepted in a Covenant of works, will yet be accepted in a Covenant of Grace: The Covenant of works doth so insist upon works, that the least mixture of diminution, or imperfection, renders the work uncapable and distasteful: the work must be in every regard perfect, for matter, and manner, and measure, or else (as to that Covenant) it was faulty, and rejected. But this is not in the Covenant of Grace: weakness in working, and imperfection of service shall not be rejected. The day of small things is not despised: The bruised Reed shall not be broken, The smoking flax shall not be quenched: I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, saith God in Mal. 3:17. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, 2 Cor. 8:12. Unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. I have seen thy tears, said God of Hezekiah, Isa. 38:5. Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee, Psal. 38:9.

7. The Covenant of grace affords better pleas than the Covenant of works. If a person offend against the Covenant of works, his mouth is stopped, and he can plead nothing on his own behalf, nothing at all to stay the hand of justice against him.

But if one sins against the Covenant of Grace, he hath yet something to plead for himself, why God should not reject and destroy him: There are four things which he can plead.

One is his Relation, yet thou art our Father, and we are thy people.

A second is, the merciful nature of God, ready to show mercy, and to multiply pardon.

A third is, the death of Christ, he shed his blood to make our peace, and to slay all enmity.

A fourth is, the very Covenant itself, wherein God hath promised that he will not cast away, and that he will heal and forgive the backslidings of his people, and though he will chastise them, yet he will not forsake them.

8. The Covenant of grace gives a better estate then the Covenant of works: we have a better estate by this, then we had, or could have by that.

'It is true, That Adam in innocence enjoyed a larger measure of knowledge, and righteousness, and had also free communion with God, without fear, and had dominion over the creatures. But yet he had not knowledge of God in Christ: nor any communion with God through Christ, nor had he any manifestations of the glories of the Gospel by the Spirit of Christ; and besides all this, whatsoever enjoyments Adam had which might make up a happy estate unto him, yet all that enjoyment was mutable and contingent: But now in and by the Covenant of Grace, our enjoyments are higher, and they are also surer.

1. They are higher, for now we enjoy God, not only as a Creator, but as a Father: we enjoy him a merciful, and gracious, and abundant in goodness and truth: and we enjoy Jesus Christ in a way of union with his person (being bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, as the Apostle speaks, Ephes. 5:30) and in a way of communion in his death, and life, and victories, and purchases: and we enjoy the very Spirit of Christ, as to all his graces, and comforts, and assurances.

2. They are surer; he enjoyed God, so as yet he lost his God: he enjoyed righteousness, so as yet he lost his righteousness; and dominion, so as he lost that dominion; and had it not been for Christ (who was immediately promised after the fall) he had never found his God again, nor a righteousness again, nor any right of dominion again: but in the Covenant of grace all is sure, and stable, and permanent: God is our God forever, and we continue his people forever: Christ is our Head, and we are his Members forever: we enjoy the Spirit, and he abides in us forever. The Covenant of grace is a better Covenant then that of works, as to the way and cause of Remuneration.

In a Covenant of works you must earn your wages before you must be paid your wages: your own doing is the price of your receiving, and your reward is as your work is; nothing is there expected as a bounty, and gift, but all runs there as debt and wages: Adam could never pray under this Covenant, Lord receive me graciously, do me good freely for thy mercies sake: But it is not thus in the Covenant of grace, where he that deserves nothing, may yet receive all: and the unworthy sinner doth yet attain to the most excellent mercies (upon the sole account of the riches of God's grace in Christ) In the Covenant of grace God doth not reward us according to our ill deeds, nor doth he reward us for our good deeds. But he freely pardons the ill works of his people, and doth them all good, not for their goodness, but for his own goodness-sake.

In the Covenant of works you come to God, saying, Lord! This I have done, therefore bless me:

In the Covenant of grace, you come to God, saying, Lord! This I need, and this thou hast promised, O give it me, not for my sake, but for thy truths sake, and for thy Christ's sake: freely love me, freely accept

of me, freely own, and bless me; I can show no deserts of mine, but I can show unto thee thine own promises: I can find enough in myself why thou shouldest abhor and curse me, and yet I find enough in thyself and Covenant why thou mayest embrace and help me.

10. The Covenant of grace is a better Covenant than that of works in respect of a double efficacy.

1. Of helping recovery.

2. Of saving virtue.

1. The Covenant of works never did afford help to recover any one sinner: As that Commander spake of the Watchman whom he found asleep (and therefore ran him through with his sword) I found him dead and left him dead: That we may say of the Covenant of works, It finds us dead in sins and in trespasses, and it leaves us dead in our sins and trespasses: there is no balm for our wounds in that Covenant: But the Covenant of Grace, this doth help and restore sinners; it is the ministry of Life and Grace, and Peace: But God (saith the Apostle in Ephes. 2:4,5) 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: And 1 Cor. 6:11. Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. And Rom. 5:8. God commendeth his love towards us, in that whiles we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Verse 9. Much more than being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

2. The Covenant of works did never save any righteous person. What saving power might be found from it upon a supposition of Adams standing, I dispute not; but this I say, There never was any one person saved actually by the Covenant of works: But yet the

Covenant of Grace doth save all Believers. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, 1 Tim. 1:15. Whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:15. We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they. Ephes. 2:8. By grace ye are saved through faith. 1 Pet. 1:9. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Thus you see that the Covenant of grace is the best Covenant, in comparison of the Covenant of works.

Is the Covenant of Grace the best Covenant? The best Covenant that ever God made with man, and for man? How great then is their sin who refuse this Covenant, and to come into this Covenant? The greater that any mercy is, our sin is therefore the greater to refuse that mercy. O beloved! Whence is it that many of your hearts are still hardened? Whence is it that you love darkness rather than light? Why do you not hearken to this Covenant? Whence is it that for lying vanities, you forsake your own mercies!

1. Are you not sinners?
2. Do not sinners need mercy?
3. Can mercy be found anywhere but in this Covenant of mercy? Or peace anywhere, but in the Covenant of peace? Or life anywhere but in the Covenant of life?
4. And doth not this Covenant hold out mercy unto you? Yea the best mercy! And upon the best terms! The other Covenant affords you no mercy, it casts you off, it condemns you to death and wrath. And this Covenant yet offers you mercy, and life, and salvation; and no Covenant but this doth so. What, and yet to refuse to come into it? Surely either you know not that you are sinners, and what will befall you for your sins, or else you are desperately wicked to slight and



refuse the mercy and grace of God in this Covenant. Ezek. 24:13. Because I would have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness anymore, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. So may the Lord say unto some of us, Because I would have showed you mercy, but you would not accept of mercy, therefore you shall never have mercy. And because I would have taken you into Covenant, and you would not come into my Covenant of grace, and life, and peace, I will never be a merciful God to you, nor a gracious God to you: but you shall die in your sins and perish forever, Heb. 2:3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? (Heb. 12:25. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.)

Is the Covenant of Grace the best Covenant? (better than any other Covenant which God made with man?) Then how injurious are many broken-hearted sinners, both unto themselves and unto God! Who lay the Covenant of grace so low, and impose such opinions upon it, as if there were no difference twixt a Covenant of grace and a Covenant of works. Surely it is either temptation which lies upon them, or ignorance, or unbelief, that they thus stand off, and fear, and dispute, and except, and question, and many times conclude against all encouragements to be taken into this Covenant, and there to find mercy, and rest for their souls: truly they do many times turn the Covenant of Grace into a very Covenant of Works.

O but there is no mercy to be had!

O but not for such great sins!

O but for me! O but I can deserve nothing! And bring nothing! O but the sentence is past against me! O but I have nothing to make my

peace! And thus they make the Covenant of Grace, a very Covenant of Works; no better then so; a Covenant without mercy, without grace, without a Mediator, without a tender compassionate God and Father; no City of refuge at all, nor help to the poor sinner at all: And when they are convinced of mercy in it, and possible reception into it, yet they think that God will not come off to this but upon very hard and difficult terms, usually annexing the Legal condition to the promises of the Covenant of Grace.

Why sirs! What do you mean thus to wrong God, and his Covenant, and your distressed souls?

Either there is a Covenant of Grace, or there is not; either that Covenant of Grace is a better Covenant than the Covenant of works, or it is not. If it be a better Covenant, then the fallen and undone sinner may find relief there, and help there, which he could not find in the Covenant of Works; for if the sinner can be no more relieved by this than by that Covenant; it is then no better Covenant. And now see what a slur you cast upon the wisdom of God, and upon the goodness of God, and upon Jesus Christ, and upon all the promises of God: O distressed sinner! If the merciful God, if the gracious God, if the giving God, if the forgiving God, if the freely loving God; if the Lord Jesus as Mediator and Surety, if all the promises of God in Christ, if all the offers of grace, if all the calls of the Gospel may suffice to convince thee that this Covenant is the best Covenant that ever was or can be made for sinners, with all suitableness and tenderness to the sinners condition: Then dispute no more, but pray for faith to give God the glory of his exceeding grace in this Covenant, &c.

Is the Covenant of Grace the best Covenant? What a comfort is this to all believers who are effectually brought into this Covenant? Is it

no comfort to be brought into such a good estate as better cannot be found or enjoyed? If the Covenant of Grace be the best Covenant (better than any other Covenant) Then all in that Covenant, are in the best condition of all other men. It was a special kindness in Joseph to give his Father and his Brethren a possession in the land of Ramesis: what kindness then is that in God to make you to be his people, and to become your God, and to settle such a portion, such a possession upon your souls, as in heaven and earth a better Covenant cannot be! How should your hearts rejoice, and bless God for the Covenant of Grace, and for bringing of you into that Covenant of grace? Where a Redeemer is only to be found, and you have an interest in that Redeemer; A reconciled God is only to be found, and you have a propriety in that reconciled God; pardoning mercy is only to be found, and you have your shares in that pardoning mercy; Renewing grace is only to be found, and you have your portion in that renewing grace! Salvation is only to be found, and you have your possession of that salvation.

Others perhaps cry out, O that we might have mercy, and O that we might have Christ! And O that God would be pacified towards us, and reconciled to us, and O that our sins might be forgiven, and our souls accepted into life! Why you have all this, and more than this! Have you not cause to rejoice who are brought into such a Covenant where you have a propriety in God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and mercy, and grace, and glory? Yea into such a Covenant where you may find relief and support for every want, and against every fear, and against every sin, and against every temptation? Where all the sorts of mercies, and helps and comforts are yours? Yea unto such a Covenant where there is not only mercy, but fullness; and not only fullness; but freeness, and with all these a certainty and unchangeableness? Here is as much mercy, and goodness, and happiness as you need, and you shall surely have it, and it shall

continue unto you forever. Adam and God parted; but you and your God shall never part; you and Christ shall never part; you and mercy, and grace, and salvation shall never part.

2. The second thing which I would show unto you about the comparison of the Covenant is this, That the new Covenant of grace under which we do live, is a better Covenant then that old Covenant of grace under which the Fathers lived, and the people of God of old time.

For the managing of this mighty and intricate Point, I shall deliver unto you three particulars.

1. That none of the people of God in any age of the world (since the fall of Adam) had a Covenant of works given unto them by God (for life) but the Covenant which God made with them (for life) was a Covenant of Grace.

2. Wherein that Covenant of Grace, under which the people of God of old lived, consents or agrees with the Covenant of Grace, under which we do now live.

3. The pre-eminency or betterness of this New Covenant, in a comparison with that old Covenant.

1. That none of the people of God in any age of the world (since the fall) had a Covenant of works given unto them by God for life, but they had all of them a Covenant of Grace given unto them for life:

Let us (if you please) calculate the several Ages or times of the Church of God, and then you shall clearly see the truth of what I speak.

1. As soon as Adam fell, God was pleased to set up the Covenant of Grace in the form of a promise, for he made a promise of Christ as a Savior and deliverer, Gen. 3:15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Here is an express promise of Christ, who is called the seed of the woman, because he was to take our nature upon him: And the work or Office of Christ is to bruise the head of the Serpent, (that is) Jesus Christ was to conquer and destroy him: and surely the conquest and destruction of Satan imports our full deliverance from him, and restoration of us into the estate of freedom, and grace, and happiness: The which Christ doth by having his heel bruised (that is) by dying and suffering for us, and hereby procuring life and salvation. The Apostle calls it His putting to death, concerning the flesh, 1 Pet 3:18. And in this respect Christ is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. 13:8, because the death of Christ (by which our deliverance and salvation is wrought) was published and promised from the beginning of the world: Now there is no Covenant wherein Christ comes in on the behalf of sinners, but that Covenant is a Covenant of Grace.

2. Again, pursue this from Adam to Abel, and from Abel to Enoch, and from Enoch to Noah, it is evident they were not under a Covenant of works, but of grace: And I will give you one reason for it, or rather the Apostle will do it for me, who speaking of Abel and Enoch, he doth commend the one for his more excellent sacrifice, Heb. 11:4, and the other for his pleasing of God, verse 5, and both of them (and Noah also) for faith (for he adds in verse 6. But without faith it is impossible to please God) whence I argue thus, That those persons who enjoyed such a faith by which their persons and services were pleasing unto God, and graciously accepted of him, those were not in a Covenant of works, but in a Covenant of Grace.

Nay look on the words once more, verse 4. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. And verse 7. Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith: verily a righteousness by faith is no righteousness in a Covenant of works, but of grace: It is that righteousness through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3:9.

3. Let us advance one step further from Noah to Abraham where we shall hear of the Covenant again, Gen. 17:2. I will make my Covenant between me and thee; and verse 7. I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generation for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee: Here is a Covenant expressly made twixt God and Abraham; but what Covenant was it? Surely not a Covenant of works, but a Covenant of grace. And that I shall clear unto you by four particulars which I pray you well to consider and observe.

1. In this Covenant you have Jesus Christ promised unto Abraham; so the Apostle in Gal. 3:16. To Abraham and his seed was the promise made; he saith not to thy seeds, as speaking of many, but of one who is Christ.

2. Abraham (In relation to this Covenant) is styled a believer, yea the Father of all them that believe, Rom. 4:11. And the Gospel was the means of his faith, which was a justifying faith, Gal. 3:8. The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.

3. He received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. 4:11.

4. Moreover it is said of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that they are in the kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 8:11. And of all the Elders with Abraham, that they did desire a better Country, that is a heavenly, Heb. 11:16. And this also proves that neither he, or they were under a Covenant of works (which never brought any to Heaven) but under a Covenant of Grace; for by grace ye are saved, Ephes. 2:5.

5. Let us go forward from Abraham to Moses, and there let us consider whether the Church were under a Covenant of works, or of grace. That God set up a Covenant in Moses time, the Scripture doth clearly teach us, Exod. 19:5. If ye will obey my voice, and keep my Covenant, Then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. Verse 6. And ye shall be un to me a kingdom of Priests, and a holy nation. Exod. 34:27. After the tenor of these words, I have made a Covenant with thee, and with Israel, Deut. 4:13. He declared unto you his Covenant which he commanded you to perform, even ten Commandments, and he wrote them upon two tables of stone?

But here it is earnestly objected, What, was not the Law which was given upon Mont Sinai, a Covenant of works? What was it else but a plain and clear manifestation of the Law written in the heart of man at the first, and now revived and set on foot by God himself.

Sol. This is (I confess) somewhat a knotty question, and therefore I would speak warily unto it.

1. The Law given by Moses (Ministerially) was partly Moral in the Ten Precepts, and partly Ceremonial in the Levitical Types and Ceremonies, and partly Judicial in the civil Rules appertaining to the Jews, as such a Nation in civil society; but the debate will principally fall upon the Moral Law.

2. Which may be considered two ways, viz. 1. As to the matter of it, as to which I grant that therein is the Covenant of works to be found. 2ly. As to the form or Sanction of it, as given (at this time) to the people of Israel; thus I deny it to be a Covenant of works; Although much which was in the Covenant of works, be in this Covenant, yet this Law or Covenant was not given for this end to the people of Israel, to be a Covenant of works unto them (that is) such a Covenant upon, or from which they must expect life upon their doing.

3. You must distinguish twixt 1. The intention of God in giving the Law, and 2ly. The abuse or perverting of that Law. I do grant that many of the Jews did set up a Legal Righteousness for their justifications and rested upon the works of the Law, as if life came by them (against which the Apostle Paul doth notably argue in his Epistle to the Romans, and to the Galatians) But this was not the intention of God in the Sanction of the Law: They never could find a justifying righteousness by the Law, or works of the Law (under the notion of a Covenant of works) Nor did God ever propound it for that end: and because I meet with this choice question, I will briefly deliver my own judgment concerning it in three particulars.

1. That God never did, nor will set up for sinners a Covenant of Works.

2. That he did not in giving the Law to the Israelites, set it up.

3. That this Covenant on Mount Sinai was a Covenant of Grace, at least subserviently and respectively.

1. That God never did (since the fall) set up a Covenant of Works: and I will give you arguments to demonstrate it.



1. He did set up immediately after the fall a Covenant of Grace (this the Scripture clearly shows us) but a Covenant of works is inconsistent with a Covenant of Grace; and a Covenant of grace is inconsistent with a Covenant of works, They are mutually destructive one to the other. If of works, then no more of grace, saith the Apostle, Rom. 11:6. So that you must either deny that God did set up a Covenant of grace for sinners (which the Scriptures affirm) or you must grant that a Covenant of grace is inconsistent with a Covenant of works (which the Scriptures deny) or you must confess that there is no Covenant of works (since the fall) set up by God for sinners.

2. If God did set up a Covenant of grace for sinners, and after that a Covenant of works for sinners, Then he did set up a possibility for sinners to be saved, and an impossibility also for sinners to be saved: The reason whereof is this. There is a possibility for a sinners salvation, as to a Covenant of grace where mercy may be found; and there is an impossibility of a sinners salvation, as to a Covenant of works, where no mercy is to be found for a sinner: But for God to make salvation both possible and impossible for the same sinners, were most inglorious and absurd.

3. To put sinners upon contradictions, is no way suitable with the wisdom and goodness of God. But if God should have set up a Covenant of works for sinners, after he hath set up a Covenant of Grace, he should have put the sinner upon contradictions: you must believe, and you must not believe; you must be justified and live by works, and you must not do so. The Covenant of grace saith you must believe; the Covenant of works saith you must not believe. That saith, believe and you shall be saved; this saith, do this and live: what is this but to build up, and pull

down; to offer mercy, and to deny mercy; to give life, and to take way life?

4. To make the Covenant of grace to be changeable and void, is quite contrary to the intention and purpose of God who hath made that Covenant to be everlasting, and never to be altered, no more than the Priesthood of Christ is changeable, of which God hath said, Thou art a Priest forever. But if God should set up a Covenant of works after a Covenant of Grace, this would void and frustrate the Covenant of grace. It would throw down Christ as a Mediator, and the Righteousness of Christ, and all the Fabric of a Sinners salvation by a Christ.

2. As God never did (after the fall) make a Covenant of works with sinners, so in particular he did not make such a Covenant with the Israelites when he gave the Law unto them from Mount Sinai, he did not give that Law for to be a Covenant of works, which I shall endeavor to prove thus.

1. What Covenant God made with Abraham, that Covenant he made with the seed of Abraham (Gen. 17:7. I will stablish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee) But that Covenant with Abraham was the Covenant of grace, and the seed of Abraham were those Israelites: And if those who are the seed of Abraham were under that Covenant of grace with Abraham, they could not be put off to another Covenant of Works, in which Abraham was not, unless you will say that God did act in different Covenants with Abraham and his seed.

2. The Apostle saith the Law is not against the promises of God: Is the Law then against the promises of God? God forbid, Gal. 3:21. And do we then make void the Law through faith? God

forbid, yea we establish the Law, Rom. 3:31. Mark! The Law is not against the promises, nor doth faith make void the Law; both these can very well agree together; but so they could not, if the Law had been given as a Covenant of works; for now the Law would be expressly against the Promises, and faith would certainly make void the Law. The promises of God are contrary to a Covenant of works, and faith is destructive to a Covenant of works. If therefore the promises, and faith, and the Law can consist, Then the Law cannot be set up as a Covenant of works.

3. That Covenant which God made with Moses, and under which Moses stood, was no Covenant of works; but Moses and the people of Israel were both under the same Covenant, Exod. 34:27. I have made a Covenant with thee, and with Israel: If any doubt under what Covenant Moses did stand, whether (of works or grace) let him peruse Heb. 11:26, what a description he shall there find of Moses: He shall there find him to be a Choice and eminent believer in Christ, Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, and having respect to the recompense of reward, &c. Now certainly such a choice believer in Christ was not under a Covenant of work.

4. That Covenant which was confirmed by blood, and sprinkling (which typified the blood of Christ confirming and ratifying the Covenant) was no Covenant of works: But the Covenant which God then made with the Israelites was confirmed by blood, Exod. 24:7. Moses took the book of the Covenant, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. Verse 8. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words: Now this very place is quoted by the Apostle in

Heb. 9:19. He sprinkled both the book and the people, verse 20, saying. This is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined unto you; and expressly interprets it, and applies it to the blood of Christ, verse 14, and verse 23. And therefore that Covenant with that people was not a Covenant of works which never was, nor shall be confirmed by the blood of Christ.

5. That Covenant which did so convince of sin, that it did also show the way of expiation of sin, and of forgiveness, could not be a Covenant of works (for that Covenant convinces and condemns) But this Covenant at Mount Sinai showed sin, and the way of forgiveness; for it taught men to look for forgiveness in the blood of Christ specified in the sacrifices.

6. If the Law had been given to the Israelites for a Covenant of Works, Then upon the breaking of that Covenant, all the Israelites had been cut off from all hope of salvation. My Reason is this, Because a Covenant of Works once broken presently condemns, and (as to it) Salvation therefore becomes impossible, it not at all admitting of repentance, or of mercy, or of a righteousness and satisfaction by another. But there was no such Covenant made with the Israelites as the sinning against which did make their salvation thus desperate, but that upon repentance they might be received to mercy. And for this see Deut. 4:29. But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; verse 30. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient to his voice; verse 31. For the Lord thy God is a merciful God; he will not destroy thee, nor forsake thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy Fathers which he sware unto them. Lo! Here is a way prescribed

for repentance in case of transgressions: And here is mercy, and acceptance in case of repentance, and all this in reference to the Covenant made with their Fathers, and with them. And are any of these to be found in a Covenant of works, or upon the transgression of it?

7. It had been strange kindness in God to help the Children of Israel out of Egypt by an out-stretched arm, and after this to make such a Covenant with them, that they should never have found mercy, nor salvation, as in a Covenant of works there is not.

3. The Covenant made with the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, was at least subserviently the Covenant of Grace: and given for gracious ends and purposes. I say a Covenant of Grace for the substance of it, though propounded in a more dark way, and in a manner fitting for the state of that people, and that present time and condition of the Church, namely so as to convince them of sin, and of their own impotency, and of the great need of Christ, and to fly for mercy to God revealed in Christ, and to be a Rule of life for a people in Covenant with God, that so they might inherit the promises of mercy, Gal. 3:19. The Law was added because of transgressions; verse 24. The Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified through faith.

This assertion I shall endeavor to make out unto you from the Word of God.

1. The Praeludium unto the Law makes much for this. Read it in Exod. 19:5. If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant. Then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. Verse 6. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation. And the Apostle makes use of these

expressions, and applies them to those who are in the Covenant of grace, in 1 Pet. 2:9. But ye are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar people, &c. And verse 10. Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Now I beseech you mark me! Is there any Covenant (unless that of grace) wherein the Lord doth thus own, and thus exalt a people? Is it not merely of the grace of God in Christ by whom we are made Kings and Priests to God? Is it imaginable that any people should be (as it were) God's own proper goods, which he loveth, which he sets his heart upon, which he keeps in store for himself, for his own special use, which he will not part withal, which God accounts as his rare and exquisite, and precious treasure (as all this the word Segulah doth signify) and yet this people are not in a Covenant of grace?

2. The immediate Introduction unto the giving of the Law, Exod. 20:2. I am the Lord thy God which have, &c. why there is the very Covenant of grace; here is God as our God (and blessed are the people who have the Lord to be their God) and here is Jesus Christ the Mediator of the Covenant implied; for in Christ doth God become our God; and there is our redemption from sin and Satan intimated by their deliverance out of Egypt, and presently there is the worship of God instituted and appointed, which if acceptable to God, must be performed with faith (for without faith it is impossible to please God) God would not command his people so to worship him, as to displease him, Lev. 26:12. I will set my Tabernacle amongst you, and my soul shall not abhor you, and I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you

shall be my people; and in the very Covenant, Exod. 20:6, showing mercy to thousands of them that love me.

3. Upon the breaking of the Tables of that Covenant before they were written again, there is such a preface made by God, as can no way fit any Covenant but that of Grace; as you may see in Exod. 34:7. The Lord, the Lord gracious and merciful, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.

4. The Ceremonies were Appendices of the Moral Law, especially of the first and second Commandments, as given to the Israelites; and what did those ceremonies shadow out? Even Jesus Christ and Redemption, and Reconciliation, and Remission, and Salvation by him, &c. Moses is said therefore to write of Christ, Joh. 5:46.

5. Many other Arguments might be brought, as that if those people were not in a Covenant of Grace, then none of them could be saved; for a sinner's salvation is in no Covenant but that of Grace; and yet many of them under the Covenant which God made with them were saved. Acts 15:11. We believe that through grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they, &c.

I now proceed to the Second Particular.

**2. Quest. Wherein that Covenant of Grace under which the Fathers lived doth consent or agree with the Covenant of Grace, under which we now do live?**

Sol. They do consent and agree in three Particulars.

1. In the Parties, God was one party, and fallen sinners were the other party in the Old, and so they are in the New Covenant. Before the coming of Christ, which respects the Old Covenant, none but sinners were looked on and brought into Covenant, and after the coming of Christ, which respects the New Covenant, none but sinners, which work not, but believe in him that justifieth the ungodly, are taken into Covenant. The Grace of God is manifested towards sinners in the one, and towards sinners in the other Covenant.

2. Both these Covenants had a Mediator who stood between the parties at a distance, and reconciled them, even Jesus Christ, who is said to be the same yesterday, and today, and forever: You have him promised to Adam and made known to Abraham, who saw the day of Christ and rejoiced, Joh. 8:56, and prophesied by of Moses, Act. 3:22. Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me, him shall you hear, &c. he was promised to the Fathers, and expected of them, Luk. 1:69. He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his Servant David. Vers. 70. As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began. And verse 72. To perform the mercy promise to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant. Vers. 73. The oath which he sware unto our Father Abraham, &c.

3. They do agree in the main Promises; the spiritual promises of good things, Rom. 15:8. Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers: Some think that the Fathers under the old Covenant were fed only with temporal Promises. Indeed they had many temporal Promises, and some were of special Blessings and



Gifts, as the land of Canaan &c. Nevertheless they had the same spiritual Promises, which we have under the New Testament.

Forgiveness of sins; besides that place formerly mentioned, in Deut. 4:29,30, &c. you read of frequent Promises of forgiving of sins upon their Sacrifices, in Levite. 9 and 2 Chro. 7:14. If my people shall humble themselves &c. I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin.

Eternal life, both promised and enjoyed; Many shall come from the East and West and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, Matth. 8:11. They embraced the promises of a better Country, even a heavenly, verse. 11,13,16. Prepared for them a City, We hope to be saved even as they, Acts 15:11, &c.

3. Quest. Wherein they differ, and wherein the betterness of the New Covenant of Grace doth consist.

Sol. Although both these Covenants do agree in substance and end, yet they differ very much as to the particular form of administration or dispensation; I will touch only on Five differences.

1. In Obscurity and Perspicuity.
2. In Burdens and Liberty,
3. In Weakness and Efficacy.
4. In Restraints and Extent.
5. In Time and Duration.

1. The New Covenant is a better Covenant than the Old, because there is a greater Perspicuity in the new Covenant, and a greater

Obscurity in the old Covenant. Hence 'tis that the Gospel is called The revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, Rom. 16:25,26. He doth not mean that it was kept secret, or hid, or covered absolutely from the beginning of the world to that time; but he speaks comparatively (that is) Now Jesus Christ and the way of salvation by faith in him appears most clearly; the Sun is risen and shines without any cloud; Behold the Lamb of God; Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; He that believes shall be saved; We are saved by grace, &c. I am the way, the truth, and the life: There was not (comparatively) such clearness in expression in the Old Testament; Hence it is, that the Apostle speaking of both these Testaments in 2 Cor. 3, he tells us of a veil on the one Testament, verse. 14, and of an openness in the other Testament, verse. 18. We with open face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, &c.

Let me give you a few Instances that you may the better understand this.

1. Consider Jesus Christ; it is true that he was revealed in the Old and in the New Covenant; but yet with a marvelous inequality of light; he is called the Seed of the woman, and the Root of Jess, and the Ointment, and the Mighty God, and the Child to be born: But the clear expression of him is in the New Covenant, Luk. 2:11. This day unto you is born in the City of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Joh. 1:14. The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, Acts 11:38. God hath anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. Vers. 42. It was he which was ordained of God, &c. Vers.

43. To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

2. Consider him likewise in his Offices; these were more darkly revealed in the Old Testament or Covenant in types and figures: His Mediatorship was typified in Moses, who stood between God and the People; his Priestly Office was shadowed in Melchizedek, his Prophetical Office in Moses, who revealed the mind of God to the people; his Kingly Office in David; God shall give him the Kingdom of his Father David: But in the New Testament, these are clearly affirmed of Christ, 1 Tim. 2:5. There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus; He is expressly called our High Priest, Heb. 4:15, and chap. 5:5,6. And expressly called a Prophet, Acts 3:22. And a King, Joh. 18:37. A King of Kings, Rev. 19:16.

3. Consider Christ in the business of Redemption; in the Old Testament this was shadowed in the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt by Moses, and the bringing of them into Canaan by Joshua: And in the Brazen Serpent, upon which they who were stung with the fiery Serpent and looked, were healed. But in the New Testament he is expressly called our Redeemer, and our Redemption; 1 Cor. 1:30, Heb. 9:15.

4. Consider likewise the Benefits which we have by Christ in the Old Testament; our Justification was shadowed in the Passover, in the Blood of the Lamb, and in the many Sacrifices of that time, and in sprinkling the blood of the Sacrifice: But in the New Testament this is clearly opened, 1 Cor. 5:7. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. And Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin. So our Adoption was figured in the first born; and our Sanctification, in

those Legal washings from pollution and uncleanness: But now in the New Testament we have it expressly, Christ is made unto us of God, Wisdom, and Righteousness and Sanctification, 1 Cor. 1:30. And that in him we receive the Adoption of Sons, Gal. 4:5. And to as many as received him he gave this dignity, to be the Sons of God, Joh. 1:12.

2. The Old Testament had more of Burden in it, and the New Testament hath more of Liberty in it. Hence it is that the Old Covenant is called a Yoke, Acts 15:10, and a Burden, Col. 2:20, and a Bondage, Gal. 4:3, and a Hand-writing of Ordinances against sinners, Col. 2:14. What a number of Ordinances and daily Sacrifices? O what a variety, and sometimes costliness of extraordinary Sacrifices for several contingencies of legal pollutions, besides the obligation of them to the observation of days, and months, and years, and ceremonial Sabbaths; again, the restriction of the people to worship at Jerusalem, where Thrice every year all the males were to come and appear before God, Deut. 16:16. Moreover a great restraint of their liberty in the use of several Creatures, the eating of which was denied unto them; But now understand the New Testament or Covenant, all these Bonds, and Yokes, and Restraint are broken; Christ hath set us at liberty from the yoke of bondage, Gal. 5:1, and hath blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, Col. 2:14, and any of the creatures is allowed unto us being sanctified by the word and prayer: The Church heretofore was as an infant, but now it is a child come to ripe years, and enjoys a freedom by Christ.

3. They differ as to Weakness and Power; The Old Testament had but a very weak operation in respect of the New; the Spirit was not so plentifully poured out as it is under the New Covenant, and therefore the old ministration of the Covenant is called a Letter, 2 Cor. 3:6, and

the new, the Spirit: he speaks comparatively of the one with the other; That the Old Testament did but as it were declare, but the new doth work powerfully and effectually in our hearts.

Not that the old Covenant had no spiritual influence and operations; for we read of many living under it who were choice and rare in grace; Abraham for Faith, and Moses for Meekness, and Job for Patience, and Josiah for Tenderness, and Hezekiah for Uprightness, &c. But that the more plentiful effusion of the Spirit was reserved until Christ's Resurrection from the dead, and ascension into Heaven; at which time the New Covenant began to appear in its glory and efficacy; gifts were abundantly given unto men, and Three thousand, and Five thousand at once converted, &c.

4. In Limitation and Extent; the Old Testament or Covenant was confirmed to the people of the Jews, and such Proselytes as came in amongst them, Psal. 147:19. He showeth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel. Verse 20. He hath not dealt so with any Nation. To them were committed the oracles of God, Rom. 3:2. To them pertained the Covenants and the Promises, Rom. 9:4. And therefore said Christ to the woman of Samaria, Salvation is of the Jews, Joh. 4:22. But the New Covenant is a more large and open door; it takes in the Jews and the Gentiles, yea some of all the Nations in the world; there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:28. The Gospel publisheth Christ and the Covenant to Jews and Gentiles, and it is powerful unto both, &c. God is become the God of the Gentiles also, and not of the Jews only, Rom. 3:29. The great separation between the Jews and the Gentiles began upon the coming out of the children of Israel from Egypt, and especially when the Ceremonial Law was set up as a partition wall;

And this Separation wall was broken down by the death of Christ, Ephes. 2:14, &c. and proclaimed immediately after his Ascension.

5. They do differ in Time and Duration, The Old Covenant was but temporary, I mean as a Covenant with such and such ceremonies: therefore it is called weak and vanishing, Heb. 8:13 What should the shadows do when the body itself is come? But the New Covenant abides forever; It is the everlasting Gospel. And it is an everlasting Ministration both for the matter and manner of it.

There might be many more differences between them produced, but I shall spare to mention them.

Thus have you heard the betterness of the New Covenant and therewith a discourse of the several dispensations of the Covenant; I will make a few useful Applications from what I have delivered, and then I shall go on to another general Head of the Covenant.

Use 1. See of what antiquity the Grace of God is! And of what a length it is! It hath been acting and putting forth itself from the beginning of the world, it is of ancient days, and running along through all ages unto our age, and so shall it hold on until the end of the World. God hath had some (ever since the fall) whom he hath owned in special a manner for his people; There is no age but his Covenant (in some measure) hath been afoot, and some have been tasting of his Grace and Mercy; We in our generation are not the only vessels of them, thousands and thousands before us have been restored by Grace, and saved by Grace.

Use 2. How should this bow in our hearts to come into that Covenant of Grace which hath in so many Generations been found so full of mercy and life? And to trust upon that God who is good, and always keeps Covenant; there is not anything spoken of in any one

Dispensation of the Covenant, but it hath been still performed: Surely that Covenant which hath held out so many years to so many Believers, it will be sufficient and effectual for us all our days.

Use 3. Then it is a gross error of the Anabaptists, who put the Fathers under a carnal Covenant, and that God fed them only (with husks) with Temporal Promises, with earthly blessings; as if they had no interest in God himself, nor Christ, nor Grace, nor Glory; whereas the Old Covenant (under which they lived) made up the same relation 'twixt God and them, as between us and God; and they had the same Christ revealed unto them, as we have; and their Faith looked on him as promised and to come, as our faith looks on him as come and exhibited; and they and we are the same children of God by faith, and heirs of the same glory by Christ.

Use 4. Then it is also a gross error to lay any other foundation than what is laid, my meaning is, To set up a Covenant of Works for life and justification, to build our confidences and hopes for life and salvation upon our own works; for God (as you have heard) hath from age to age, and from generation to generation set up a Covenant of Grace (though in several ways of dispensation) for his people, and in these latter times (as the Apostle stiles them) hath settled, fixed an invincible Covenant of grace to the worlds end. And the Covenant of grace lays Jesus Christ alone for the sinner's foundation, and gives faith to lay the soul upon him, not upon our own righteousness, but upon his righteousness. You do for lying vanities forsake your own mercies, when you leave Jesus Christ, and expect life from a Covenant of works.

Use 5. If they who had the Covenant of grace more dimly and darkly revealed, were brought in as a people unto God; what shall we say for ourselves, who have the Covenant of grace most clearly revealed in

the Gospel, and who have Christ, and all the work of Redemption by Christ? And all the way of salvation by Christ written (as it were) with the beams of the Sun? What shall we say for ourselves, if yet

1. We remain ignorant of mercy, and life, and Christ, and salvation.

2. We remain obstinate, and refuse to hearken unto the way of life, and unto the terms of grace propounded unto us in the Gospel.

3. We still receive the grace of God in vain, and are no way wrought on by the ministration of the New Covenant; but it is still a dead Letter unto us, not a quickening Spirit, &c. O how inexcusable are our souls? And how unanswerable shall we for all this grace of God? And how heavy will the condemnation be for despising the grace of God shining amongst us with such glorious light in the face of Christ, and in the Ministry of the Gospel of Christ? If our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that are lost. 2 Cor. 4, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (who is the image of God) should shine unto them, verse 5.

O what manner of persons should the people of God be in these times, who live under the new Covenant, the best of all Covenants! Better than the Covenant of works, better than the Old Covenant of Grace for perspicuity, for efficacy, for liberty, &c.

1. What manner of men should we be in knowledge of Christ, and of the grace of God in Christ!



2. What manner of men should we be for soundness of judgment in the truths of the Covenant, having so much light of the Gospel revealing the Covenant.

3. What manner of men should we be in the estimation of Christ, in affections unto Christ, in love to Christ, in faith in Christ? To whom Christ is so fully, and so evidently made manifested by the Gospel in his Person, in his Offices, in his Love, in his Redemption, in his Salvation.

4. How rich in grace, how abounding in every grace! To whom the New Covenant of grace is preached, which is of more power and efficacy than any other Covenant which hath a more abundant presence and influence of the Spirit. As to whom much is forgiven, of them shall much be required; So they who have received much, from them doth God expect more.

5. How should you serve your God, and live up to Christ in all intention of mind, and fervency of Spirit, and freedom of heart, and cheerfulness of soul, and readiness of obedience, who are brought into that Covenant which sets you at liberty from a world of Ceremonies, and Sacrifices, and restraints, and besides, from sin and Satan!

6. How chiefly should your hearts be raised to the better promises in Christ fully manifested now in the Gospel! In the Old Testament you find more mention indeed of temporal blessings, and the spiritual were (many times) veiled in them: But in the New Testament you find the greatest mention of Spiritual blessings, and temporal blessings be annexed unto them. And why is this, but because your hearts should be more taken up with, and more set upon the great things of salvation and heaven, than the mean things of earth, and of this life? O that you had hearts suitable and answerable to the

choicest and chiefest manifestations of the Covenant of grace, and of the blessings more fully revealed and promised in the Covenant!

How should we Gentiles bless the Lord whom he hath reserved for the times of the New Covenant, which excels the other! It is to me a very considerable Mystery that the Jews who were (if I may so express myself) the Original people of God, the first fruits of the creature, That they should have the largest time under the Old Covenant: And we who are Gentiles that came in (as it were) at second hand, should have all our time under the New Covenant. That they by unbelief were so quickly broken off, and the Gentiles have been for so many hundred years grafted in: whatsoever the mystery of this dispensation may be, certainly we who are sinners of the Gentiles, have wonderful cause to bless our God who hath given us so long a day in the day of his grace; and have singular cause to improve such a mercy with fear and trembling! As we may see the greatness of the freeness of God's grace, and the exceeding riches thereof to us, so should we both lay hold on the grace revealed, and walk with more faith and humility: not be high-minded, but fear: for we stand by faith; Remember saith Paul to the Ephesians, (Chap. 2:12.) That at that time ye were without Christ, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world? But verse 13, now in Christ Jesus ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

## CHAP. VI

And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you. - Isaiah 55:3.

And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

I Have now discoursed of the Covenant of Grace as it stands in opposition to the Covenant of Works: and I have discoursed of the Covenant of Grace as to the vital nature of it, what it was: and I have discoursed of the Covenant of Grace, as to the Properties and Adjuncts of it.

Now I shall proceed unto a fourth General consideration of this Covenant of Grace: and that is the condition of it. The Covenant of Grace (herein) agrees with all other Covenants, that it is a mutual obligation; God binds himself, and his people bind themselves; there is something which he will do, and there is something which we must do: I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant, Ezek. 20:37, and surely there is a condition in that Bond. God hath his part in the Bond, and we have our part in the Bond; If you trace the Covenant from Abraham even unto Christ (successively) you shall all along find a condition expressed, and annexed unto the Covenant.

Abraham he believed, Gen. 15:6. And he was to walk uprightly, Gen. 17:1, and the many Rites in Moses time took in a condition of faith and obedience; and so it did in David's time: and the like with the people of Israel, in and after the Babylonish Captivity: and so in Christ's, and the Apostles time.

## SECT. I.

Object. I Know there is a great dispute How any condition can be allowed in a Covenant of Grace: And some are very eager against it: and think that if any condition be admitted, then presently we are Legalists, and are setting up a Covenant of works instead of a Covenant of Grace.

Sol. But I humbly conceive that there is no need of such heat, nor fear of such an inconveniency in this Point, if parties would but patiently hear one another, and calmly consider the matter.

Therefore first I think it necessary to distinguish of that word (condition) which may be taken in a three-fold sense.

1. For such an Act which we may, or may not perform, according to the power and pleasure of our own free will, without the preventing, or determining grace of God: And truly in this sense, I know no godly Christian, who doth, or dare to thrust in a condition to the Covenant of Grace, as if there were something to be done by us (that is) by the sole power of our free wills, upon the drawing out of which, a Covenant is made up, and accomplished twixt God and us.

2. For the doing of some work which hath in it a meritorious reason on our part, either for the acceptance of our persons with God, or for the performance of his promises unto us, so as wages are due to a workman; no such condition as merit and self-worthiness. Neither in this sense dare we admit of a condition in the Covenant of Grace; for the thirsty drink of the water of life freely, and the poor buy without money, and without price: Both our graces, and our rewards are only of the grace of God in Christ.

3. For some qualifications in the sinner, not wrought in him by his own power, but by the sole power of God's grace: without which he cannot stand in an actual relation unto God as his God, nor can apply the promises of pardon and salvation by Christ unto himself: In this sense we do hold a condition in the Covenant of Grace, namely, That something there is required of us, which yet God doth promise to work in us (and which he doth work effectually in the hearts of all the Elect in time) therefore Faith is called the operation of God, Col. 2:12, and the work of his power, 1 Cor. 2:5, without which they cannot look on God as their God, nor can apply the Promises of forgiveness and eternal life, and which (when they do find wrought in themselves by the power of God's grace) they can, and may apply both unto themselves.

Look as to make up a conjugal Relation, there is something required on either party; The woman must be willing to take and receive the man for her husband, as well as the man is willing to take the woman for his wife: So it is in the making up of the Spiritual marriage (which is the Covenant) twixt God and us; as he is willing to be our God, so must we be willing to be his people. And as he (therein) takes us to be his people, so do we (therein) take him to be our God; Only with this difference, That in the civil Covenant of marriage, our own will leads us to that; but in the Spiritual, God doth by his Spirit work in us that will, which is a condition necessary to make the Covenant between himself and us.

2. A condition (as thus interpreted) as it is simply necessary to the Covenant of Grace (being a mutual compact, and not a mere promise) so it is expressly determined in Scripture. Joh. 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: ye shall not perish if you do believe: and ye shall have everlasting life if ye do

believe. Mark 16:16. He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. Isa. 55:3. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant. Exod. 24:7. He took the book of the Covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. Verse 8, and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words. Acts 2:38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Chap. 3:19. Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, &c. Chap. 13:18. Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. Verse 39. And by him all that believe are justified, &c 2 Cor. 6:17. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. Verse 8, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

3. Every condition annexed unto a Covenant, doth not make that Covenant to be a Covenant of Works, unless you do put the self-same condition into that other Covenant which is placed in the Covenant of works: But thus it is not in the Covenant of grace; which

1. Puts not the same condition, but another condition of a quite different nature from that condition in the Covenant of work: There it is, Do this and live, Here it is, Believe and you shall be saved.

2. Puts such a condition which is compatible with the grace of God: Indeed works (that is) a self-perfect, and absolute obedience is incompatible, and inconsistent with salvation by grace; but a saving by faith is not inconsistent with grace: Of

which if any doth doubt, let him but read the Apostle in Ephes. 2:5. By grace are ye saved. Verse 8. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Rom. 4:16. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace. What can be can spoken more expressly to show the consistence twixt grace and faith? Grace saves, and yet faith saves; ye are saved by grace through faith.

Now from all which hath been discovered, it doth appear that the Covenant of grace can admit of a condition, namely such a condition which is graciously given, and such a condition which will in the nature and use of it exalt all the grace of God. And truly this condition is Faith, and no other thing; for Faith

1. Is the gift of God, Ephes. 2:8, and Phil. 1:29. It doth not (at all) flow from ourselves. Therefore believers are said (Joh. 1:13) to be born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

2. And it is such a gift of God as is completely adopted to the Covenant of Grace: (To no Covenant but that, and to that it is) For that Covenant on God's part is all in offers, and promises, and giving's; and faith is all in receiving, and is depending, and acknowledging, and magnifying the grace of God.

And that Faith is the condition annexed to this Covenant, I shall present unto you a few Arguments (besides the Scriptures above mentioned) to demonstrate it.

1. That without which God is not our God, nor are we his people: And upon which God is our God, and we do become his people and children; This is a condition of the Covenant; But faith is that without which God is not our God, nor are we his people, and upon

faith God is our God, and we are his people and children: See it in the particulars.

1. Without Faith there is no Relation (by way of Covenant) twixt God and us;

1. For God and unbelievers are not in Covenant.

2. Refusers of the Covenant, are not in Covenant.

3. Persons under wrath and condemnation are not in Covenant. He that believes not, is condemned, and he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him, Joh. 3:18. Ephes. 2:11. Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, &c. Verse 12. That at that time, ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel and strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. This was their condition before they were quickened from the dead, and had obtained faith, 1 Pet. 2:10. Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

2. Upon faith, God becomes our God in Covenant, and we become his people and children. He upon believing becomes our God in Covenant, Isa. 55:3. Incline your ear, and come unto me: Hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you. And Rom. 8:15. Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry Abba Father: And that spirit of Adoption presupposeth faith: None are sons but by faith: And we upon believing do become his people and children. Gal. 3:26. Ye are all the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.



2. That which gives you an interest in Christ, the same thing gives you an interest in the Covenant of Grace. (For this is a sure truth, that according to your interest in Christ, so is your interest in God, and in the Covenant. Out of Christ you shall find no God to be your God) But Faith is necessary to give you an interest in Christ, forasmuch as Christ becomes ours by faith: By faith we are planted into Christ, and built upon Christ, and married unto Christ, he is ours, and we are his.

3. If all the good of the Covenant comes unto us upon believing: Then Faith is the condition annexed unto the Covenant (you can have none of the good of it but upon believing; unbelief cuts you off from all title, and all fruition) but all the good of the Covenant comes to be settled upon you by believing. If you believe, you shall be saved: If you believe, you shall be justified and pardoned: you have the righteousness of Christ by faith, and you have the pardon of your sins by faith, you are heirs of all by faith: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, Joh. 3:26. The promise that he should be the heir of the World was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the Law, but through the righteousness of Faith, Rom. 4:13.

4. All the dealings with God as a God in Covenant, is by Faith; you can have no communion with him at all without faith; you cannot acknowledge him, nor love him, nor desire him, nor delight in him, nor call upon him, nor trust him, nor take anything from him, nor make any use of him or of his promises but by faith. Heb. 11:6. He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, James 1:6. But let him ask in faith, &c.

## SECT. II.

Quest 1. But now come three Questions, what Faith that is which is necessary, and which must be put forth to bring us into the Covenant, and without which we neither are, nor can be in Covenant with God.

2. Whether Faith only be the condition?

3. Why Faith is the condition?

1. What Faith it is that is the condition?

Sol. There are several distinctions of Faith considered in the kinds of it, of which I shall not speak; and there are several conditions of the same Faith in respect of the particular acts issuing or following from it.

1. That Faith which brings us into the Covenant, is a Faith which respects Christ, or which is conversant about Christ. No other Faith but this Faith; and of this Faith there are divers acts. 1. One is a uniting act. 2. And there is a justifying act. 3. A third is a drawing act.

The faith which brings us into the Covenant, is that faith which doth unite us unto Christ, which makes us one with him: And we being thus united to Christ, we are thereupon, and therefore in the Covenant: Faith considered as justifying, doth not bring us into the Covenant; for our justifying follows our being in the Covenant; we must first be in the Covenant before we can have Righteousness and forgiveness of sins. Neither doth faith as drawing any grace from Christ bring us into the Covenant: Forasmuch as all the fruits of communion are consequents unto us being first in the Covenant. But it is faith considered only as uniting us unto Christ which brings us into the Covenant.

For the opening of this Point (which is as difficult and weighty as any that I meet with) give me favor to enlarge myself a little in showing unto you

1. That there is a union twixt Christ and us.
2. That faith is the means or instrument of that union.
3. That our interest in the Covenant necessarily flows from this union with Christ.

1. That there is a union twixt Christ and us, not an imaginary union, a union only in the apprehension of the mind (as an object apprehended is conveyed and united to the intellect) but a very real union: Hence it is that the Church is called the Body, and Christ is called the Head, Ephes. 5:23. Christ is the Head of the Church, and he is the Savior of the body. And verse 30 Ye are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones. Now there is a real union 'twixt the body and the head, and between every member of the body and of the head; they are all joined to the head by the Nerves and Ligatures from whence they receive their sensation and strength. In like manner there is a union between us and Christ, we are joined to the Lord, (1 Cor. 6:17) and he is joined unto us, &c.

The Church is called a building, and house, and Christ is called the foundation and corner-stone, Eph. 2:20. We are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Corner-stone, 1 Pet. 2:4. To whom coming as unto a living stone, verse 5 ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, &c. There is a union twixt the building and the foundation, the building depends upon the foundation, and the foundation bears up the building.

The Church is the Branches, and Christ is the Vine, Joh. 15:5. I am the Vine, and ye are the branches: The living branches have their union with the roots, there they grow, and there they live, and are nourished.

The Church is called the Spouse and Wife of Christ, and Christ the Husband: I will marry thee to myself, Hosea 2:19. I have espoused you unto one husband, saith Paul, 2 Cor. 11:2. And twixt them the union is so near, that they are called one flesh, Gen. 2:24, so likewise are Christ and they who are united to Christ called one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17.

2. That faith is the means and instrument of our union with Christ: By which we are near to him, enjoy him, are joined unto him, possess him as ours. And this the Scripture holds forth unto us abundantly in the several expressions of faith: Our believing is sometimes styled a coming to Christ; Come unto me; and No man comes to me except, &c. A receiving of Christ, Joh. 1:12. To as many as received him, &c. A livingly Christ, and a living in Christ. Because I live, ye shall live also, Joh. 14:19. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, Gal. 2:20, and a joining to Christ, 1 Cor. 6:17. A being in Christ: Ye are in Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1:30, and that is by faith. A partaking of Christ, a planting of us into Christ, and Christ is said to dwell in us by faith, and so do we dwell in him by faith, and abide in him by faith. An eating and drinking of Christ, Joh. 6:56.

When the Spirit of God works faith in our hearts, our hearts are now brought in to Christ; they are subdued and captivated: We embrace Christ, and we come in to Christ; and Christ is ours, and we are his, and the whole heart is settled upon Christ, and knit unto Christ, and becomes one with Christ.

3. Our interest in the Covenant necessarily follows from this union with Christ. Being brought by faith into Christ, you are now in the Covenant: And that I shall clear unto you thus.

1. The Covenant of God was made first with Christ as the head of the Church, and with us in relation unto Christ, and with Christ in relation to us, Tit. 1:2. In hope of eternal life which God promised before the world began: To whom did he promise that eternal life for us, but unto Christ? With whom he did Covenant for us, and in whom with us, Isa. 42:6. I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. The same you read in Isa. 49:8. Jesus Christ is not only the Messenger of the Covenant, Mal. 3:1, nor only the surety of the Covenant, Heb. 7:22, nor only the Mediator of the Covenant, as standing twixt God and us, Heb. 12:24, but he is the principal confederate in the Covenant. Christ stands as a public person in the Covenant; and when God made a Covenant with him, he made it with him for himself and all his, with all that should be brought in unto him. As Adam stood in the Covenant of works, not as a private person, but as a public person, and that Covenant was made with him, and with all his posterity; so the Covenant which God made with Christ, it was made with Christ as a public person, as the Head of all the Church with him and all his: And therefore as soon as you are brought in by faith to Christ, you are immediately brought into the Covenant.

2. In Christ, and by Christ God is our God, and our Father; and therefore if by faith you are brought into Christ, you are brought into the Covenant: Let God look on us as out of Christ, he must look on us as enemies, and not as children; and if we look on God out of Christ, we must behold him as our Judge, but not as our Father. But consider us as brought into Christ, now we are reconciled to God; and now in what relation God stands to Christ, in the same he stands

to us; and in what relation Christ stands to God, in the same do we stand to God. And what privilege Christ enjoys, the same do we enjoy by Christ; he is a God to Christ, and a Father to Christ, Psal. 89:26. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, &c. And thus we being in Christ, he is to us. Joh. 20:17. I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God; and Christ is the Son of God, and so are we the sons of God, 1 Joh. 3:1. Christ is the Heir of God, and so are we heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, Rom. 8:17.

3. When you are by faith brought into union with Christ (so that you are his) you now enjoy life, and promises, and all blessings, 1 Joh. 5:12. He that hath the Son, hath life. 1 Cor. 3:22. All are yours: verse 23, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 2 Pet. 1:4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, and you may plead them all, for they are yea, and in Christ Amen. Ephes 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

4. This union with Christ directly stands in opposition to a sinner's being cut off from God, and brings him again into a state of favor. The soul can no more receive ought from God, till it be one with him by Christ, than Christ could merit anything for us till the Deity and the flesh were fully united: and no more than the soul can impart anything to the body till they be one.

Thus have you heard what faith that is, which is the condition of the Covenant; viz. A faith of union, a faith which brings us into Christ, and unites us with Christ: I now proceed unto the second question.

## SECT. II.

2. Quest. Whether Faith only be the Condition of the Covenant? Is not Holiness required? Is not Repentance? Is not new obedience?

Sol. For answer unto this, we must distinguish

1. Between the Covenant, and persons in the Covenant: If you speak of persons in the Covenant, certainly holiness is required of them (ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy; and be ye holy, for I am holy) and holiness is promised to all the people in Covenant: And holiness is wrought in all the people of the Covenant: All the people of God are a holy people; but though holiness be in the Covenanted, yet it is not in the condition of the Covenant: God doth not say, If you be holy, then I will be your God and accept of you, but if you believe; when you are brought into the Covenant, then you are made holy; but that which brings you into the Covenant, that which God insists with you for so as to be your God, is faith. Receive my Christ, believe on him, and I will be your God.

2. Though Faith be the only condition as to entrance in the Covenant, yet this faith will bring you to holiness as a fruit of the Covenant. For this faith brings you to Christ, to union with him, and communion with him in holiness: As soon as faith brings you into union with Christ, Christ makes you partakers of that unction of holiness wherewith he himself is anointed.

3. There is a difference 'twixt the persons to whom promises are made, and the condition upon which those promises are performed. Indeed you read of many promises made to broken-hearted and penitent persons, but the application of them all is only by Faith: The forgiveness of sin cannot be applied by any hand but that of faith which seed the promise of it, and seeks the performance of it by and for Christ.

4. For newness of obedience, this is a consequent effect, and not an Antecedent condition; for it is impossible to see fruits till you find life: And besides this, that faith which lets you into Covenant, is a very fruitful Faith, it grafts you into such a root which can enable you (and will do so) for fruits of life, as the first Adam doth his Branches for fruits of death: So then it is faith, and faith only which is the condition of the Covenant, yet it is such a faith, which though it takes no graces or works with it as competitors in the nature of a condition with it, yet it doth infer and draw after it all these Graces, and all good works, as Austin said, *Bona opera sequuntur justificatum, licet non praecedunt justificandum, &c.*

### SECT. III.

3. Quest. Why is Faith singled out to be the condition of the Covenant of Grace?

1. There is nothing whatsoever which doth so fit and answer a Covenant of Grace as Faith doth; for in this Covenant God deals in promises, and by a Mediator: And the promises are objects proper to faith: As precepts are to obedience, and threatening's to fear, so are promises to faith: And for Jesus Christ the Mediator, deal with him you cannot but by faith.

Object. Indeed love deals with Christ as well as faith (Christ is the object of our love, and of our faith) But then here

1. That love deals with Christ in the strength of faith; first faith deals, and then love deals with Christ.



2. Though love deals with Christ, yet it is another way than faith: Love is bringing into Christ, but Faiths work is receiving all from Christ, and resting on Christ, &c.

2. There is nothing but Faith which will, or can acknowledge a free Covenant: And all as freely given unto us: Set up anything but faith, and that will set up us, and pull down grace: Anything but faith must be something in ourselves; and something in ourselves will deprive grace of the glory, yea it will deny grace; but faith will do none of this, because faith is a mere gift of grace, and faith receives all as free gift, finds nothing in us at all, but receives all, and lives wholly on the grace of God in Christ.

3. It is of faith, that the promises might be sure; so the Apostle, Rom. 4:16. Adam had a Covenant as well as we (and therefore some observe that he had one sacrament of death, and another of life, to assure him of death in case he sinned, as well as to assure him of life in case he obeyed) because it was made upon condition of works: And truly if Adam who was so every way furnished, could not hold up a Covenant upon a Condition of works, much less should we do it, being now utterly broken by him: But now the promise of life being made to us upon condition of faith, it is therefore made sure; for faith builds upon a sure foundation, and faith hath a sure word of promise.

4. The Covenant of grace excludes all boastings in ourselves, Rom. 3:27, and therefore faith is necessary for us; for boasting is excluded, not by the Law of works, but by the Law of Faith, Ibid. If you should put in works for the condition, then the sinner would be ready to boast, All this I have kept from my youth. This have I done, and that have I done, and I never offended thy will; the wages is due debt to me: O but this must never be, &c.

5. There are such things undertaken in the Covenant, as nothing but faith can tell what to make of them. I will forgive your iniquities, and will give you a new heart, and I will heal your backslidings, and I will love them freely, and I will forgive your sins for mine own sake. These are absolute Mysteries without faith.

Before I proceed any further in this Point, I would make some useful Application of what I have delivered already. Is Faith the condition of the Conant?

#### SECT. IV.

1. Use. Then how are men mistaken! How have they deluded themselves! How must they return ashamed, who have nursed up their fancies and presumptions about the mercy of God, and the many promises of God about salvation, and other blessings, yea and about God himself, what a good, and gracious, and merciful God he is, and so will be to them?

O but sirs! There is a condition in the Bond. God makes many sweet and comfortable promises, O but there is a condition; And God saith he will be such a gracious and merciful God, &c. O but there is a condition; and he saith that he will save, and give eternal life; O but there is a condition, a condition that you think not of, a condition that you never attained unto: Faith is the condition of the Covenant: You must be believers in Christ, and then and so you must claim the promises, you must have an interest in Christ, or else you can never have an interest in the privileges of the Covenant: you have owned the promised mercy, and the promised salvation in the Covenant; O but you have not all this while owned Christ by saith, and therefore you have all this while deluded your souls.

The Apostle saith all men have not faith; and the Prophet saith, Who hath believed our report? And Christ himself saith, He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believes not shall be damned. Why brethren! If Faith be the condition of the Covenant, If faith be necessary to bring us into the Covenant; Then no unbeliever is yet in the Covenant, for no unbeliever hath faith: No, no, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; and mercy is not the portion of unbelievers, but of believers, and salvation by Christ is interested only on them who believe on Christ: And thou art (to this day) an unbeliever, thou art utterly destitute of faith. And there are six things which show that thou art so.

1. One is the unsensibleness of thy sinful and wretched condition, and of thy need which thy soul hath of Christ.
2. A second is, the exceeding ignorance in thy heart of Christ, as the Mediator of the Covenant.
3. A third is, the exceeding pride, and confidence on their own righteousness, and on thine own works.
4. A fourth is, the continual neglects and disesteem of the Gospel of Christ.
5. A fifth is, the fruitless reception of the many offers of Christ.
6. A sixth is, the incompliance of thy heart with the Lord Jesus, and averseness, and refusing of subjection unto Christ. Thou wilt not have him to reign over thee. Ah poor creature! How hast thou befooled thyself! And deluded thy soul with a vain presumption of interest in the Covenant, whilst as yet thou hast not faith to interest thy soul in Christ.

2. Use. Is saith of union the condition of the Covenant! Then as you have reason to look to yourselves, because all men have not faith; so you have reason to look to your faith, for you may have a faith, which yet is not a faith of union: That is a considerable passage of Christ in Joh. 15:2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. Verse 6. If a man abideth not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned: A branch may be in a tree two ways: One is by a mere corporeal adherence by cleaving and sticking to the body of the tree: and so every dead branch is in the tree, as well as those that live; such branches have no union, they are dead and cut off, and cast away into the fire. Another is by a real participation of the life, sap, and influence of the root: That which makes us to be in Christ any kind of way, is Faith: and according to the differences of faith are those differences of being in Christ. You may read in Scripture of a dead faith, James 2:26. This dead faith takes in an external profession of Christ, and a self-aiming dependence on Christ to keep us from Hell, and get us to Heaven. But for all this there is no real union with Christ. And we read too of a lively and unfeigned faith, of a faith which joins us and Christ in one Spirit, which grafts us indeed into Christ and makes us partakers of the life and grace of Christ. O where is this faith? This living faith? This engrafting faith? This uniting faith is the only precious faith, and the only faith which brings us into the Covenant, and the only faith which can look on God as our God, and promising mercy and salvation unto us? If you have not this faith, you have no interest in Christ; and if you have no interest in Christ, you have no interest in God, nor in the Covenant of God: You cannot own God for yours, nor can you own the promises of God as yours, as made unto you.

But here now occur two serious questions.

1. One is, How we may know whether our faith be a faith of union which unites us to Christ.
2. The second is, How we may attain unto the faith of union, which only brings us into the Covenant.

#### SECT. V.

1. Quest. How we may know whether our Faith be a Faith of real union with Christ? A faith which unites us to Christ indeed?

Sol. This is a most pertinent question, because our real interest in the Covenant of grace depends upon it, all depends upon it; out of Christ, and out of Covenant; in Christ, and in Covenant. And if your faith be a uniting faith, then Christ is yours, and God is yours, and all the good of the Covenant is yours.

Now there are five things which are to be considered about the faith of union, (or the faith which indeed unites us to Christ.)

1. The manner how it is wrought in the heart.
2. The peculiar operations of it upon the soul in relation to this union.
3. The very act, or acts by which, and upon which the soul is indeed brought into union.
4. The qualities of this union by faith.
5. The choice influences or effects which do always attend that union with Christ by faith.

1. If your faith be a faith which unites you to Christ, then it is the work and fruit of the Spirit, and it is wrought by the Spirit in an uniting way.

1. It is the work of the Spirit of Christ: None doth or can raise and produce this faith, but the very Spirit of God, Col. 2:12. Ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead: His mighty power is put forth to produce it, Ephes. 1:19, 1 Cor. 2:5. Your faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 2 Cor. 4:13. We having the same Spirit of Faith. In all these places the Apostle speaks of that faith which interests your persons in Christ: This faith he calls the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, 1 Cor. 2:4, and the power of God, and the operation of God, and the Spirit of Faith; and in Isa. 53:1. The revealing of the Arm of God.

Consider this Faith in all the parts and degrees of it, you shall find that every one of them comes from the Spirit of God.

Faith is sometimes styled knowledge, and believing knowing; why! The right knowledge of Christ is a fruit or work of the Spirit of God, Matth. 11:25. Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.

Faith is sometimes styled acknowledgment, (Col. 2:2. The acknowledgement of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.) And no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12:3.

Faith, or believing is sometimes styled a coming unto Christ; and saith Christ himself, No man can come to me except the Father draw him, Joh. 6:44. It is called a receiving of Christ, Joh. 1:12, which ability to receive Christ depends only on the will of God, verse 13.

Well then, uniting faith is the sole work of the Spirit of God, if any man be brought into Christ, and joined unto Christ, this work is wrought by the Spirit of Christ.

2. The spirit works this uniting Faith in a uniting way or manner; how is that will you say? Thus it is, when the Spirit doth work this faith in us, he doth it in a Gospel manner, the Gospel way is the uniting way, accompanying it all along, 1. By Evangelical light. 2. By Evangelical offers. 3. By Evangelical promises. 4. By Evangelical efficacy.

1. He lets in such a Gospel-light into the soul of a broken and troubled sinner, that he is now able to see, and to discern the wonderful grace of God in Christ; even the glories of Christ, the sealing, and anointing of him to be the Mediator, and Redeemer, and Savior of sinners, and the life of the world, the Prince of peace, the only help and hope of them that are lost, Joh. 3:16. The Gospel saith so, and the Spirit makes him to see it so. The people that walked in darkness have seen great light, Isa. 9:2. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3:18.

2. When he hath let in such a light that the sinner is convinced of the infinite mercy and grace of God in Christ; Then he further enables the sinner to apprehend the singular kindness of God in the offers of this Christ unto him (unto you is the word of this salvation sent, Acts 13:26, and verse 38. Be it known unto you, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins) And the Spirit accompanies the Gospel in this offer. As the Gospel outwardly offers Christ to sinners, so doth the Spirit inwardly offer Christ to the heart, and secretly calls there, Come unto Christ, you are poor, and you are thirsty, and you are broken, and bruised in heart. And such sinners as these doth

Christ call to come unto him and live forever. He was anointed for you, and is sent to you.

3. The Spirit backs these offers and calls with express promises: for though the sinner be exceeding glad to find out Christ the Savior: yet he is exceeding doubtful whether he may close with Christ thus offering himself unto him: therefore herein (likewise) doth the Spirit appear towards the working of faith, viz. he doth clear up the promises of the Gospel, so that the poor sinner may be convinced and satisfied that Jesus Christ is contented and willing to be his, and that he may come, and be kindly and graciously accepted of Christ: Those passages, Him that comes to me I will in no wise reject, Joh. 6:27. And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, Rev. 22:17. And a bruised reed will he not break, Matth. 12:20. Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matth. 11:28. All these and other promises and encouragements, are set home by the Spirit upon the heart of the poor sinner, so that he deems that he hears Jesus Christ himself speaking alluring comforts unto his soul.

4. The Spirit rests not here, but proceeds further: For notwithstanding all this, yet the poor sinner finds himself without all strength, and saith he, I am not able to believe though I see this Christ, and his goodness, and his love, and his kindness, and his graciousness, yet I cannot believe, yet I cannot come to him, &c.

Now upon this there are two things more wrought by the Spirit in the heart of the poor sinner 1. One is Earnest desires for faith. O Lord give me faith, persuade my heart bring in my heart, draw it to Christ, for Christ his sake. 2. The other is, The very gift or work of faith: The



Spirit by his mighty power gives an ability unto the heart of the sinner to come to him to receive him and thus uniting faith is wrought, namely by the Spirit of Christ accompanying and blessing the Gospel (as you have heard) unto the soul of a sinner: Therefore look well to yourselves in this; If your faith be not a faith which the Spirit of God works by the Gospel, it is a false faith; it is a faith of delusion, and not of union; it is a presumption of your own making, a mere imagination of your own: No faith will bring you to Christ, but that faith which comes from the Spirit of Christ.

2. That Faith which unites to Christ, hath always some particular operations upon the soul in relation to that union with Christ: For the faith (which is wrought by the Spirit of Christ) is no base quality, nor is it any dead quality; but it is Noble, High, and Active: Now there are three things which this faith doth work in everyone that hath it. 1. An exceeding appreciation or esteem of Christ. 2. A fervent desire to enjoy Christ. 3. A separation of the heart from everything that would hinder it from union with Christ.

1. If your faith be this saith of union, then it hath raised your hearts to exceeding high estimation of Christ; other people have no high, nor great thoughts of Christ. What is thy beloved more than another beloved, said they to the Church, Cant. 5:9. There is no beauty in him that we should desire him, said they, Isa. 57:2. Not this man, but Barabbas, said the Jews, Joh. 18:40. The Farm and the Oxen are preferred before him, Luke 14:18,19. But unto you who believe he is precious, saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2:7. Precious faith makes us to look on Christ as precious. How did the Church look on Christ in that Cant. 5? Why, As the chiefest of ten thousand. Verse 10. As altogether lovely, verse 16. How did those Believers look on Christ in Joh. 1:14? We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of

Grace and Truth: How did Paul look on Christ? Phil. 3:8. I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: Beloved! Never was there unbeliever who had high thoughts of Christ; and never was there sound believer but he had precious thoughts of Christ; the Apostle tells us as much, 1 Cor. 1:23. We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. Verse 24. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God: O sirs! The excellencies of Christ are hidden excellencies from the men of the world, and no eye can see them but the eye of faith; there must be a light shining in the heart to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ, 2 Cor. 4:6. When faith is wrought, then a light is wrought to see the beauties of Christ, the beauty of his Person, the beauty of his Offices, the beauty of his Love, of his Death, of his Righteousness, of his Holiness, of his Peace, &c. the veil is removed, and we do with open face as in a glass behold the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3. &c. So that none like Christ, he is the Pearl of great price; and nothing like Christ, no love like his, no enjoyment like the enjoyment of him, &c.

2. If your faith be this Faith of union, Then it hath raised in your hearts exceeding desires to enjoy Christ: I must have this Christ, I cannot live without this Christ: O Lord give me Christ, I have nothing if I have not Christ. There is nothing in heaven or earth that I desire in comparison of Christ. I desire to be found in him, saith Paul: He is the desire of all Nations, Hag. 2:7. You never had such desires towards Christ, until faith was wrought in you; such high desires, such longings, such hungering's, such thirsting's; nor such busy and stirring desires; saw you him whom my soul loveth! And I sought him whom my soul loveth, and I will seek him whom my soul loveth: Nor such unsatisfied

desires. Nothing satisfies you, or puts an end to your desires, but Christ desired by you.

3. If your faith be this faith of union: Then it did work in your hearts a separation from all things which otherwise would have hindered you from union with Christ. You know that whatsoever keeps things at a distance (so that they cannot close) that same hinders union. Now there are four things which keep the soul and Christ at a distance, Christ and we cannot close whiles they continue, and faith breaks them all down.

1. A proud conceit of our own fullness, Righteousness, sufficiency: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, said Christ And the whole need no physician, but the sick. And the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Now faith that unites to Christ, breaks this partition wall, and levels this mountain: it empties the sinner of himself, it takes away all confidence in himself, and will (by no means) suffer him to rest upon, or to be found in his own righteousness, Phil. 3:3. We rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Verse 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.

2. A love of sin: This is likewise an absolute hindrance of union with Christ: That heart cannot close with Christ which closeth with sin; and Christ will not close with that heart which is joined to sin. Ephraim is joined to Idols, let him alone, Hosea 4:17. (as if he should say) his heart loves Idols, and therefore I will have nothing to do with him: So Joh. 3:19. This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light. Christ is that light, and he presented and offered himself to sinners, but they loved their sins, and would not part with them to join with Christ. Now

faith which brings a soul to Christ, hath parted that soul and sin; it hath given a bill of divorce unto sin; it takes off the heart from sin; what, shall I prefer hell before heaven? Shall I prefer damnation before salvation? Shall I for this sinful lusts-sake deny Christ? My heart refuse to marry him who is the Son of God, the Lord of glory, the Prince of Peace, the Savior of sinners? What have I to do anymore with Idols! Said Ephraim, Hosea 14:8. Get thee hence, said they in Isa. 30:22. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein, Rom. 6:2.

3. A love of the world: He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me? And he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me, Matth 10:37. If a man saith I will have my ease, and I will have my liberty, and I will have my pleasures, and I will have my profits, and I will have my friends, and I will have my honors, and I will not have Christ with any loss or cross; this man loves the world, and this hinders union with Christ: The young man lost Christ upon this very account, Luke 18:22,23. But if Faith indeed be wrought in the heart, all this language is removed out of the way: Faith overcomes the world, 1 Joh. 5:4. The Merchants sold all for to buy the pearl of great price; and Moses in Heb. 11:24,25,26. We have forsaken all and followed thee, said the Disciples. When a man hath faith, he can be content to be Fatherless and Motherless, to be friendless and landless, to part with all rather than he will be Christless; Faith sees enough in Christ, though he should enjoy no more but Christ. Faith will enable us to trample upon the world, so that we may enjoy Christ, it will enable us to break off with all, and to break down all to possess him who is better than all.

4. Unbelief. This locks and shuts up the heart that it cannot move at all to Christ, cannot see Christ, nor hear Christ, nor desire Christ, nor give consent to Christ: But faith breaks down unbelief, breaks open

the prison, and breaks asunder all the shackles and fetters of unbelief; answers all exceptions, reasonings, cavils, delays, fears, doubts, and sets the soul at liberty, and works in the whole soul to Christ.

O beloved, try your hearts by what I have spoken in this particular; you think that you have this uniting faith: But what hath that faith wrought upon you, and within you, to bring you and Christ together? It is not so easy a work to match Christ and the soul together; nothing can do that but faith, and no faith can do that, but such a faith which presents Christ in that height of goodness, and beauty, and excellency, that the soul is drawn out with that strength and vehemency of desire after Christ, as to part with all to enjoy Christ, &c. And who hath found it thus? Is there not yet something or other which stand between Christ and our hearts? &c.

3. Thirdly, you may know whether your faith be indeed a faith of union, by those acts or workings in the soul immediately and necessarily to make up an union between a soul and Christ; unto which when the soul attains, then Christ is ours, and we are Christ's: For as there are some acts which are immediate to constitute a conjugal union twixt person and person, without which there is no conjugal relation between them, and upon which the relation is immediately made; so there are some acts of the soul immediate to the being of the Spiritual union twixt a person and Christ, without which there is no relation, and upon which there is an immediate relation twixt him and Christ.

There are two acts upon the soul when the union is made between Christ and us.

1. One is, an act or work of the Spirit on the behalf of Christ, testifying unto our hearts, and persuading our hearts that Jesus

Christ is contented, is very willing to become ours; to be a Husband to us, to be our Head, to be our Savior. Jesus Christ doth outwardly express his consent in the Gospel, but he inwardly delivers it unto us by his Spirit. As by the spirit he becomes ours (If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. 8:9.) So by the Spirit he testifies his willingness and consent to be ours, yea and that he is ours: Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. 3:24.

2. The other is, the act or effect of faith on our behalf: For the Spirit in testifying unto us the willingness and consent of Christ to be ours, doth at the same time work faith in our hearts, which draws out a reciprocal consent from us to Christ. And therefore as Christ is said to abide in us by his Spirit, so he is said to dwell in us by faith. These two acts make up our union: I take you, saith Christ; and I take, you saith the Believer; I consent saith Christ, and I consent saith the Believer: This mutual consent makes the match or union.

**Ob. But will some say, Is this all? And is there no more (on our part) to be put forth to declare that our Faith is a Faith of union?**

Sol. I answer, If you speak as to the very uniting work, this is all that faith is to do, to enable our wills or hearts to give a right consent to Christ, to accept of him, to receive him.

Ob. And who then hath not this faith? For every sinner will give his consent to take Christ, and receive Christ, and to be his.

Sol. 1. That is not so; for many sinners refuse Christ, and reject Christ, and will not consent unto him, as you may read in Luke 14:18.

They all with one consent began to make excuse; and in Matth. 22:5. They made light of it and went their way, &c.

2. Every consent (even) towards Christ, to have him to be ours, and for us to be his, is not the consent of faith: There is a fourfold consent towards Christ which is not a consent flowing from Faith, and therefore never unites to Christ.

1. Consensus de futuro, as this, I do consent hereafter to yield up my heart to Christ that he shall be mine, and I will be his; but for the present. I cannot, or I do not close with him: This kind of consent is no other but a present dissent, in which no conjugal union doth consist; for it is only the present consent and acceptance of the person which makes up that union, and which gives propriety and interest. And thus is it in the matter twixt us and Christ; not a future purpose to have Christ, but a present acceptance of Christ makes the match between us and him: When I come to be old, and to be sick, and to die, then I will be Christ's, and then I will own and embrace him! Well, but whose are you for the present? Your union is where your present choice is, and where your present acceptance is.

2. Consensus involuntarius, an involuntary consent: Properly every consent is voluntary, but I call it involuntary, because if the will might use its own liberty with our safety, it would not consent though at present it doth. An involuntary consent I call that which a person would not yield, were he in an estate of liberty and safety; but being in a distress out of which he cannot be helped, unless he now yields, therefore he doth consent or yield: Such a consent doth many a sinner give to take Christ, and to become his, namely in some grievous strait of conscience and fear of the wrath of God, and he knows that there is no easing of

the one, nor escaping of the other but by Christ; and therefore he doth (de praesenti) come in to Christ and professeth that he is content to close with him, only out of a self-respect, as one in a storm comes under a tree. It is true indeed, that the consent of Faith is a present consent, but withal it is a very free and voluntary consent; the heart is never forced, but persuaded and graciously allured and inclined to Christ (not out of mere exigency, but pure excellency, and that from the beauty and goodness in Christ) when faith makes it to consent unto Christ.

3. Consensus distinguens: There is you know the Person of Christ, and there are the Benefits or Portion by Christ. Though a man hath not that Faith (of which we are discoursing) yet he may voluntarily consent to take Christ with a respect to his Portion (that is) to the Benefits by Christ; with all his heart he may be willing to have the Righteousness of Christ to justify him, and the Blood of Christ to get him the pardon of all his sins, and the Merits of Christ to procure salvation for him; and yet this person cannot, and will not consent to take the Person of Christ, and to take Christ as his Head, and to be his Lord, nor to become a member of Christ, and a servant unto Christ, and Spouse to Christ: This is a consenting unto the things of Christ, but not unto Christ himself. As if one should think to marry himself unto an estate only: But the consent arising from faith is otherwise, for this consent is immediately given to the Person of Christ, and therefore it is called a receiving of Christ, Joh. 1:12. And a marrying to himself, Hosea 2:19. Indeed when you have consented to take Christ, then doth Christ (according to his promises) settle upon you all his saving benefits; but that which faith immediately looks on is the very Person of Christ, to unite our persons to his own Person: To take him as our Head, and as our Husband, &c.



4. Consensus-exceptionis: I call that a consent of exception wherein a person yields to another, yet with a reservation, and with a provision upon such and such conditions, and not otherwise; as thus, I am content and do yield to take Christ to be mine, and myself to be his, even in respect of his Person, but yet so, that with him I may enjoy my sins, or so, that I may not hazard my estate by the match and so that I may not suffer with him. O no! Christ will never be yours, and you can never be his with those reserves and provisions: If any man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me: As if a woman should think any man would marry her upon this condition As long as you are rich, and at liberty, and in health you shall be my husband, and so that I may be an adulteress: The consent which indeed ariseth from faith (which makes union 'twixt us and Christ) is a consent freely taking Christ, and fully taking Christ, and immediately taking Christ, and sincerely taking Christ; Christ and none but Christ, Christ and all Christ, Christ and all that may befall us with Christ; Christ at his best, and Christ at his worst, Christ in Heaven as triumphing, and Christ on earth as suffering: A consent to live with Christ and to die for Christ, a Christ upon any condition that Christ will make: And a Christ upon no condition that my vain heart would make.

4. You may know whether you have this faith of union, by the qualities of the union made between us and Christ. The opening of this union is (I do ingeniously confess) one of the difficultest works that ever I have perused; Not without cause doth the Apostle call it a Mystery, and a great mystery, Ephes. 5:32. There are three unions which are high, and not easy to be opened. 1. The union of the three Persons in one Nature. 2. The union of the two Natures in one Person. 3. The union of the Church with Christ, or of every Believing

person with the person of Christ. But (with God's assistance) I shall endeavor to say something towards it.

The union which is made with us and Christ by faith hath these seven properties or qualities.

1. It is real, and not imaginary: There is a work which is only in the imagination and apprehension of the mind, wherein though the species and forms and Ideas of objects are in our minds, yet the objects themselves are not with us, but are far enough from us; such union as this faith doth not work. But the union which Faith makes is a real union, even such a union wherein we are indeed rooted or joined unto Christ: Therefore the Apostle speaking of this union twixt us and Christ, he expeseth it by that union which is between a man and his wife, saying, They two shall be one flesh, Ephes. 5:31. (The man shall be joined to his Wife, and they two shall be one flesh:) And Christ himself expeseth this union twixt himself and us, by the union of the Branches with the Vine, Joh. 15:5. I am the Vine, and ye are the Branches: The Branches are really united to the Vine, and so are we to Christ; our union with Christ is so real, that our bodies are called the Members of Christ, 1 Cor. 6:15, and we are said to be one Spirit with him, verse 17.

2. It is substantial, and not virtual only; it doth not consist only in the reception or participation of the graces and gifts of Christ; as if all our union with Christ were like our participation with fire: only in the heat of it, and not in the substance of it. No! But our union with Christ is substantial, our substance is united to the substance of Christ, Ephes. 5:30. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone. And Joh. 6:56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

Upon which words Cyril saith, that Christ by the communication of his flesh dwells in us, and we are his members, even by a natural participation: which expression must be understood *de re quae participatur*, for we are united to the very flesh and substance of Christ; but not *de modo participandi*, for that is only by faith, and not *per contactum*; we are united to Christ not as wax to wax by a corporal contact, but by saith: His substance and our substance, yet by faith.

3. It is total, and not partial. Not the soul only of a Believer is united to the soul of Christ; nor the flesh only of a Believer is united to the flesh of Christ; but the whole believing person is united by faith with the whole person of Christ: as in the conjugal union twixt Adam and Eve, that union was twixt person and person, so is the spiritual union twixt Christ and us, of which that was a Type and Mystery: Jesus Christ is (in Scripture) styled our Head, and our Savior, not of one part of us only, but of the whole he is the Savior; not of our bodies only, or of our souls only, but of soul and body, of our whole man; but then of salvation by him we partake not without union; and therefore our whole man partakes of salvation by him; then of necessity our whole man must have union with him: Moreover as our whole man is united to Christ, so our whole man is united to whole Christ considered as Head and Savior of his Church, not to his Divine Nature only, nor to his human Nature only, but unto the person of Christ consisting both of the Divine and of the Human Nature: and the reason of this is, because we are united to Christ as our Head, and as our Savior, which Jesus Christ is not according to his human Nature only as man, nor according to his Divine Nature only as God, but according to both as God and man: Hence is it that Christ and we are called one flesh, Eph. 5:31, so are we called also one spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17.

One flesh in respect of union with his human Nature, and one Spirit in respect of union with his Divine Nature; And as he is said to be partaker of our flesh and blood, Hebr. 2:14, so are we said to be partakers of his Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. And truly such a union as this with the Person of Christ in respect of his Human and of his Divine Nature, must necessarily be acknowledged, unless we will deny a union with Christ as our Mediator and Savior. But now here are three Questions which may be moved.

**1. Quest. One is whether this total union of our persons with the person of Christ be not the same with the Hypostatical union of the two Natures in Christ.**

Answ. I answer, it is not. For it is one thing for the Divine and human Nature to be united to the person of Christ; and it is another thing for us to be united unto those natures in Christ: Again, the Hypostatical union, is in the union of those Natures in the second person of the Trinity, who is the Son of God by eternal generation. But our union is not so; we are not such sons of God by eternal generation as Christ was, but by grace, which he was not. Moreover our union with those natures, is by faith on our part; but the Hypostatical union of those two Natures in Christ, is not an union by faith, but by assumption of the human Nature into an unity with the Divine Nature in his Person.

**2. Quest. Whether, if we be united thus to the person of Christ in both his Natures, we do not hereupon become so many Mediators, and Savior's, and Heads of the Church, because in respect of the union of both these Natures Jesus Christ is Head and Mediator.**

Sol. I answer, this will by no means follow. For,

1. As the personal union of the Wife with the person of her Husband, doth not at all make her to be a husband; so our personal union with Christ, doth not at all make us to be Christ, or to be Savior's, or Heads of the Church: we are indeed united unto his Person, but not placed into his Office: And not so as to be that Person.

2. There is a great difference twixt union of reception and participation, and a union of denomination. We are united to Christ so that thereby we have interest in, and benefit by Christ as a Mediator and Head; but not so as to be denominated Mediators: only the union of the Divine and human Natures in Christ, denominates him to be Head and Mediator: For to make Christ to be a Mediator, it was not only necessary that there should be such a union, but also that the person in whom that union is to be found should be God; he that is a Mediator betwixt God and Man, as he must be man, so also he must be God; but though we be united to the Divine Nature in Christ, as well as to his Human Nature, yet we are not God.

3. Quest. Whether by faith we be first united unto, and joined with the Divine Nature, or human Nature of Christ with himself (first) considered as man, or with him first considered as God?

Sol. This Question although I find it argued in the writings of very godly and learned men, yet truly (unto me) it doth seem to savor of too much curiosity, and for mine own part (so far as I do yet apprehend) I do think it but a Scholasticallnicity; for although you do find Jesus Christ revealed and manifested in the Gospel, sometimes as man, and many acts ascribed unto his Human Nature in reference to our redemption; and sometimes as God, and several acts of his Divine Nature; yet (with submission to better Judgments) I do

conceive that our union doth not begin first with one nature, and after that with the other nature of Christ; but our union is with the Person of Christ (as consisting of both Natures) at once. And my reason is this, because our union is with Christ as Mediator (with whole Christ) at once: I beseech you consider.

When the Gospel offers Christ to a poor and distressed sinner, it doth not offer Christ in one Nature first, and in his other Nature next; but the Gospel offers whole Christ at once; it offers (at once) Christ the Savior, and Christ the Head, Christ the Redeemer (that is) the Person of Christ consisting of both Natures: And when the Spirit of Christ comes into the heart to join Christ to us, and when faith is formed in the heart to join us to Christ; why! The Spirit at once applies the whole Christ unto you; and faith at once looks on Christ as Head and Mediator, and (as so) unites you unto Christ: Faith looks on Christ not in one Nature only, or in the other Nature only; but as a Mediator, as a Head, as a Savior, and under that notion unites you to Christ: It is true that the great works of Redemption, and satisfaction, and reconciliation appeared in the human Nature of Christ, and are frequently ascribed to his blood; and it is as true, that the Divine Nature of Christ enabled the human Nature of Christ unto those works, and gave (as it were) life, and vigor, and efficacy unto them, without which they could never have been done, nor have been such effectual works: And it is as true that not any of those works were done in respect of any of the Natures alone which did redeem and satisfy, &c. But it was the person of Christ (consisting of them both) who did redeem, and satisfy, and reconcile, and save, and under this notion Christ offers himself; and we by faith do receive him.

4. The union between us and Christ by faith is a near union. And if I may so express myself, an immediate union: It is (in Scripture) set

forth by the nearest of all unions here below. There are three unions here below, which are most remarkable for their nearness.

1. One is Artificial, as is that of a Building with the foundation: Our union with Christ is expressed by this, in 1 Pet. 2, where Christ is called a lively stone, verse 4, and a chief corner-stone, verse 6. (And our foundation, 1 Cor. 3:11, and we are called a spiritual house built upon him, verse 5.)

2. A second is Political, as is that of the Wife with the Husband by marriage: And our union with Christ is often expressed by this also: In the Canticles, and in Hosea 2:19, and in Ephes. 5:31,32.

3. A third is Physical, or Natural, as is that of the Head with the Body, and of the Vine with the Branches; under these expressions also is our union with Christ expressed, Ephes. 5:23. Christ is the Head of the Church, Joh. 15:5. I am the Vine, ye are the Branches: The union is so near 'twixt the Church and Christ, that Christ compares it with the union of himself with the Father, Joh. 17:21. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one with us. Verse 22. That they may be one, even as we are one. Not that there is absolutely and in all respects that very self-same union of us with Christ, as of Christ with the Father; but that there is such a union according to proportion, and to note also the marvelous nearness of our union with Christ: Which in this differs even from the natural union, where every part of the body hath not an immediate contiguity with the Head. And yet there is not the meanest member of Christ, nor yet the choicest, but they do all of them stand in the same equal nearness of union with Christ: Now that which I aim at in the nearness of our union with Christ

by faith is this; That where faith makes the union, the heart of a person doth so immediately an entirely close with Christ, that there is nothing whatsoever which stands between it and Christ; no love of sin, no love of the world, &c.

5. The union 'twixt us and Christ which is made by faith, it is a full and complete union. The whole man is joined to Christ, and so joined to Christ, that it is joined to no other but Christ: Faith doth so unite us to Christ, that henceforth we are no more our own, but his; all that Christ hath is ours, and all that we have is his; our souls are his, and our bodies are his: Faith brings in our whole man to Christ, when it unites us to Christ: It doth not keep back any part of us from Christ: It doth not bestow one part of us upon Christ, and another part of us upon the world, and another part of us upon sin; no, Christ hath all when faith unites us to Christ: he hath all our minds, and all our affections, he is our desire, and our love, and he is our delight, and he is our hope.

6. The union 'twixt us and Christ which is made by faith, it is a satisfying union: When a poor soul comes by faith to be one with Christ, so that it can say, Christ is mine, and I am Christ's, now it is satisfied, it hath enough, it is replenished: As this union in the kind of it is most excellent, so in the sense of it, it is most sweet: Faith uniting us to Christ finds all suitable good in Christ, and all happiness, life, love, mercy, grace, joy, peace, salvation in him.

7. This union 'twixt us and Christ by faith, it is a firm and inseparable union: An union that can never be broken asunder: and herein it goes beyond all other unions which are used to illustrate this union; every one of them is soluble, it may be broken off; the Head and the body may be severed; the Foundation and the House may be separated: The Branches may be cut off from the Vine: The Husband



may be taken away from the Wife, and the Wife from the Husband; Yea the soul and body may be disunited by death: But the union 'twixt us and Christ remains forever. There is not only a continuation of it all our life, but also in death itself; your very bodies sleeping in the dust are (even then) in union with Christ.

I grant that the sense and apprehension of this union may (in this life) be much interrupted, and many times be wholly darkened; but the substance of the union still remains: and I grant that the substance or nature of this union may be exceedingly assaulted by Satan, yet nevertheless it continues and abides forever: For Christ will never part with the believer, and the believer will never part with Christ: And moreover as no power in the world is sufficient to overpower the Spirit of Christ, which on Christ's part makes union, so no power whatsoever shall be able to conquer faith, which on our part also makes the union. This faith of union as it is produced by no less power than that of God, so it is preserved and upheld by the same power to the end. Neither God, nor Christ, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the heart of a believer will break this union; and neither Satan, nor the world, nor sin can do it.

5. If your faith be indeed the faith of union, this will appear by these influences, and effects which do always attend that union which faith works between us and Christ.

When we are by faith united to Christ, then upon this union there follows a communion betwixt Christ and us, in which Christ communicates or imparts some things of his unto us: And we likewise do communicate and impart something in us unto him.

Upon this union there follows such a communion twixt Christ and us, as that we do partake of, and have fellowship in the most excellent things of Christ.

We have fellowship with him

1. In the same Spirit, Rom. 8:9,11, and 1 Cor. 6:17. And by the same Spirit are we reconciled and sanctified (though not in the fullness and measure as Christ himself was) and changed by him into the same image of Christ, 2 Cor. 3:18.

2. In the same life: As he that hath the Son hath life, 1 Joh. 5:10, so he that hath the Son hath the same life which the Son hath: I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, Gal. 2:20. The Head and the body, the Tree and the branches partake of the same life.

3. In the same Righteousness. His Righteousness is our righteousness; He is the Lord our righteousness, Jer. 23:6, and we are made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5:21.

4. In the same Relation: So that as he was the Son of God by eternal Generation, in like manner are we the sons of God by adoption; so that he is not ashamed to call us brethren, Heb. 2:11,12.

5 In his victories: In all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ that loved us, Rom. 8:37.

6. In his glory: The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one.

All these things are most certainly imparted unto every believer upon his union with Christ Jesus; Christ communicates unto him his own Spirit, his own Holiness, his own Righteousness, &c. And hence it is apparent, that they never were united by faith unto Christ, in whom nothing of communion with Christ can be found, Rom. 8:9. If any

man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, &c.

2. Upon this union with Christ there is yet another part of communion in respect of us, and there are two things especially which we do impart to Christ; one is love, the other is subjection: for by faith we are united to Christ, as the Wife to the Husband, which is an union of love; and also to Christ as members of the body to the head, which takes in an union of subjection.

1. If saith hath united us to Christ, then do we love Christ; every Believer loves Christ: Saw ye him whom my soul liveth? So the Church, Cant. 3:1,2,3. Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love thee. So Peter, Joh. 21:17. Whom having not seen, ye love; so the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1:8.

And how doth the true believer (who is united to Christ) love Christ?

1. He loves his Christ with the Love of friendship, he loves Christ for Christ himself.

2. He loves his Christ with a love of complacency, O how sweet and lovely is this Christ?

3. He loves his Christ with a love of satisfaction, Christ is enough, he is my center in whom I rest.

4. He loves his Christ with a love of sincerity, Christ and nothing that is contrary to Christ.

5. He loves his Christ with a love of excellency, nothing so much, nothing so well as Christ.

6. He loves Christ with a love of extremity, he is sick of love for Christ; he so loves Christ, that he thinks he never loves Christ as Christ deserves to be loved.

7. He loves Christ with a love of fidelity, so as nothing can quench that love, nor break off that love.

8. He loves his Christ with a love of benevolence, O how much prosperity doth he wish to Christ!

9. He loves his Christ with a love of beneficency, what would not he do for Christ? What would he not suffer for Christ?

10. He loves his Christ with a love of sympathy, what Christ doth love, he doth love; and what doth please Christ, that doth please him; and what doth grieve and trouble Christ, that doth grieve and trouble him.

O Sirs! Uniting faith sees so much in Christ, and finds so much from Christ, it makes us partakers of such a Christ, and of such a love from Christ, that it is impossible but that soul must love Christ, which by Faith is united to Christ.

2. If your faith be the faith of union with Christ, then it will certainly cause in you a subjection unto Christ (as the Wife is subject unto the Husband) and an obedience unto Christ (as the members are obedient to the Head.)

**Quest. And what subjection and obedience is that?**

Sol. You know that it is voluntary, and it is full, and it is cheerful, and it is ingenuous, and it is accurate, and it is durable, as long as the union and relation doth last: The Wife willingly obeys, and obeys every lawful and good command, and doth it with all her heart, and

is very well pleased if her husband be pleased, &c. Why! After this manner will faith fashion your hearts to Christ, if it hath united you to Christ, or rather thus will Christ (upon your union with him) fashion and enable your hearts: Your hearts will look on Christ as one that hath authority and right to command them, and give laws to them: And your hearts will look on all his commands as good, and holy, and just, and they will not be grievous unto you, but you will be a willing people in the day of his power. And thus by these characters you may know whether you have this faith of union which indeed joins you to Christ, and is the condition of this Covenant.

#### SECT. VI.

2. Quest. Now I proceed unto the second Question; what is to be done to obtain this faith (this faith of union) which only brings us into the Covenant.

Sol. To help you in this (seeing all our souls hopes and enjoyments depend upon it) I would commend this course or practice unto you.

1. Consider the Author of this faith, to whom it doth really appertain to give this faith which unites to Christ.

2. Consider what means he doth use for the giving and working of it in the hearts of sinners.

3. Consider what concerns yourselves in reference unto God, and those means by which he doth work the faith which doth unite to Christ.

1. Consider the Author of this faith, who it is that can give this faith which unites us to Christ: very much lies in this, for if we mistake the

cause, it is very probable we shall miss of the effect; if we go with our vessels to Cisterns that hold no water, we shall return empty and ashamed; therefore remember

1. That no man whosoever is, or can be the author of this faith unto himself; by his natural power he cannot. 1. Come to Historical Faith, Matth. 16:17. Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee. 2ly. See his need of Christ: the Spirit is sent to convince of sin. 3ly. Omnipotency is necessary. Ephes. 1:19,20, 1 Cor. 1:21. The World by wisdom knew not God; and verse 23. Christ to the Jews a stumbling block, foolishness to the Greeks. If any man had such a power to believe in Christ, surely it would appear either in the gifted sinner who hath great parts of knowledge, and understanding, and wisdom; or in the troubled and distressed sinner who longs for ease and rest to his poor soul, and would put out all the power he hath to enjoy it: But no such power is to be found in them (as from themselves) to enable their hearts to believe in Christ: The knowing and understanding sinners in other matters, may yet be grossly ignorant of Christ, and averse to Christ, and the things of Christ. And the more spiritual knowledge any man hath of Christ, or of himself, the more inability shall he discern in himself to believe on Christ: And the troubled and distressed sinner cannot of himself believe, or lay hold on Christ, though Christ be revealed to him, and offered to him, and all arguments used to persuade him, yet he is concluded under unbelief, except the Lord himself persuades and draws his heart. No persons can, though they have Eloquence, Piety, Pity, Art, Diligence, Wishing, and Desires.

2. That no Ordinances and means whatsoever can (of themselves) be the author of this uniting faith. If the Apostles of

Christ did live amongst you, and did preach every day of the week unto you the Gospel of Christ; neither they, nor yet the Gospel which they preached could (by their own power) make any one sinner to believe on Christ, Matth. 11:17. We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. 'It is true, that these are means and instruments of faith (as you shall presently hear) but the Axe (which is an instrument) cuts not of itself; and the Cord (which is a means) draws not of itself. Neither the convincing Paul, nor eloquent Apollos, nor the affectionate John can prevail.

3. That no duties whatsoever are the authors of the faith which unites to Christ: You may pray, and should pray; but Prayer (as a work done by you) is not the cause of faith; and you may hear, and read, and meditate, but none of these (as your works) can be the author of this faith: All these may be done, and yet your hearts remain still faithless. Rom. 10:18. Have they not heard? Verse 16 But they have not all obeyed.

4. God, and God only is the Author of the faith which unites us to Christ. No man (saith Christ himself, Joh. 6:44) can come to me, except the Father draw him. And verse 45. They shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. God himself must teach the heart: And therefore Christ saith in verse 29. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Ephes. 2:8. By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Until the Lord himself gives you faith you cannot believe: until the Lord say, Come, you cannot come; until the Almighty God say to your hearts, Be willing, and be able to take Christ, to receive him, to give consent to be his, you will never be able, and never be willing to close with him,

&c. Therefore remember this, every one of you who desire this faith of union, I say, remember. That it is God only, none but God who can give you Christ, and none but God can give you faith which unites you to Christ, it is his work, and his alone: Never look for it from any power in yourselves, or in any other creature, but look only to God for it.

2. Consider what means God doth use for the giving and working of faith: Though the means of themselves give not faith, yet God doth give faith by the means; although the Conduit (of itself) gives not water, yet the fountain sends it unto your houses by the Conduit.

Now that means is the Gospel; this is clear in Ephes. 1:13. In whom you also trusted after, that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation. So Rom. 10:17. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The Gospel is therefore called the door of Faith, Acts 14:27, and the word of faith, Rom. 10:8, and the power of God, Rom. 1:16, and the word of Reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5:19.

The Gospel is the means of faith in three respects.

1. In that it is set apart and ordained by God himself for that end and purpose, to call sinners to Christ.

2. In that it is blessed of God with the presence of his Spirit to work and implant faith: There God reveals his arm and puts forth his power: Some men do fancy ways of their own to get faith; And why not another way, as well as by the Gospel? I will tell you why? Because God hath not ordained and sanctified any other way but this: When the Lord commanded the brazen Serpent to be set up for the healing of the people, and that they should look on it and be healed, they might as well demand, and why a Brasen Serpent? And why not another brazen Serpent, as



well as this to heal us? No, none but this, for this only was ordained of God, and sanctified for that purpose: So the Gospel, that, and that only is the means ordained and sanctified by God, and which hath his promise of presence and blessing to go along with it, to beget faith in our hearts.

3. In that it is the most apt of all ministrations whatsoever, to raise and persuade the heart to believe. For there only is the relation of the grace of God, and love of God, and kindness of God, and of the mercy of God in Christ: and therein is Christ made known, and the righteousness of Christ, and a sinners salvation in and by Christ: and therein are held forth all the encouragements to win the heart to Christ; and all the answers and resolves to whatsoever may breed fears, and doubts, and discouragements in the heart from coming to Christ, and all promises by which this faith is raised.

3. Consider what concerns yourselves in reference unto God who only gives faith, and in reference to the Gospel which is the only means by which this faith is wrought: Supposing only three things (already) formed in you. viz. 1. An apprehension that you are lost, and separated from God by sin. 2. A conviction that you stand in extreme need of Christ. 3. An earnest desire at least to enjoy Christ; I would propound four things for you to do, that so at length you may attain unto this uniting faith.

1. Diligent application of yourselves to the hearing of the Gospel; joining thereunto a serious and reverent attention; come and hear, and come and hear for this very end, if peradventure God will give you this faith, if peradventure his Spirit will accompany the Gospel with power unto your hearts, that so you may be able to believe. Come as the impotent man came to the pool to be

healed: Lydia took this course, and her heart was opened to believe, Acts 16:14. So did they in Acts 2:37,41, Act. 13:48. When the Gentiles heard this, they glorified the word of the Lord: And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

2. Serious meditation upon, first the relation of the Gospel. 2ly. The offers of the Gospel. 3ly. The terms of the Gospel. 4ly. The promises of the Gospel. 5ly. The instances or examples in the Gospel.

1. The Gospel Revelations of Jesus Christ; given, sent, sealed, set forth by God to be a Redeemer, a Savior, a Mediator, a Peace, a Propitiation, a Reconciliation, a life for sinners: Now seriously meditate on all this you whose hearts are broken with the sense of your sins: The Gospel in the Word of truth, what it reveals and declares unto us, that same is certain and infallible and the Gospel is the Word of Salvation; whatsoever concerns our salvation, that same is manifested unto us by the Gospel; And this Gospel doth reveal and declare unto us the exceeding love of God the Father, in that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him, should not perish but have everlasting life: It doth also declare unto us his Son Jesus Christ who was God, and in time was made man, that so he might reconcile and unite man to God. And it doth declare him in the union of his Natures, and excellencies of his Person, and in the glories of his Offices, and in the accomplishment of all the work of Redemption and salvation for sinners, and willingness to save them: So that from the very Gospel-revelation of Jesus Christ, a distressed sinner may gain thus much. 1. As not to despair. 2. As to have some hope. 3. As to have some desires: O here is a Christ for sinners! A Christ given by God the Father to save sinners! Why should I then despair? And here is a Christ, such a Christ, of such infinite worth and merit, given to make satisfaction, and peace, and why should not

I hope? Am I excluded? At least his Person, and Offices, and Works may serve thus far to beget hope, and to work a desire that I may enjoy him, in whom alone salvation is to be found, and who came into the world to save sinners.

2. The Gospel offers this Christ to distressed and poor sinners, Acts 13:26. Unto you is the Word of this Salvation sent. Verse 38. Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of your sins.

This Evangelical offer of Christ, it is

1. A good Offer: It is an offer of a Savior, of Mercy, Peace, Life, and of Salvation itself: This day is Salvation come to thy house.

2. It is a serious Offer, Heb 12:25. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation! Hearken unto me, and your souls shall live, Isa. 55:3. Believe and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16:31. These are serious offers and commands.

3. It is a personal Offer; the Lord Jesus means you in particular: You I say who are heavy-laden, you who are poor, you who hunger and thirst, unto you is the word of this salvation offered and sent.

4. It is a very tender Offer. 2 Cor. 5:20. As though God did beseech you by us: We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God: why? If a sinner did seriously meditate on this offer of Christ by the Gospel, me thinks it might much conduce towards a bringing in of his heart to Christ by faith.

5. It is an Offer worthy of all acceptance, 1 Tim. 1:15. As to the making of a match, when you report unto the party, there is such

a person every way desirable and lovely, there is no exceptions to be taken: He is perfectly beautiful, singularly wise, affectionately loving, exceedingly rich, every way suitable, and you cannot live unless you have him. And besides all this, he desires and offers himself to match with you! Surely all this conduceth much to the making of a match! So when a poor sinner hears of Christ, and of so much good in and by Christ, and withal finds Christ offering himself unto him; I am willing to be yours, I am content to take you as I find you; I know your sins, and wants, and unworthiness; I know what it must cost me to adorn you, &c. yet I offer myself to be yours, and I charge you that you do not neglect and refuse my offer! Truly this conduceth very much to persuade the heart, and to draw the heart to close by faith with Christ, &c.

3. The Gospel offers Jesus Christ upon very gracious and reasonable terms: In the Gospel you shall find Jesus Christ propounded unto sinners under several notions and expressions, and in all of them you may discern the admirable condescension's of Christ; he cannot fall in with you upon lower and easier terms, so as to become yours, than he doth propound: Sometimes he is propounded as a Gift, and all the terms that he stands for that you may be possessed of him as a Gift, is that you receive him; giving and receiving are correlatives: Sometimes he is propounded as a Match, as a Husband, and all that he stands for to make him yours, is only that you be willing, that you give your consent to be his. Sometimes he is propounded as a Bargain to be bought, and all that he imposeth on you is this, that you buy without money and without price. Sometimes he is propounded as a Guest, and a friend who would come into your house and sup with you, and all that he insists with you for, is only this, that you open the door and let him in.

4. As the Gospel reveals Christ unto you, and offers Christ unto you, and offers him unto you upon most gracious terms; so likewise it holds out unto you abundance of promises which are as so many Adamants to draw your hearts to Christ's, and are as so many cords of Love: There are promises which respect you and Christ: If you will come and be his, he will certainly be yours, he will not reject you. And there are promises which respect you and your good estate by Christ: As that he will marry you to himself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies, Hosea 2:19. And that he will be Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption unto you, 1 Cor. 1:30. And that there shall be no condemnation to you, Rom. 8:1. And that whosoever believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16. And that whosoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins, Acts 10:43.

5. Besides all this the Gospel gives you instances of the performance of all these promises, and likewise of the gracious reception of as great and unworthy sinners as yourself, 1 Tim. 1:13,14,15,16, 1 Cor. 6:9,10,11. It shows how that when sinners have by faith come to Christ, he hath accepted of them, hath received them graciously, hath bestowed himself upon them, hath given righteousness, and remission of sins: and his Spirit, and his Peace, and everlasting life unto them: Every true believer who came to Christ did enjoy Christ, and all saving good with and by Christ: Mary Magdalene, Paul, the Corinthians, Ephesians, and all others are witnesses of it &c. they became Christ's, and Christ became theirs, and he was their Atonement, Redemption, Reconciliation, Righteousness, Life, &c. why? A serious and solid consideration of all these Evangelical passages, they cannot but work on the hearts of broken sinners to look towards this Christ, at least to pant in humble and earnest desires of him, and for faith that they may be united unto him.

3. The third means which I would present unto you for the obtaining of this uniting faith, is earnest supplication or prayer: As Christ spake unto the woman of Samaria, if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, give me drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water, Joh. 4:10. So say I, if you did but know the excellency of this faith of union with Christ, and what Christ is, and what union with Christ is, and how far it interests you in the Covenant of grace; surely you would earnestly be enlarged in your supplications and requests unto God for it, and you would not be denied this request, Ephes. 3:14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, verse 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; draw me, and I will run after thee. Well, pray the Lord to give this faith unto you which will unite you to Christ, I say, pray the Lord to give it you; For,

1. You cannot give it to your own hearts, it is not in your power to make your hearts to believe.

2. None can give it but God, no created power is sufficient for this work.

3. God is able to make your hearts to believe: to break all the chains of unbelief: To set out Christ as most desirable, and to work faith, that so you shall come to Christ; He is able to enlighten your minds, and to convince your judgments, and to overcome your wills, and to persuade your hearts.

4. He hath promised to give this faith: He hath promised that the dead shall hear the voice of his Son, Joh. 5:25. He hath promised that they shall be all taught of God, and he that heareth, and learneth of the Father, shall come to Christ, Joh. 6:45. He hath promised to allure us unto Christ, Hosea 2:14. And to persuade Japheth, Gen. 9:27, and to make us a willing

people in the day of his power, Psal. 110:2, and to send the rod of his strength out of Zion, verse 3.

**Object. We do hear, and we do pray, and yet we are not able to believe?**

Sol. 1. O but pray that God would make the Gospel which you do hear, to be the savor of life unto you, and that his Spirit may accompany the Gospel which you do hear. To open the Gospel. 2. Thy ear. 3. Thy heart; for it is by his Spirit that the Gospel proves to be unto you the word of Faith: Our Gospel came in power, and in the Holy Ghost, 1 Thes. 1:5. If the Spirit of God did but reveal his Arm, if he would but breath through the Gospel, it would certainly be the power of God for faith in you.

2. Again, you must pray with all importunity, and diligence, and watchfulness, and observation what God answers, and spiritual violence, and resolution, and never cease wrestling with God. I tell you it is one of the greatest requests that you can make to God; O Lord unite me to Christ; give me that faith by which I may be Christ's, and Christ may be mine, And take this for thine encouragement, That if the Lord hath given such a spiritual and steadfast frame of spirit as to pray, he will at length give thee this faith.

4. Patiently wait upon God in the use of Evangelical means, until he doth come in with his Spirit upon your Spirits to enable you by faith to close with Christ, lie at the Pool, do not limit God to this Sermon, or to that Prayer; and do not wrangle and murmur against God; regard what concerns yourself to do, and trust God with his work, and with his time; never did any soul seek him or wait on him in vain, nor return ashamed; there is not one Prayer that you make, nor any one Evangelical Sermon that ye hear, but it is making way in

your hearts for this uniting faith: Some more light gets in to discover Christ's fullness, and our want: Some more hope is raised of a possibility at length to enjoy Christ: Some more power is given against the powers, and workings, and reasonings, and fears, and doubts of unbelief; they have not that despairing dominion: Some more bewailing's of thy Christless condition and strong unbelief with a resistance of it: Sometimes more renewed resolutions and courage; well, whatsoever comes of it, I will not yet give over my suite, I will venture a few prayers more; something more is getting in, and winning upon the heart towards Christ; But

Why may I not believe on Christ? What if I should venture on him upon his offers, upon his entreaties, upon his commands, upon his promises? Do I not sin against Christ, and offend him, thus to fear, thus to dispute, thus to question, thus to stand off? Well! I will come and believe on him. O I cannot! Lord help me: Lord work in me both to will and to do: when Lord? How long? Yet will I wait on thee till thou showest this mercy to me.

## SECT. VII.

3. Use. Is faith the condition of the Covenant of grace? And is that faith a uniting Faith? A faith which unities us unto Christ. The next Use then shall be for Comfort and Encouragement; 1. To sinners in general. 2ly. To believers in particular; to such as yet find themselves out of Covenant, and to such as find themselves partakers of this uniting faith.

1. That faith is the condition of the Covenant of Grace, this is a comfort and encouragement to poor sinners, who as yet find themselves out of Covenant. If God had put any other condition upon



that Covenant, every sinner had been utterly hopeless; suppose he had annexed and imposed the condition of actual, and perfect, and personal righteousness (bring that, and perform that, and then I will be your God, I will accept of you, I will own you, I will love you, I will pardon you, I will save you) why! No sinner could (upon this terms) have found an entrance or admission into the Covenant, because the performance of this Covenant is impossible to a sinner; as such a condition is inconsistent with the grace of God, so such a condition is impossible with the state of sin, which is a state of impotency and of death: But now faith being the condition of the Covenant, as there is a door open for grace to manifest itself, so there is hope for a sinner to partake of that grace; for if God will capitulate with us upon believing in Christ, Then

1. Our former sinning's do not absolutely exclude us. One sin did break the Covenant of works; but our many sins hinder not our reception into the Covenant of grace, if yet we believe on Christ.
2. A want of personal and perfect righteousness doth not exclude us; for faith is not to look at our own righteousness, but at the righteousness of Christ.
3. Our self-unworthiness is no prejudice; Faith looks for love, and mercy, and glory through Christ for the sinner who is (in himself) unworthy of love, and mercy, and glory.
4. Our union with God is possible; for though an immediate union there cannot be between God and a sinner, yet a mediate union there may be, viz. A union by Christ the Mediator, unto whom faith brings and unites the soul; so that there is yet hope for the sinner to be brought into Covenant with God, though not upon his own account, yet upon the account of Christ, unto whom faith joins the sinner.

**Object.** But it may be objected, 'tis true that faith is the condition of the Covenant And that faith is that condition, it is therefore hopeful for sinners. But yet this faith is as impossible to the sinner, as the condition of perfect obedience; for the sinner is no more able to make his heart to believe on Christ, than he is perfectly to obey the will of God; And then where is the comfort and hope that you speak of? In the notion it is true, that faith is a condition which advantageth a sinner: But in practice it is such a condition unto which it is impossible for any sinner by his own strength to attain.

Sol. 1. I grant, that as to the mere consideration of the sinner's self-natural power, the condition of Faith is as impossible as the condition of perfect obedience is; he hath no more power nor propensity to believe in Christ, than he hath to obey and fulfill the Law, and his heart is as full of unbelief as it is of disobedience.

2. Nevertheless though there be a self-impossibility, yet there is not an absolute impossibility; nay faith is such a condition, as is not only possible for a sinner, but very probable for him to attain it.

1. Though it be the Condition of the Covenant, yet it is not such a condition which God doth impose upon the sinner (by his own strength or power) to form it in himself: Indeed God doth require faith in Christ; but God doth not require of the sinner to create this faith in his own heart.

2. Though faith be the condition of the Covenant, yet it is such a condition which God himself doth promise to give unto the sinner: As it is a condition on our part so it is a gift on God's

part: we are to have it, but God is to give it according to his promise: and undertakes to work it in us according to his power.

3. Though faith be the condition, yet it is such a condition that God affords all the means for the working and deriving of it unto the sinner; There is no sinner in all the world upon whom God calls for faith in Christ, but unto that sinner God affords the Gospel, which is the means (as you have heard) designed by God to work faith.

4. As God affords the means unto sinners by which faith is wrought, so his Spirit (upon whose operation faith depends) doth ordinarily accompany, and assist, and bless those means, to make them to be the power of God to the production of faith in the hearts of sinners; so that the Gospel is never sent unto any people, but there are some of them effectually called, so as to believe through grace.

5. And fifthly, as there is no sinner unto whom the Gospel of Faith is sent, who can properly conclude, that God never intends to give him this faith; so every sinner may and doth (some time or other) find that the Spirit doth by the Gospel earnestly deal with his heart to believe and receive Christ. The Spirit by the Gospel doth let in so much light of conviction, and doth so far act upon his heart by motions and arguments, and persuasions to receive Christ, that if yet he continue unbelieving, this fault cannot be charged on God (who doth work so wonderfully with him to believe) but only on himself who slights those means, and quenches those motions of the Spirit, and willfully opposeth and resisteth the Spirit in this working.

Hence it is that you never read of an impossibility on God's part (for with him all things are possible) nor yet of an impotency on

the sinners part why he believes not (though that be true that the sinner in himself considered is insufficient) but still the charge lies against the sinner for his willfulness and unwillingness; ye would not, and ye will not come unto me that ye might have life; and we will not have this man to reign over us; Because God puts forth so much of power by his Spirit in the Gospel as may satisfy us that believing is a possible work, and that our unbelief sticks unto us not only from a want of power, but only from the presence and redundancy of perverseness in our wills.

6. Let me add one conclusion more, That this faith which is the condition admitting into the Covenant, is such a condition as God never did, nor will deny to any sinner seriously and cordially asking it of him: even in this it holds true also, ask and it shall be given unto you. If God sometimes gives this faith to them that do not ask, will he deny it unto them to whom he gives a heart to ask? Especially seeing that he therefore gives us an heart to ask, because it is his purpose to give us this faith which we do ask: See now you have the comfort in the general from this, that faith is the condition of the Covenant of grace, namely that then a sinner is capable and hopeful of being brought into the Covenant, notwithstanding all his former sinfulness, and present unrighteousness, and unworthiness, none of which do hinder faith from interesting of us in Christ: And this Faith also is such a condition as God himself doth promise to give, and set apart peculiar means to work it in us, as upon our serious asking of him will give unto us.

2. I shall now speak of the particular comforts which do belong unto Believers who stand possessed of this faith which unites to Christ, and is the condition of the Covenant of Grace.

I grant that distinction of weak believers and of strong believers, and that by reason of this gradual diversity there is therefore a different apprehension and perception of your comforts: But if your faith be such as indeed brings you into union with Christ (be that faith weak or strong) then I confidently assure you, that your condition is very comfortable and blessed.

**Quest. But what are those comforts? And what is that blessedness for all who are by faith united with Christ?**

Sol. I will mention some of them unto you: If you be by faith united to Christ, so that he is yours, and you are his, Then

1. Unquestionably God is your God; for union with Christ infallibly takes in union with God; if Christ be yours, then God is yours: Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. 3:23. Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 Joh. 1:3.

Beloved, this is a truth, that you can never have union with one Person of the Trinity alone: as the union of those persons is common and mutual between themselves (the Father hath union with the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and the Son hath union with the Father and the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost hath union with them both) so is our union with them; If we be united to Christ, we are united to God the Father of Christ, and to the Holy Ghost the Spirit of Christ: If Christ be yours, then God the Father is yours, and if Christ be yours, then God the Holy Ghost is yours: As Christ is in you of a truth, so God is in you of a truth, and the Spirit of Christ is in you also: And as you are in the Son, so are you in the Father, and so are you in the Spirit: And as the Son is in you so the Father is in you, and the Holy Ghost is in you: And because this one thing is the Caput, the sum, and height, and depth of all our comfort and blessedness, I shall therefore crave the favor to speak some few words unto it.

1. First then, our union with Christ draws in with it our union with God, so that we and God himself are no longer enemies by way of difference, nor strangers by way of distance, but we are made nigh by Christ, not only nigh in a way of pacification, by removal of enmity (God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself) But which is more, we are by Christ made nigh to God in a way of relation, so that he is now become our God: As by reason of this union Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren, Heb. 2:11. So God is not ashamed to be called our God, Heb. 11:16. Yea and as the Apostle tells us, that Christ is ours, Ephes. 1:3. Our Lord Jesus Christ, so Christ himself tells us that God is ours, I ascend to my God and to your God: And (by the way) observe it, that Christ doth not say only or first I ascend to your God (yet this had been a special comfort to the Disciples that God was their God) but he saith, I ascend to my God, and to your God; and why to my God, and next to your God? But to inform us that God becomes our God by virtue of our union with Christ? What Christ calls mine, that you may call yours; My God, and your God, and because my God, therefore your God: So then our union with Christ infers with it our union with God; our relation to Christ infers with it our relation to God; and our propriety in Christ, our propriety also in God; and our fruition of Christ to be ours, a fruition of God himself to be ours; than which a more high and blessed fruition no creature is capable of.

2. Secondly our union with Christ takes in with it our union with the Father (the first Person in the Trinity) that as God is the Father of Christ, and Christ is the Son of God; so now in Christ God is also our Father, and we are his children, Joh. 20:17. My Father, and your Father; Ephes. 1:3. God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. Thes. 2:16, and God even our Father? Here you see that God is Father to Christ, and he is also a Father to all

them that are Christ's: And as Christ is the Son of God, so are we the sons of God; and how come we to be the sons of God? See Gal. 3:26. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus: and Joh. 1:12. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name; why! As this is an unspeakable dignity for us to be raised unto (1 Joh. 3:1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God?) So it is a most comfortable relation, none the like: It concludes within it all the love of God, and goodness, and mercy, and care, and help, and compassion, and tenderness, and blessings of God as a Father.

3. Thirdly our union with Christ takes in with it also our union with the Holy Ghost, in which respect, he that is joined to the Lord, is said to be one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17, and the Spirit of Christ is said to be given us, 1. Joh. 3:24, and he is in us, and dwells in us, Rom. 8:9, and hath communion with us, (2 Cor. 13:14. The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all) and we have fellowship with the Spirit, Phil. 2:1, in the participation of his 1. Graces. 2. Help. 3. Comforts.

O Christians! These are glorious things indeed: who would not strive after union with Christ, which brings such a union with it? And who cannot but rejoice and triumph in Christ by union with whom he is thus united to the whole Trinity?

2. If you be by faith united unto Christ, here is yet another comfort for you: That as this union infers with it a relation to every Person in the Trinity, so it doth assuredly confer upon you an interest in every good of the Covenant: for by virtue of this union we are made both Sons and Heirs. Sons, Gal. 3:26. Ye are all the children of God by

faith in Christ Jesus: Heirs, Gal. 3:29. And if ye be Christ's, then are you Abraham's Seed and Heirs according to the promise. Some read it, if ye be one with Christ, Si unus estis in Christo, vid. Beza. Here you do expressly find our Heirship to flow from our union with Christ: for certainly our heirship thence ariseth from whence our sonship doth arise, and that is from union, with Christ: Well then! Believers are Christ's, and being Christ's they are Children; and if Children, then Heirs, and Heirs according to promise.

**Quest. Heirs? Whose Heirs? And of what estate?**

Sol. An Heir (strictly) is the child (either Natural or adopted) who upon the death of the Father succeeds into his possessions: In this strict acceptation, neither Christ (who is the Natural Son and Heir) nor Believers (who are sons and heirs by grace) are God's Heirs; for God never dies, and we do not take any possession of his estate upon such a vacancy and cessation.

But Theologically he is an heir who is accepted and admitted into the possession promised and set forth, and given by God, who yet lives forever to be our God and Father; and indeed our inheritance and inheriting is nevertheless because our Father lives; but it is therefore our settled and blessed inheritance, because our God and Father lives forever.

Now that of which we are Heirs (by virtue of union with Christ) is,

1. God himself, Rom. 8:17. If children, then heirs, heirs of God: As your children are your heirs, so God's children are his heirs; he hath never a child but he is an heir, and an heir of God. There is an estate of inheritance set out for him: what God possesseth, of that (according to his capacity and proportion) shall he be possessed of holiness, glory, happiness.



2. All the inheritance which Christ hath purchased, and God hath entailed, or settled, or passed over unto you in his Covenant, of no less then all this are believers heirs: This is the inheritance, and the estate of which you are heirs; namely all the good set out for you in the Covenant by God the Father, and confirmed and sealed unto you by the blood of Christ the Mediator of that Covenant: Therefore Believers are (in Scripture) styled Heirs of the promise, Heb. 6:12, of the grace of life, 1 Pet. 3:7, of the righteousness which is by faith, Heb. 11:7, of salvation, Heb. 1:14, of the kingdom promised to them that love him, Jam. 2:5. All the good in it for them, of all things, Revel. 21:7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things.

There is Haereditas gratiae, which contains all the blessings designed for enjoyment in this life.

And there is Haereditas gloriae, which contains all the blessedness reserved for enjoyment in that other life: Of all in the one, and in the other, are believers heirs; you are heirs to mercy, and grace, and righteousness, and comforts, and salvation. I think therefore that the believers condition (by virtue of his union with Christ) is very comfortable and blessed.

3. If you be by faith united unto Christ, there remains one comfort more for you which is this, That as you are thereby heirs of all the good mentioned, and promised in the Covenant, so, all that good will Christ see accomplished and performed unto you; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, 2 Cor. 1:20. They are sure and certain, are surely, and certainly made good: As God spake unto Jacob, Gen. 28:15. I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of: So Jesus Christ (unto whom you are united) he will not cease until you be actually possessed of all that good which his father promised unto him from all eternity, and

hath promised also unto you in time (in his Covenant) to bestow upon you.

And there are four things which may assure you of this, viz.

1. The suretyship of Christ, which implies not only his undertaking for us to God, but likewise the same for God to us, that God shall really make good to us, all which he hath promised unto us.
2. The Intercession of Christ, which is his everlasting work of applying all the good which he hath purchased.
3. The Donation of his Spirit upon us for the communicating of all good unto us.
4. The intention of his Merit and Purchase which he laid out in our names, and for our good: He merited no less for us than all that good in the Covenant: No less than all outward benediction, than all heavenly blessings, than Justification, Reconciliation, Sanctification, Consolation, Perseverance, and eternal Glory.

His Merit and purchase amounted to all this, and not to less than this; and as God is bound to give him what he hath purchased, so he hath bound himself to bestow all this upon believers, who are united to him. Whosoever believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:13.

5. The habitude 'twixt Christ as Head, and believers as his Body and Members; he is not perfect until they be perfected.

And now I pray you that are believers, be you yourselves judges, whether your union with Christ puts you not into a most comfortable and blessed condition, seeing it brings you into union with God, and

every Person of the Trinity, and makes you heirs of all the good in the Covenant, all which God and Jesus Christ will see actually bestowed upon you.

Object. True, will some say; here is comfort enough; for here is all that souls can wish or enjoy. But truly the more you speak of this comfort from union with Christ, the more sad and uncomfortable is my heart! Because at least I fear that I never yet in truth attained unto this union of Faith: why so?

1. I was driven to look after Christ out of fear, and out of the sense of wrath.
2. Union with Christ supposeth separation from all that is contrary unto Christ: Alas I find the contrary, a body of sin still present with me!
3. Union with Christ depends upon some mighty and powerful workings of the Spirit, which I never observed, nor discerned in my soul.
4. Union with Christ certainly includes the presence of the Spirit, and the communion of the Spirit; whether I have that, I know not.
5. I still live under weaknesses, and wants; but union with Christ would have let in more supply, &c.

Sol. I will briefly speak unto these fears, if possibly they may be removed. For as it is my desire that you may by faith be brought to Christ, so it shall be my endeavor, that every soul united unto Christ may taste of those comforts which do belong to him in Christ.

**1. Object. You fear that you are not rightly united to Christ, because you were driven to look after Christ out of fear, and sense of wrath; whereas the union by faith is free and voluntary.**

Sol. Though this be true, yet is it possible that your union with Christ may be right: They in Acts 2:37, were indeed by Faith united to Christ, although the first work appearing in them was the sense of their sins, and of God's wrath for that sin; and so was the Jailor in Act 16:30, effectually brought in to Christ, although trembling of heart first seized on him; and so was Paul in Act. 9:6. Therefore distinguish thus of this matter.

1. There is a difference 'twixt an occasion of looking after Christ, and 'twixt a principle which unites to Christ. The sense of sin, and the fear of the wrath of God, these are the occasion of your looking after Christ; and had you not met with these, it is most probable that you never had minded Christ: And yet it was not this fear, but faith (which followed upon it) that did unite you to Christ; I say faith which saw the exceeding goodness, and kindness, and graciousness in Christ represented, and offered, and promised in the Gospel, and thereupon drew your hearts to the prizing, and desiring, and receiving Christ, with a most cheerful and ready consent and will: So that though at the first, and occasionally some legal operations and impressions awakened your hearts to look after a Christ for deliverance, yet it was the Gospel by the Spirit working faith in your troubled hearts, which brought and joined you to Christ.

2. Again, you must distinguish 'twixt the sense of sin and wrath considered alone, and considered concomitantly: If the sense of sin and wrath alone did put you upon Christ, and never anything

else, this indeed were sad: For when these alone put us upon Christ, then we desire Christ no farther than a present help, and ease against those evils which do distress us; but thus it is not with you, though perhaps (at the first) your thoughts were fixed upon Christ only, to deliver you from the wrathful impressions in conscience; yet upon the farther light and working of God's Spirit, your hearts are carried beyond these; for you must now have a fruition of Christ; you have now coveted an union with Christ, and satisfied you cannot be without that near union; and truly this is the effect of faith graciously given unto you from God.

**2. Object. But union with Christ supposeth a separation from all that is contrary to Christ: Is not sin contrary to Christ, and this I find still: Ergo,**

Sol. I answer.

1. It is one thing for sin to be separated from me, and it is another thing for me to be separated from sin.

For sin to be separated from me, is wholly to be rid of it; so that sin no more remains in me: For me to be separated from sin, is not to love and serve it, but cordially to hate it, and oppose it; he is separated from sin, who hates sin.

Now it is not the presence of sin simply and absolutely, which is effectually contrary to union with Christ (for then no sinner should ever be in Christ) but it is the love and service of sin which is contrary to a union with Christ; a man cannot love sin, and yet love Christ; neither can he serve sin and serve Christ.

But thus it is not with you; for though sin be in you, yet you love it not; and though sin assaults, and tempts, and perhaps sometimes prevails, yet you serve it not: And remember as long as sin is your burden, your grief, your enemy which you resist which you would destroy, with which you will not make peace, certainly you love it not, nor are you the servant of it. Paul (who was in Christ) found the presence of sin, but yet he hated it, and the powerful working of sin, but yet he refused it; and sometimes the captivity of sin, but yet he bewailed it, and sought to Christ for more deliverance and victory.

2. There is a twofold separation from sin.

One is Radical, when by the infusion of grace, the heart is changed and alienated from sin.

The other is Gradual, when by the further influence of the Spirit of Christ, the powerful presence of sin is more and more mortified and subdued. This latter you shall attain unto by virtue of your union with Christ: But if you find the former, certainly you are united to Christ: If there be but so much grace infused into the heart to alienate it from sin, to change the bent and frame of the soul; why! This cannot be without a union with Christ; for this is a new spiritual change wrought in you by the Spirit of Christ; and the newness of our hearts depends upon that union with Christ, which is made by faith, and is the lively testimony of it: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17.

**Object. O but union with Christ depends upon some mighty and powerful workings of the Spirit upon the soul, which I never observed, nor discerned in my soul!**

Sol. It is a truth that it doth so: The Gospel comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, when it enables a soul to believe

in Christ; and without the mighty working of the Spirit it is impossible to make the heart to believe: And although in the present darkness of the Spirit you discern not, nor remember such a mighty working, yet perhaps by the effects which may be found in you, you shall acknowledge the same: for the time was

1. When blackness of darkness covered your minds, so that you were ignorant of God and Christ, and your own condition, and of the way of salvation. But now there is a light set up in your mind, by which you know the true God, and him whom he hath sent, even Jesus Christ, and the salvation by him purchased for sinners who believe in him.

2. When carnal security possessed your heart, so that you could rest quiet in your natural condition; but now that spirit of slumber and security is shaken off, and your soul is become anxious and solicitous, What shall I do to be saved?

3. When your heart was full of your own righteousness, you were rich and increased, you were whole and needed not the Physician; but now you see yourself poor, and wretched, and naked, and miserable, and utterly undone, unless you may have Christ and be found in him.

4. When you were confident and presumptuous of your own power, and self-sufficiency; O it was easy to repent, and no great matter to believe on Christ; but now you find yourself without all strength; and unless you be enabled by the strength and grace of Christ, it is not only difficult, but also impossible for your heart to close with him by faith.

5. When you found your proud spirit slighting the offers of Christ, and opposing the word of Christ, and resisting, and quenching the motions of the Spirit of Christ; but now your hearts tremble at these

abominations, and you lie down at the feet of Christ, and your heart is set on Christ, O Lord give me Christ; O Lord give me an heart to embrace this precious Christ, and never to slight thy great love in Christ, nor that great salvation anymore.

6. When you felt the power of unbelief in your hearts working up daily exceptions, and hourly fears, and strong despairs forever enjoying Christ for your Christ! O now! This sin, and that sin, this slighting, and that neglecting! And your unworthiness, and Christ's unwillingness; and your inability, and Christ's command; and your dullness and Christ's silence; and your desires, and Christ's delays! So that no hopes many times lodged within you, your hearts were sinking, and failing, and giving up all: But now your hearts are answered and set at liberty, and power is found within you to break down this mighty partition wall of unbelief; and against all the oppositions which unbelief and Satan can make, yet to venture upon Christ, and to justify the invitations and promises of Christ, and wholly to come up to all the terms and articles of Christ, upon which he is contented to be yours.

O Christian! Call'st thou these no workings of the Spirit? Or no mighty workings of the Spirit? I tell thee that to work and effect these things, no less power is put forth than the Almighty power of God upon thy soul! A greater power than to bring Israel out of Egypt; as great a power is put forth as to raise the dead: I grant, that when the Spirit works with the Law to convince and distress the conscience, there his workings are more vehement and strong to our apprehensions: And when the same Spirit works through the Gospel, his workings (many times) are not discerned in their time of working, in that sensible and remarkable efficacy; but yet when you review the whole work, and working of the Spirit (as to the production of faith) why! You will fall down and admire however



your poor souls could (against so many oppositions, insufficiencies, reasonings, conclusions, fears, doubts, despairs) be prevailed upon, and enabled to come to Christ.

**Ob. O but union with Christ indeed by faith ever takes along with it the presence and communion of the Spirit: He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit; and he hath received the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ who is in Christ: But I have not that Spirit, I find him not, I feel him not.**

Sol. This also is a truth, that the communion of the Spirit is inseparably, annexed to union with Christ: And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's.

But then know,

1. You must consider in what posture a Christian must be who may judge of the presence or absence of the Spirit of Christ in him. 1. He must be out of melancholy. 2. Out of violent temptation. 3. Out of Desertion: He must be himself, see himself that he is able and fit to judge Spiritual works, and to compare things together, and to weigh all that may be said in the balance of the Sanctuary. If thou be in this free posture, and upon diligent search, and serious consideration canst find not any one effect of communion with Christ, the case is very heavy: But I believe the contrary touching thee, O weak Christian! When those above mentioned impediments are off, so that thou art able to use the light of grace, and of a renewed conscience, much of Christ and from Christ will be found in thee, a love of thy Christ, a delight in thy Christ, a heart ready and willing to hear, and to obey thy Christ.

2. Distinguish of vital acts, and of vivifical acts, (that is) effects of a real union, and effects of a comfortable union: The estate of a

comfortable union and communion, thou dost not (perhaps) espy at present, viz. Not actual joy, not actual cheerfulness, not actual assurances: O but though you do not find the child smiling, yet if you find it living, there is union: There are yet the effects and characters of life, and of vital union and communion with Christ, though not of a comfortable communion; there is yet a breathing after Christ, a hunting after Christ, an heart renewed and changed, an image of Christ unto which thou art changed and conformed, a will agreeing with the will of Christ, an end agreeing with the end of Christ, &c. And yet thou canst serve thy Christ in tears, though thou canst not serve him in joys; and though the Spirit of Christ be not seen so as to comfort thee, yet he is found so as to lead and uphold thee.

3. There is a communion by way of influence, and a communion by way of eminency, and a communion by way of evidence, and all these depend upon union with Christ.

1. Communion by way of influence, when we partake of the Nature and Life of Christ; ye are made partakers of the Divine Nature, saith Peter: Christ liveth in me, saith Paul.

2. A communion by way of eminency, when Christ appears mighty in the soul, in the large, and high, and strong degrees of acting of particular graces, of faith, of love, of patience, of self-denial, of zeal, of wisdom, of humility.

3. A communion by way of evidence, as when Christ kisseth the soul with the kisses of his lips. That is, when he sheds abroad his love into our hearts by the Spirit which he hath given us, and makes us to know that he loves us, and saith by his Spirit unto our hearts, I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: Perhaps you have not attained to this last communion with Christ, to this Osculumoris: and perhaps you have not attained to the second

of these, which (as Bernard speaks) is Osculum manus: well! But yet you have attained to the first of these, which is Osculum pedis: perhaps you have not the sensible manifestations, and impressions, and seals of his favor by his spirit; but yet you are young men in Christ, and strong in the might of his Spirit: perhaps you are not come to the strength of the Spirit; but yet you are babes in Christ, yet the life of Christ is in you; you have that Spirit of Christ (in way of influence) which brings you into fellowship with Christ in his death, and in his resurrection; ye are dead to sin, and you are alive unto righteousness, and Christ is setting up himself in your hearts more and more; Be not discouraged; this shows true union with Christ forever. This is the communion of the Spirit of Christ, when our hearts are fashioning and conforming to Christ, and have any part of his image stamped upon us: If you can find any one grace depending upon, and flowing from union with Christ, that is enough to satisfy you about the communion of the Spirit, and that you have the faith which hath indeed united you unto Christ.

**Ob. But if I had indeed this faith which unites to Christ, I should not all this while have lived with so much weakness of grace, and under so many spiritual wants; certainly I should have found more of the strength, and of the fullness of Christ, who filleth all in all:**

Sol. I grant it for a truth, that the right union is an imparting, and strengthening, and supplying union: Whosoever is united to Christ indeed by faith, to him is Christ a supplying Fountain, a feeding Root, and a helping Head, and he will never leave the communicating of his Spirit unto him, until he hath filled him with

all that fullness whereof a lively member of Christ is capable: but then remember,

1. Comparatively the original and first receptions from Christ are weak and little, as the seed that is cast into the earth, or as the light which breaks forth in the morning: compare the first works of grace, with the flowing growth of grace, it is but as the babe to the strong man, but as the Lamb to the sheep; I believe, Lord, help my unbelief, this is that most of Faith at first: Thou knowest that I love thee, this is the highest of your love at first: whom I serve with, or in my spirit, this is the greatest of our obedience at the first.

2. The Communications of Christ unto the soul united by faith unto him, are partly for justification, and partly in Sanctification.

His communications in Justification are at once and full, and perfect: as soon as you are by faith united unto Christ, you are perfectly reconciled to God, you are perfectly clothed with the righteousness of Christ, you are perfectly pardoned all your sins; your peace is so perfectly made with God, that you cannot be more fully reconciled: you have the righteousness of Christ so perfectly imputed to you, that you cannot be more righteous; you have your sins so perfectly forgiven, that they cannot (as to God's work of absolution) be more exactly forgiven; they are so forgiven that none can lay anything to your charge; so forgiven that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

His communications in Sanctification are not thus perfect, and at once; but they are successive and by degrees, and by measures: as the members of the body united to the Head, or as the branches united to the Root, have their strength and enlargements derived unto them in a succession of time, and in a proportion; so the Members of Christ and the Branches in him (true Believers) they do

receive from him grace upon grace, one degree and measure after another, like a vessel in the Sea which is not filled according to the present fullness of the Sea, but according to the present capacity of the vessel, drop after drop, it is filled by continued way of filling: or like a Child that is nourished by a daily addition and reception of food, and so creeps up into more strength in time: Beloved, you must not expect (though you be united to Christ) such an immediate and complete supply of the Spirit of grace from Christ as at once to make you strong Christians, and full Christians without any weaknesses, and without any wants: Indeed Christ hath promised to perfect his work which he hath begun, and to strengthen what he hath wrought; and he will do so, but then it is in his own way, and in his own time, by degrees he will so follow the work of grace, that you shall grow and increase more and more with the increasing's of God: he will water the Plants, and bless the Buds; and at length will bring forth Judgment into victory; he will not communicate his Spirit unto any of us in this life so perfectly as to be without combat in ourselves, nor without dependence upon himself.

3. But lastly, do you indeed find weaknesses and wants still abiding with you? And why then did you complain and sit still? Why do you not rather look out to Christ's fullness, than thus discourage your hearts at your own emptiness? Indeed it is the first work of faith to unite you to Christ, to make you and Christ one, to give you an interest in himself; but then it is the next work of faith to live upon your Christ, to depend upon Christ, to draw out of his fullness, to go to him, and to trust on him for all the good which yet your souls do want, to get further fellowship with him; will he deny you help who hath not denied you himself? And is not he therefore your Christ, that he may be your head and help, and supply? &c.

## SECT. VIII.

4. Use. Is uniting Faith the condition of the Covenant of Grace, so that all Believers in Christ are really in Covenant with God, and God with them? Then you who are believers (who are by faith united unto Christ) learn from hence the duties which do especially concern you as Believers interested in Christ, and in the Covenant: The duties which do much concern you are these. 1. Improve your faith to a dependence on your God. 2. Improve your faith to an observance or keeping Covenant with your God. 3. Remember that it is Jesus Christ upon whose account you and God are in Covenant.

1. Being united by faith unto Christ, and so brought into Covenant, now improve your faith to a dependence upon your God, who is your God in Covenant: Come unto him in the name of Christ as unto your God, and rely on him, and expect to receive from him, all the good for which he hath engaged himself unto you in Covenant: For the better managing of this instruction, I will briefly show unto you

1. That it is an express and peremptory duty incumbent on you (who are by Faith brought into Covenant) to depend by faith on your God in Covenant.

2. How far you may by virtue of your union with Christ by faith depend upon your God.

3. What encouragements there are for all who are by Faith united unto Christ to depend and rely on their God for whatsoever good themselves do need, and God in his Covenant hath promised unto them: I beseech you who are Believers, diligently to regard and remember these things.

1. It is an express and peremptory duty incumbent on you being brought (by faith on Christ) into the Covenant, to depend by Faith on God, who is your God in Covenant, Isa. 8:19. Should not a people seek unto their God? Psal. 20:7. Some trust in Chariots, and some in Horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God. Psal. 115:9. O Israel! Trust thou in the Lord, Psal. 91:2. I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress, my God, in him will I trust, Isa. 50:10. Who is he that sits in darkness and sees no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Isa. 26:4. Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. See Psal. 62:8, Zeph. 3:12, Isa. 12:2, Isa. 14:32, 2 Cor. 1:9,10, 1 Pet. 3:5.

Beloved! This is the end of your union with Christ, that you might have communion with God, that you might have access unto him, Ephes. 2:18, and that you might come boldly to the throne of Grace, that you may obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need, Heb. 4:16. And this is the end for which this faith is given unto you, not only for admission into the Covenant, but for participation of all the good of the Covenant: It is given unto you to make you children, and it is given to you to make you heirs; it is given unto you in a passive sense that you might be received into the Covenant; and it is given unto you in an active sense, that you may receive the good out of the Covenant; It is given unto you to take off your hearts from all confidence, but upon your God alone, and to set all your hopes on him, and expectations from him; and it is given unto you that you might give glory to all the truths of God; and what glory do you give to his promises, if you think him a God not to be trusted? &c.

2. How far (by virtue of union with Christ) Believers may depend upon their God in Covenant. I will describe those Bounds unto you in six Propositions.

1. So far as Jesus Christ is made over unto you by God, your dependence on God, may, and should extend. Isa. 9:6. Unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; his Name shall be called wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; He is by God set forth to be a propitiation, Rom. 3:25. And he is made of God unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30 And God hath made him to be sin for us, that we may be made the Righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5:21. And he is given to be a Redeemer, a Savior, a Light, a Salvation: As to all these respects you may confidently depend upon your God, that Jesus Christ shall be unto you a Redeemer.

2. So far as Christ hath purchased for his Members, as far as his purchase extends, so far your dependence on your God may extend; whatsoever good or blessing he hath laid down a price for, and bought by his blood and death for all that believe on him, for all that may you by faith depend upon your God (in time) to settle upon you; whether it be remission of sin, or reconciliation with God, or grace, or peace in conscience, or acceptance, or assistance, or joys of the Holy Ghost, or perseverance, or eternal glory, for all of it are you to depend upon your God, to settle upon you in their order and measure.

3. So far as the promises of God do extend, so far may, and should your dependence on your God extend: whatsoever he undertakes to give you in his Covenant, for all that may, and should you depend upon him for according to his Covenant: His Covenant is full of promises, and those promises are full of good for soul, for body, for both, for this life, for the next life, for grace, for glory; why! All these promises are the children's bread, and the believers portion: and as where God hath a mouth to speak to us in the way of Precepts, there



we should have an ear to hear him in the way of obedience; so where God is pleased to abound in promises unto us, we are bound to enlarge our Faith in a dependence upon him for all that promised good: unbelief displeaseth and dishonoreth God in his promises, as disobedience doth dishonor and displease him in respect of his commands.

4. So far as the real exigencies of our souls and bodies do extend, so far may, and should our faith of dependence extend upon our God: Though the child hath no reason to depend upon his father to supply him of his vanities; yet he hath warrant enough to rely upon him to relieve all his necessities. If the child wants bread, and raiment, or Physic, the child may come, and the Father will help: and this holds 'twixt God our Father, and his children. How much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him? Matth. 7:11. If it be a want indeed, an exigence indeed, a strait indeed, you may go to your God and trust on him, and he will not fail you. Psal 84:11. No good thing will he with-hold. Psal. 34:10. They that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing. Isai. 41:17. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

Let your want or exigence be temporal, or spiritual, if it be indeed an exigence by reason of temptation from Satan, or from the insolent operations of sinful corruptions, or from the greatness of afflictions, or heaviness of misery, or distress of poverty, or any other pressure, I say, if it be a real exigence that you know not what to do, in every such case your eyes should be upon your God, you should trust on him, and stay upon his Name.

5. So far as your prayers may extend for yourselves, so far may, and should your dependence on your God extend: I do not say every

man's asking and faith of dependence are co-extensive: Nor do I say that every good man's asking and faith of dependence are to be paralleled: But this I say, that so far as you may pray, so far you may and ought to believe, to depend on your God, 1 Joh. 5:14. This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us. Joh. 14:13. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: you may pray for whatsoever God hath commanded you to pray, and you may pray for whatsoever God hath encouraged his people to pray; you may pray for whatsoever God hath promised to hear and answer Prayer; and for whatsoever Christ may be looked upon as an Intercessor: And for all these may you depend upon your God. Nay you should do so; for as your God would have you thus to pray unto him, so he would have you to pray in faith, to ask in Faith, believing that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

6. Lastly, Match but conditions and circumstances, whatsoever good, and in whatsoever like case any Child of God, or servant of Christ hath extended his faith of dependence upon his God, for all that good may you (being now in the same relation and condition) exercise your faith of dependence upon your God: If you be in the same strait that Jehoshaphat was, or in the same distress that Hezekiah was, or in the same calamity that Job was, or in the same dejection and desertion that David was, or in the same spiritual conflicts, and temptation that Paul was, or in the same trouble and terror of conscience that Heman was, &c. whatsoever mercy, or grace, help, or comfort, or goodness, they might look up unto God for as their God in Covenant, for the very same may you look up to God, and depend upon God for as your God. Whatsoever any one hath pleaded for with God, and trusted upon God for, because he was their God, upon the same account, in the same condition may every Child of God plead with him, and depend upon him for, because God is also his God:

Parallel but conditions and circumstances, and then the same Covenant will unquestionably afford unto you the same ground for confidence and dependence.

3. These things being so, let us advance now into the third place, viz. What encouragements there are for all who are by faith united unto Christ, cheerfully and confidently to depend upon their God for whatsoever good he hath stated out for them in his Covenant.

Sol. If any people in the world have grounds of encouragement to depend on God for the good of his Covenant, then certainly you have who are by faith united unto Christ; and you have these three choice encouragements; viz. 1. Relation. 2. Promises. 3. The Name and Office of Christ.

1. There is a very near relation between God and you; so near that there is a mutual propriety between you, Zech. 13:9. I will say It is my people, and they shall say The Lord is my God, 2 Cor. 6:18. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Isa. 54:5. Thy Maker is thy Husband (the Lord of Hosts is his Name) and thy Redeemer, &c. Can there be any Relation greater or nearer than these Relations? My God, and my people; our Father, and my Sons and Daughters; my Husband, and my Wife. Surely these are the nearest Relations for union, and they are the tenderest Relations for affection, and they are the strongest Relations for obligation: The Father himself loves you, said Christ to his Disciples; I will marry thee to myself in loving kindness, said God to his Church. Love will do much, especially love set in a near relation. Why are our hands so open to our Wives, and Children, and Friends, but because our hearts are enlarged in love towards them? And why do any of these repair unto us (and not to others) for help, but because of their near relation unto us? They are our Children,

and we are their Fathers, they are our Wives, and we are their Husbands? There is near relation, and there is love, and there is readiness, and there is special obligation, and therefore they come to us, and depend upon us, and we do help them. Do you find encouragement to depend upon your friend, because he is your friend and loves you? And have you not a greater encouragement to depend upon your God, because he is your God and loves you? Can the Child find encouragements enough (by virtue of his relation) to go to his Father and rely on him? And cannot you (who are by faith the children of God) discern greater encouragements to go to your Father, and depend on him? Your Relation is higher, and your love is infinitely purer and stronger!

2. If the nearness of Relation be not satisfactory, then remember there is also the bound of promises: To you are the promises made and given, which are the very bonds of God, and your names are in those bonds; God will not be at liberty, he knows how incredulous we are, we must have his Word to tell us how he stands affected towards us; nay, and we must have his word of promise, binding and engaging his honor (as God) to do us good, and not to fail us: Nay, perhaps his word of promise will not suffice us, but besides that we must have his Oath (which yet we never put any man on earth unto, and unto whom we come for help) but God comes off with all this to encourage us to come unto him, and to depend on him. He is ours in Affection, he becomes ours in Relation, and he tells us how good a God he intends to be unto us, and then engageth himself in promises for all that good; and moreover he takes his Oath, swears by himself that he will not fail us nor forsake us, and that in blessing he will bless us. Beloved! What would you have more to encourage, to assure you, to give you confidence that you may draw near to your God, and depend, and trust upon him; saith God, you have my Word, and you

have my Oath, and I am yours, I have no greater security to make unto you.

3. Well, and besides this you have another encouragement to come and depend upon your God, and that is the Name of Christ, and the Office of Christ.

**Object. True, will you say, we can desire no more on God's part; but something makes us to fear, and doubt on our part; He is good, but we are unworthy; and he is willing to do us good: but how shall we plead with him?**

Sol. I answer, Jesus Christ is yours, and in his name you may go to the Father, and as you may plead with the Father in his Name, so doth he plead for you with the Father in his own Name: Joh 16:23. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name he will give it you. As if he should say, I grant that you (of yourselves) are unworthy, and you cannot prevail upon your own account of worthiness; this will not carry it with the Father; therefore when you come unto him use my Name, plead my worthiness, entreat him to do you good for my sake, and I assure you that will prevail with him, Heb. 9:24. Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. 7:25. He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him: Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession. You see in these places that Jesus Christ appears in the presence of God for you; when you appear before God in prayer, Christ also appears in the presence of God for you, and makes intercession for you; he owns your persons, and he owns your petitions, you plead and Christ pleads, you make requests, and Christ makes intercession. Father! These are they whom thou hast given to me; Thine they were, and they are mine; for them I died, and for them I purchased all the good which thou didst promise

unto me, that they should have, if I would lay down my life for them: Now therefore let them enjoy what thou hast promised, and what I have purchased for them. Thus have you the first duty belonging unto them who are by faith united to Christ, and brought thereby into Covenant with God: Now follows the second.

2. Being united by Faith unto Christ, and so let into the Covenant, Improve your Faith to an observance or keeping Covenant with your God: And indeed Faith is given unto you also for this end, that you may be able to keep and hold fast the Covenant made between you and your God, that you may obey his will, walk in his Statutes and ways, be sincere and upright, and remain faithful and steadfast with him to the end.

**Quest. But can faith do this? Is it in the power of our faith thus to enable us? How can, or doth faith enable us to keep Covenant with our God?**

Sol. This is an excellent question, and I would resolve it thus: Faith doth enable us to keep our Covenant with God six ways.

1. By pleading the Covenant; by enabling us to go unto, and rest upon our God in Covenant, to let out that strength and sufficiency of that grace which he hath promised unto all his people in Covenant with him; the strength to keep the Covenant lies in the Covenant, and by faith you get it.

Thou said'st that thou wouldst do me good, said Jacob, Gen. 32:12. So Lord thou said'st that thou wouldest give me thy Spirit to cause me to walk in thy statutes and to do them, Ezek. 36:27. Thou said'st thou wouldest write thy Law in my heart; Now Lord! According to thy word and Covenant help, strengthen, keep, direct, establish my heart, subdue mine iniquities, suffer

me not to be tempted above what I am able, let thy grace be sufficient for me, make thy power manifest in weakness, &c.

2. By keeping up communion with Christ, and drawing virtue and influence from him: without me ye can do nothing, said Christ; I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me, said Paul: Why! It is in and by Christ, that we are what we are, that we do what we do, that we are strengthened with all might, that we stand, that we walk, that we work, that we run our race, that we finish our course, that we continue in well-doing to the end: Now faith keeps up our hearts, and keeps up communion with Christ our Head, our Root, our Life, our Fountain, our Strength, and our Sufficiency, and receives out of his fullness, and makes us partakers of his life, and of his death, and of his victories over sin, and Satan, and the world, and of his strength for active and passive obedience.

3. By taking us off from all our own self-sufficiencies, and self-confidences (which breed nothing but pride and presumption, and hypocrisy, and apostasy, and carelessness) and exciting our hearts to pray, and to fear, and to watch, and diligently to attend the Ordinances of Christ; all which are means to strengthen and preserve us in well-doing, &c

4. By observing the continual mercies of God to us in the things of this life, and the gracious performance of his promises unto us, both which are as so many cords to bind us faster unto God, and are of great force with a believing heart to engage it more unto God, and to walk the more closely, and faithfully, and exactly, and fruitfully before him: to be the more ashamed to sin against him, to be barren and uneven with so blessing and encouraging a God!

5. By letting in the love of God in Christ (the goodness and sweetness of his favor) into our Consciences. It is faith which hath the sight of all the kindness of God, and conveys unto us the tastes of all the mercy of God, how God stands affected to us, how accepted we are with him, what grace our poor souls have found in his eyes, what his thoughts are of us, and how dear we are to his soul: And verily if Faith be the glass (as it were) for us to see the face of our loving God, O how will this inflame and knit our hearts in love to God again! And how will that love continue us to the choicest, to the fullest, to the cheerfullest, to the faithfulest service of obedience!

6. By holding out before us, both the honor of God, and the reward of God: Our faithful walking with him is an honor to him, and a delight to him, These are my people, these live like a people of God, they glorify him: and that is the great Argument which faith useth to make the people of God to be faithful and steadfast, Herein is my Father glorified, Joh. 15:8. And besides that, it holds out the crown of life, the great recompense of reward, that Well done good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown. He that continues, to the end shall be saved. And faith beholding what God hath done for us, and what God is still to us, and what an immortal inheritance, and exceedingly exceeding weight of Glory he hath prepared and reserved for us, doth thereupon quicken, encourage, support, draw out our hearts to be industrious, obedient, diligent and faithful.

3. The third and last duty from this, that you are by Faith united to Christ, and brought into the Covenant, is this, Remember your Jesus Christ, remember that it is Christ only upon whose account you and



God are in Covenant: he is the door of your hope, he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; in him are ye found, and in him have you found life, and love, and mercy, and grace, and peace, and salvation. You could never have seen the reconciled, loving, gracious God as your God, but in and by him: He hath made you near, and accepted, and beloved, and blessed; He alone! Therefore.

1. Never magnify yourselves, but Christ; never ascribe anything to your worthiness, but ascribe all to Christ: O Christ, I had never seen, nor tasted, nor enjoyed this, nor that, nor anything but for thy sake.
2. Love Jesus Christ exceedingly for himself, and for all the treasures of the Covenant opened for you, and laid out upon you, &c.
3. Go still in his Name unto the Father: By him you come into Covenant, and by him you obtain successively every good out of the Covenant, &c.

Jesus the Mediator of the Covenant.

Hebrews 12:24.

And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The Apostle in the 14th verse of this Chapter exhorts the believing Hebrews (unto whom he wrote this Epistle) to the serious study and practice of peace and holiness: And in the 15th verse he dehorts them from all bitterness of spirit, and profaneness of life. This latter he doth enforce by an argument ab exemplo: in verse 16, from Esau that loose and profane person (who for one morsel of bread sold his

birthright) preferring the satisfaction of his sensual appetite, before the fruition of so a great blessing and dignity, the which he therefore forfeited, and could never obtain, although he sought it carefully with tears, verse 17.

The former duty of holiness he urgeth upon them from the consideration of their evangelical estate (that is) of the excellencies, blessings, and privileges which they had obtained by the Gospel of Grace: To illustrate this the more, he makes a comparison between the Law and the Gospel; and the condition under the one, with the condition under the other, from verse 18, to verse 25, wherein he doth represent unto them their admirable advantages by the Gospel, and therefore their stronger obligation to embrace it, and to live answerable unto it in holiness of conversation.

The condition in which sinners lie whiles under the Law and the curse thereof, and without Christ, is set forth in the 18,19,20,21 verses. I will give you the sum of it.

They have to do with God as a terrible Judge, sitting on the Throne of his Justice, This is represented by Mount Sinai that burned with fire, and where there was blackness, and darkness, and tempest, verse 18. All which show unto us that dreadful and burning wrath of God against sinners; and when he manifests himself unto them as their offended Judge, then they are filled with confusion, and perplexity, and horror. They can neither fly from this God, nor yet abide his dreadful presence; this is set out in verse 19,20, as if nothing but death were to be expected and present destruction: And truly the manifestations of God were (then) so terrible, that Moses himself said, I exceedingly fear and quake, ver. 21. No not the most righteous person is able to stand before God as a judge.

But now let us consider the other estate unto which Believers in Christ are brought by the Gospel. This is set forth in verse 22,23,24. But ye are come unto Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, instead of Mount Sinai which was the seat of wrath; ye are come to Mount Zion which is the throne of Grace: And unto the City of the living God; ye are not now in a wilderness condition, but brought into a resting place, into the heavenly Jerusalem (which is the vision of peace) where (being reconciled by Christ) you do abide, and enjoy the living God for your God.

And to Myriads, or innumerable company of Angels; even the Angels are fellow-Citizens with you in the heavenly Jerusalem, and in this life your fellow servants and Ministers.

To the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in heaven. Through Christ ye are made members of the true Catholic Church, of the Elect and of all Believers, whose names are enrolled in heaven, written in the book of life, predestinated unto grace and glory.

And unto God the judge of all, who will condemn and punish his adversaries; and absolve, comfort, and reward, and save his people, according to his faithful promises.

And to the Spirits of just men made perfect. To the Church triumphant in heaven, which is freed from all sin and misery, and partakes of perfect holiness and happiness; to which you have now a present right, and of which (are long) you shall by Christ have a sure enjoyment with them that are already entered into that Possession.

And to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant. Ye are under a Covenant of grace which proclaims remission of sin, and of which

Christ himself is Mediator and Surety; by whom God is satisfied and reconciled.

And to the blood of sprinkling; to the partaking of this blood which was shed for the remission of sins, and to cleanse us from sin; so that you are now justified and sanctified by him; which speaketh better things than that of Abel. The blood of Abel spake and cried out against Cain for curse and vengeance; but the blood of Jesus Christ speaks to God for mercy and pardon of sin, and peace, and life, and is effectual for these.

Thus you see into what a surpassing condition the Gospel brings believers in Christ, and of what efficacy the Apostles exhortation of them to holiness should therefore be.

## CHAP. VII

The Covenant of Grace considered in relation to Christ the Mediator.

This last verse I have purposely chosen to carry on farther the discourse of the Covenant of Grace in relation to Christ Jesus as Mediator thereof: And let me tell you that herein lies the strongest hopes, and the sweetest comforts, and the surest grounds that we sinners have; that as there is a New Covenant (a Covenant of Grace) so that Jesus Christ is the Mediator thereof: For set Jesus Christ aside as Mediator in this Covenant, there would be no admission of sinners into it, nor any participation of the good things in it, nor any ability of our standing or abiding in it.

I find in Scripture a seven-fold relation that Jesus Christ hath to the Covenant.

1. He is the substance of the Covenant, even the Covenant itself, Isa. 42:6. I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, Isa. 49:8. He is our very peace, and our very life, and our very salvation; and (if I may not be mistaken) he it is that fulfils, and makes the Covenant good on both sides.

2. He is the principal confederate party: As Adam was in that Covenant of works standing for himself and all his posterity; so Jesus Christ in this Covenant of Grace for himself and all that believe on him, Heb. 1:5. I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son, 1 Joh. 20:17. I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.

3. He is the Messenger of the Covenant, (Mal. 3:1. The Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in) He it is who opens and reports unto us the good will of his Father, and the gracious love of the Father, and what hath past and hath been agreed on 'twixt the Father and him touching our salvation; he reveals this Covenant, and treats with sinners about it, and shows them the way how to come in, and prevails with them by his Spirit.

4. He is the Witness of the Covenant, Isa. 55:4. Behold I have given him for a Witness to the people. Rev. 1:5. From Jesus Christ the faithful witness, &c. He testifies to the Covenant, by word, and deed, and oath, and his testimony is true, 1 Tim. 1:15. This is a faithful saying and worthy all acceptation, that Jesus Christ is come into the world to save sinners: He is the Yea and Amen to every word of promise and grace that God hath spoken concerning us, that it is good and true, that God hath said it, and that he will perform it.

5. He is the Surety of the Covenant. Heb. 7:22. Jesus was made a Surety of a better Testament and Covenant: As God is (in some respect) a Surety for Christ, Isa. 52:13. Behold my servant shall deal prudently; so Christ is a Surety for God, undertaking that his Father shall perform what he hath promised, Joh. 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, verse 38. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Verse 39. And this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And a Surety for us; He did enter into Bond for us to pay our ransom; To become sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him.

6. He is the Testator of the Covenant, and he died to confirm the Covenant: His death sealed it, so that we may challenge and plead the good of the Covenant as children do their Estates left unto them in a Testament sealed, Heb. 9:16,17. Where a Testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator: For a Testament is of force after men are dead.

7. He is the Mediator of the Covenant: Thus is he styled in the Text, the Mediator of the New Covenant. Thus in Heb. 8:6. The Mediator of a better Covenant. Thus in Heb. 9:15. The Mediator of the New Testament. He is that days-man 'twixt God and us, that lays his hand upon us both, such a one as Job wished for, Job 9:33. He takes up all differences, answered all demands, paid the ransom, and reconciled us.

There is,

1. Internunciarius, A Messenger between two parties.
2. Arbitrator, An Umpire, an indifferent man chosen to judge between two. *A litigantibus eligitur, & habet totius rei potestatem.*
3. Intercessor, who useth entreaty for another.
4. Advocatus, who defendeth or soliciteth another man's cause.
5. Mediator ut supra; and there is a Mediator per modum Annuntiationis, or Revelationis, as Moses who stood between God and the people, *Indicans illis verbum Dei, Deut. 5:5. I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show unto you the Word of the Lord, per modum reconciliations: So Jesus Christ who by his death or sacrifice appeased God, and reconciled us*

unto God, 1 Tim. 2:5. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ. Verse 6. Who gave himself a ransom for all.

But what is a Mediator? He is;

1. Qui medius est inter duos parum inter se congruentes, aut etiam sibi invicem hosts; he is a middle Person (a third Person) between two who are either jarring and quarrelling, or else who plainly falls out and becomes enemies; he is one who steps in 'twixt the offending, and offended person.

2. Qui mediate inter partes: He is one who mediates between those parties, (that is) who undertakes to take up their differences, and to atone and reconcile them, and make them one in love and friendship again, and for that purpose engageth himself to give such a satisfaction to the offended party, whereby all grounds of injury and displeasure being removed, he, and the offending party comes to stand in the terms of affection, peace, and amity, as if no difference ever had been between them.

3. Qui promovet, he is one who doth so attend and personate the reconciling of parties, that he gives not over that work or enterprise, until he hath accorded them, and drawn them into a state of love and reconcilment, until he hath indeed made them friends.

4. Qui utriusque nomine: He is one who transacts this work between the parties in the name of the both parties dealing with the offending party in the name of the offended; and with the offending party, in the name of the offending party; so to satisfy the one, and so to relieve and help the other.

In all these respects is Christ a Mediator 'twixt God and us sinners.



1. God the Father he is that one party, and the sinner is the other party; betwixt both of them Jesus Christ the Son of God comes in as a middle or third party.

2. And mediates, takes it upon him to set them at one again, who by reason of sin we are at variance and enmity; and this he doth by undertaking to give satisfaction to God offended and provoked by sin.

3. And so prosecutes this work that he refuseth not anything required and insisted upon by the offended God, necessary to make him reconciled, but willingly yields to do and suffer all (and did so) to make up a peace twixt him and sinners.

4. In the transacting of all this, He acted in the name of them both, with the one, and with the other.

For the opening of this excellent and useful Point, I shall touch briefly upon seven particulars.

1 The necessity of a Mediator between God and us sinners.

2. That Jesus Christ is the Mediator, and he only.

3. How Jesus Christ is to be considered, as standing under the Name and Office of a Mediator.

4. According to what Nature in Christ he is our Mediator, whether according to his Divine nature only, or Human Nature only, or both.

5. What did concern Christ to do or suffer for us as Mediator.

6. What the merits, efficacies, virtues and benefits are depending on him as Mediator, and flowing from his mediation.

7. What Christ still doth in the behalf of the people in Covenant, for whom he is a Mediator.

### SECT. I.

That there is a necessity of a Mediator between God and us: Man may be considered two ways,

Either as a righteous Creature so made by God, in which respect there is no necessity of a Mediator for him; for as so he was in an estate of friendship with his God, and no difference nor provocation therefore requiring a Mediator.

Or as a sinning, offending and guilty Creature. By reason whereof friendship is broken off 'twixt him and God: God is infinitely offended and provoked, and sinful man lies under his heavy wrath and curse for sinning voluntarily against him; all which was threatened in case of sinful transgression and disobedience; And thus he stands in need of a Mediator; For

1. God is righteous, and must establish his Law against sin, by the punishing of sin; he will certainly be repaired either in the sinner's eternal destruction, or in a Mediators perfect satisfaction. He will be satisfied, or else never reconciled.

2. There is an absolute impotency in the sinner to make his own peace with God, either to satisfy the offended God, or to repair his lost self; he hath nothing either proportionable or available that way. So then, if God cannot in honor suffer sin to pass unpunished; and

man cannot in any kind of obedience make a compensation and satisfaction unto God; of necessity a Mediator must be found who must step in between both these parties, on whom the curse due to sin may be laid, and God (by his obedience) may be satisfied, he undertaking and laying down the same for the offending and sinning party, unto the offended and provoked party.

3. It had utterly been in vain (be it spoken with reverence) for God to have set up a Covenant (a New Covenant) if he had not set forth a Mediator for that Covenant. Because neither can a sinner come into a New Covenant without a Mediator (the sinner's access to God and union with him requires one) Nor can there be any acceptance of the person or of the services of any sinner without a Mediator, who must bear his name before God, and take away the iniquity of his holy offerings. Nor can he continue in that Covenant without the presence and help of a Mediator; For if Adam who had a perfect righteousness (suitable to his created condition) could not make good the Covenant with him, much less can the sinner by his own strength either perform the duties, or persevere in the performance of them against so many inward oppositions of his own sinful nature, and so many outward temptations of Satan, without the power and sufficiency of a Mediator.

## SECT. II.

2. That Jesus Christ is the Mediator, and he only: There are two Branches in this Assertion.

1. One that Jesus Christ is the Mediator, which will appear to be a truth, whether you consider (six things.)

1. The counsel and purpose of God to save sinners by Christ as Mediator. Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, 1 Pet. 1:19,20. Whose names are written in the book of Life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Rev. 13:8. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, Acts 2:23.

2. The voluntary consent and compact between God the Father and Christ. The Father was willing to give Christ his Son to be the Head, and to be the Ransom of the Elect; and Christ the Son of God presented himself most willing to procure that salvation for them: The Father agreed with him for an obedience even to the death to bring this about, and promised him a Spiritual Kingdom and seed upon the performance; And the Son came up to this, Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of thy Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart.

3. The promise of this unto Adam. Gen. 3:15. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel: This is directly meant of Christ, who as our Mediator should suffer death for us, &c. And unto Abraham in Gen. 18:18. In thy seed shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed.

4. The Legal figures and shadows in Sacrifices and Offerings, all which Typified Jesus Christ the Mediator who offered himself, shed his blood, took away sin, and made peace, as in the Hebrews is abundantly expressed.

5. The actual exhibition and presentation of Christ unto the world, and for this purpose to be a Mediator, Gal. 4:4. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the Law. Verse 5. To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6. The real executing of that Office of Mediator, in fulfilling all Righteousness, and in giving himself for a Ransome, and by his blood reconciling and making Peace.

2. And as Christ is that Mediator, so he only is that Mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, but one God, and but one Mediator. Acts 4:12. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other Name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved. None was ever called to that Office but Christ; and none was ever fitted for that Office but Christ; and none were ever able to discharge that Office but Christ. Him the Father sent, and gave, and sealed; and on him was laid our iniquities, &c. Read you of Man or Angel called by God to be a Mediator 'twixt him and sinners? Was ever any so fitted for that work but Christ?

He who is a Mediator, at least three conditions must lie upon him.

1. He must not be of the number of those who are to be reconciled: Therefore no simple man can be a Mediator.

2. He must partake of the nature of them who are to be redeemed and reconciled; He must be of the same seed with them, Heb. 2:16, and therefore no Angel can be a Mediator.

3. He must be more than a mere Creature; For a mere creature cannot satisfy, nor can his righteousness be imputed to any but

himself; and he must be able to overcome sin, and death, and raise himself, which no creature can do; therefore neither men, nor Angels can be Mediators.

### SECT. III.

3. Now let me speak unto the third particular, viz. How Jesus Christ is to be considered, or looked upon as being a Mediator.

I answer, not as God only; not as the second Person in the Trinity only; not as man only; but as Theanthropos, as God-Man: As God manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3:16. As the Word made flesh which dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory as the only begotten of the Father, Joh. 1:14. As the second Person of the Trinity incarnated, as Immanuel God with us: A Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his Name Immanuel, Isa. 7:14, with Matth. 1:23, and so the Angel to Mary in Luke 1:31. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his Name Jesus, verse 32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David, verse 33. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end: So Gal. 4:4. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, &c. to redeem them that were under the Law: (And Christ is said to bear our sins in his own body, 1 Pet. 2:24. And to make his soul an offering for sin, Isa. 53. And by his death and blood to reconcile us, Rom. 5:9. Col. 2:22.) As Christ was God from all eternity; so in time he was made Man: True God he was. Joh. 1:1. The Word was God: and true Man also he was. Heb. 2:14. He did partake of flesh and blood; and verse 17. In all things made like unto his brethren: and Acts 20:28, of him it is said, that God purchased his

Church with his own blood (that is) the Son of God being made man, did so purchase his Church.

So then, Jesus Christ is our Mediator considered as God and Man: And the Reasons are these.

1. A Mediator must be a middle Person 'twixt differing parties, equally distant from both, and equally drawing nigh to both parties betwixt whom he doth mediate. Now Christ who was God, by becoming man, is therefore a middle Person betwixt God and Man; for upon this account he partakes of the Nature of them both; and as he is near to the Father as God, in like manner he is as near to us as he is man.

2. A Mediator must be indifferent, and faithful in the behalf of both parties, not leaning too much unto the one, nor inclining too much unto the others; not pressing on the one side, nor prejudicing on the other side, but dealing righteously between both, and evenly: And thus did Christ our Mediator, being God and Man: He was (as it were) therefore so equally interested and balanced on the behalf of both, that man could not have chosen a better; nor God have appointed a fitter; and neither a surer Mediator than Christ. For as he himself was God, it concerned him to salve his honor, and to give him satisfaction: And as he himself was also Man (and under obligation for him) it concerned him as much to lay out himself for the good and interest of man in procuring reconciliation and salvation for him. So that partaking of both their Natures as a Mediator, he was thereby not only entrusted by both parties, but also a like engaged in the behalf of them both: And truly therefore was the Divine and human Nature united in his Person, that so God and Man might be united and reconciled by his mediation.

3. Besides, those opera Θεάνδρικά necessarily must be the opera Θεάνδρος the works of Christ's Mediation which did rest upon him to perform and dispatch, (by his Fathers will and his own consent and susception) were such as no person could effect, unless he were both God and Man; for he was both to die, and to overcome death; die he could not unless he had been Man; and overcome death he could not unless he had been God. He was to be under the Law, that he might redeem us from the Law: He must therefore be Man, that so he might be under the Law; and he must therefore be God also, else he could not have Redeemed us from the Law: He was to suffer, and by suffering to satisfy and merit. If he had been God only, he could not have suffered; if he had been Man only, he could not have satisfied, and merited. He was to lay down his life, and to take it up again; he could not have done the former, had he not been Man; nor could he have done the latter, had he not been God.

**Object. Now whereas some denying the true Humanity of Christ (as others have denied his Divinity) do object, That Christ took upon him the form of a servant, Phil. 2:7, and that he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. 8:3, and therefore he was not made Man indeed, and therefore not to be considered as God and Man in his Mediatorship.**

Sol. I answer.

1. To the first (the form of a servant) doth not prove that he was not really a servant, no more than in verse 6, his being in the form of God doth prove that he is not really God: But he was so in the form of God, that yet he was true God; In like manner he was so in the form of a Servant, that he was also a true Servant: Nevertheless know, to be in the form of a thing may be taken two ways.



1. Sometimes for a mere show or appearance, without the truth of that substance whereof it is a form or appearance: Thus the Apostle speaks of some who had the form of godliness, 2 Tim. 3:5. (that is) a mere outward appearance without the presence, power, or substance thereof.

2. Sometimes for the evidence of a real being: for the word Μορφή, is also such a form as grows upon, and manifests the truth of an Essence or Being; as the form of a Seal left in the wax, is an evidence that a true seal hath made that impression. So the external way of Christ in his humiliation and sufferings, his humbling of himself to the death, &c. did (like a form) show indeed that he was a true and perfect man, and were the evidences of the truth of his Humanity.

2. To the second also I answer, That there is a difference between flesh and sinful flesh: A sinful Human Nature is one thing, and an Human Nature is another thing: Christ was not made sinful flesh (his conception by the Holy Ghost freed him from that contagion; and truly he could never have been made a Mediator for sinners, had he himself been a sinner) yet was he made flesh, or true man: He was flesh in truth, though sinful flesh only in similitude, because of his reproaches, and abasements, and sufferings; He was in the opinion of the world numbered amongst transgressors, and accounted by men to be smitten of God, for his own sins; yet this in truth was not so: For he was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted.

Thus have I opened unto you what a Mediator is: The necessity of a Mediator; that Christ is the Mediator, and he only; that he is so as God made man. Before I pass to the other particulars, I will make some useful Applications from those truths already delivered.

Is there a Mediator of the New Covenant? And is Jesus Christ the Son of God that Mediator? This may inform us of many things.

1. Of the Atrocity or heinousness of sin. It was a good expression of Bernard, *Agnosce, O homo, quam gravia sunt vulnera, pro quibus necesse est Dei Filium vulnerari!* O sirs! We make light of sin, it is but a pastime to a fool to commit iniquity; we commit sin, and we forget our sins; By our sins we make a breach, a difference 'twixt God and our souls. And we think it an easy matter to close up the differences thus raised by our sins; As that King after his swearing and wicked doing would kiss his Crucifix, and thought that was enough to make his peace; so we. O but we are exceedingly mistaken; though it be easy to fall out with God, yet it is not easy to fall in with God; though it be easy to offend and provoke him, yet it is not easy to be reconciled to him: When man hath sinned against God, none can make his peace with God, but the Son of God, and he must do it as a Mediator: He must come down from heaven to make our peace in heaven. And he must be made man to reconcile sinful man; and he must be made under the Law, to deliver from the curse of the Law; and he must be put to death to deliver us from death: Sin makes such a difference that no Angel, no Man, no Creature can take it off, but Jesus Christ the Mediator.

2. Of the wonderful goodness of God to us sinners, and to us enemies; that he gave and sent his own Son to be a Mediator for us, 1 Joh. 4:10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins: He began in love to us, who began the breach and enmity with him; and sent his Son (the Son of his love to the abusers of his love) to be a propitiation for our sins, whereas he might have sent down wrath and damnation upon us sinners, Rom. 5:8. God commendeth his love towards us, in that whiles we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. O what love is

this, not to spare his Son, and yet to spare his enemies! Christ who had no sin of his own must die, that sinners who had no righteousness of their own might live. Quod meretur malus, patitur bonus; man sinneth and deserves the curse; and he that was God and Man suffers to take away this curse, and to make our peace.

3. Of the exceeding love of Christ unto us; who saw our sinful fall and pitied us, and when no Redeemer, no Mediator could be found, he became a Mediator, he voluntarily consented to take upon him the Mediatorship for sinners, we made ourselves necessary debtors, and he made himself a free Mediator.

And what think you was the Son of God to be, and to do, and to suffer, when he consented to be a Mediator? Truly he became Man as we are, and a servant, and a sufferer, and must deal with the wrath of God and curse of the Law, and the fulfiller of all righteousness for us, and the satisfying of the justice of God, and make peace, and deliver us from all our enemies, and perfectly redeem and save our souls! Even his love (if it be lawful to draw out such a comparison) exceeded the love of all the Trinity besides: if that of Aquinas be true, that it was greater love to give Christ to die for sinners, than freely to have forgiven sinners; why may it not then (in some respect) be a greater love in Christ to give himself and die to make our peace, than only to give himself so to suffer? A suffering love is accounted greater than a bestowing love.

4. Of the great obligations which lie upon us to look after Christ, and by faith to own him as our Mediator; There being no other Name given but his, by which we can be saved. O Christians, why is Christ no more prized, no more sought, no more seriously and earnestly attended and attained? Is he not a Mediator? And is there another? Every sinner (and so is every one of us) needs a Mediator 'twixt God

and him (O that we did indeed see the necessity of a Mediator) to make peace, to restore him into the favor of God, to purge away his sins! And God (to show his willingness for reconciliation with you) gives his own Son, and he gave himself; why then can you not see the way of your own mercies? Why do you not enter into this door of hope? A Mediator only saves a sinner; but the Mediator saves not, if you do not receive him, and believe on him.

The next Use shall be for Comfort to us sinners; and the comfort is this, That there is a Mediator, and Christ Jesus is that Mediator, and that as so he is God and Man: why, where lies the comfort?

1. This Mediator undertakes all things between God and us; all things in our name to God, and all things in the Name of God to us: He deals for us with God, and for God with us to make up a perfect reconciliation: No less lies upon him as Mediator, then fully and perfectly to restore us again: He is our peace, and makes peace: and this he took upon him being Mediator.

2. He will certainly stand unto the Covenant of Mediatorship, agreed upon between God the Father and himself for us; Nay, let me speak a bold truth, Jesus Christ must stand unto it: though it was a free act of his to engage himself to be our Mediator and Surety; yet being engaged, he is not free to perform that Office or no.

**Quest. It is a question started and asserted by some, whether *Filius Dei potuit sponsioni susceptae renunciare & se subducere*: The Remonstrants (If I mistake not) say that he might have done it if he had pleased *Abdicare, & negligere premium in compacto promissum*.**

Sol. These men would not only hold out a possibility for us to fall from grace, but they bid fair for it in Christ himself.

But this Opinion is false. For

1. When Christ engaged himself as Mediator, his obedience of Righteousness was a Debt which he was bound to pay; he became thereby our Surety and Debtor to the Father.
  2. He then also was made under the Law, and under that he was not if the Law did not bind and challenge him to perform that obedience; nor yet could he satisfy the Law; for no obedience satisfies the Law, but that which the Law can challenge as due unto it.
  3. He did not come (as Mediator) to gratify a friend, but to do the will of him that sent him: and this was the will of his Father, that he should lose none of them that were given unto him.
  4. Why was Peter so sharply reprov'd and silenced by Christ, when he wish'd him to pity himself? And in his agony he submitted, Not my will, but thy will be done.
3. He hath gone through all the works of a Mediator, he hath born our sins, satisfied justice, blotted out the handwriting which was against us, slain enmity, made peace, brought in everlasting righteousness, so that now he is Immanuel, even God with us.
4. It cannot be but he must be most willing to do us good, to pity us, to help us, to save us: for as a Mediator, he is married to us, he is nearly linked unto us, assuming our very nature into the unity of his Person, Heb. 2:17. In all things it behoov'd him to be made like unto

his brethren; that he might be a merciful, and faithful High Priest to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

3. Then in your daily failings (for which you are humbled) you have a Mediator to go unto, 1 Joh. 2:1.

4. Then for the Assecution of any good, you need go with confidence to God, for you have a Mediator, Heb. 4:15,16.

#### SECT. IV.

4. I Now proceed to the fourth particular, viz. according to which Nature in Christ he is a Mediator; whether according to his Divine Nature only, or according to his Human Nature only, or according to both?

For the resolving of this question, I desire to lay down a few conclusions.

1. That there are in Christ (our Mediator) two distinct Natures, viz. The Human Nature, in respect of which he is Man; and the Divine Nature, in respect of which he is God: And I the rather deliver this, because some have endeavored to bereave Christ of his Human, and others of his Divine Nature: and both of them expressly contrary to the Scriptures, Joh. 3:13. No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven: Certainly, he who spake this, who said that he was the Son of Man, and was seen to be so, was indeed so; and at that time was not in heaven, but on earth, and yet at that time he saith that he is in heaven; Why then of necessity he must have another Nature besides his human Nature, even a Divine Nature by which he is in heaven, as

well as an human Nature by which he was then on earth, Joh. 10:30. I and my Father are one, and Joh. 5:18. He made himself equal with God, but Joh. 14:28. My Father is greater than I: Now it cannot possibly be that Christ should be one, and equal with the Father, and yet be lesser than the Father according to one and the same Nature, Joh. 20:27,28. Thomas when he had seen Christ and (probably) touched Christ, he said, my Lord, and my God: He whom he saw and touched was Man, and the same whom he confessed was also God; and therefore that Christ whom he saw and confessed was both God and Man, Rom. 1:3. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, verse 4. And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.

2. That those two Natures united in the Person of Christ, do still retain their distinct essence, and proprieties, and operations, so that there is no transmutation of the one into the other, nor mixture or confusion of them, but as the Divine Nature (notwithstanding the personal union) still remains God, and is Eternal, Omnipotent, Invisible, Infinite, Immortal, Impassible, so the Human Nature assumed into the unity of the Person of Christ doth still remain a Creature, finite, visible, mortal, and capable of suffering, and obnoxious unto death: And although the Person of Christ (in whom the Divine and Human Nature are united) is capable of the affirmation of either Nature (as you may truly say that Christ is God, and Christ is Man, and Christ is eternal, and Christ is in time, that Christ is immortal and infinite, and Christ is mortal and finite; for what may be affirmed of either Nature, all that may be affirmed of Christ in concreto) yet this cannot be affirmed of the Natures in Christ reciprocally: you cannot say that the Divine Nature of Christ did die or suffer, but this is affirmable only of the Human Nature of Christ: And you cannot say of the Human Nature of Christ that it is

Eternal, and infinite, and everywhere, yet this you may safely affirm of his Divine Nature by reason of that union which they call Hypostatical: The Person of Christ hath two distinct Natures, and the properties of both; And yet the Natures themselves retain their properties incommunicable one unto the other.

3. By virtue of the Personal union (that is) of the Divine and Human Nature in Christ the second Person in Trinity, although it be impossible for the Human Nature thereby to become the Divine Nature; Nevertheless hereby the Human nature is exceedingly exalted and enriched by the Divine nature, so that no other Creature did or could attain unto that perfection of holiness, and righteousness, and dignity, which the human Nature of Christ did enjoy by virtue of union with the Divine nature in the person of Christ.

4. Those two Natures thus united in the Person of Christ were (if I may so express myself) the Principles of all the Actions, and Passions, or Works of Mediatorship and Redemption: For unto them did both the Natures of Christ concur by way of communion, yet still reserving their own properties, and proper way of working, the Divine Nature doing what was proper unto it, and the Human Nature what was proper unto it. Some of the works of Christ our Mediator, were the works of his Human Nature in respect of the thing done; but they had their efficacy, dignity, and value from his Divine Nature, in that they were the works of him who had the God-head dwelling bodily in him; And some of the works were the work of the Divine Nature, but yet they were done by the instrumental concurring of his Human Nature: Wherefore as the Divine and Human Nature did concur to make one Christ, so the acts of those Natures (distinct in their operation and virtue) did concur and contribute to make up the same work of Mediator.



5. As the Divine and human Nature are united into the Person of Christ, and had their concurrences in his works of Mediation, so Jesus Christ according to both these Natures is our Mediator.

The Papists do hold the contrary: Though they do say that Christ who is Mediator is both God and Man, yet they do deny that he is a Mediator as God and Man, and that he is a Mediator only according to his human Nature as man.

**Object. 1 Tim. 2:5. There is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.**

Sol. But this place will not prove what they do desire; indeed it doth prove that Christ is Man, who is the Mediator: but it doth not say that he is Mediator only as Man; yea and the next verse may satisfy us, that he must be considered as God as well as Man being Mediator. For it followeth in verse 6, who gave himself a Ransom for all, &c. Now Christ giving himself a Ransom was not Man only, but God also; therefore the same Apostle saith, that God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, 2 Cor. 5:19, and that by his own blood he purchased the Church, Acts 20.

**Ob. But it is there said, The Man Christ Jesus, and why is it said the Man, but to show that only as Man he is Mediator? So Bellarmine.**

Sol. 1. By the same reason we may argue, that Christ only as Man, doth forgive sins, Because it is said in Matth. 9:6. The Son of Man hath power to forgive sins.

2. But the reason why he saith the Man Christ Jesus, is not that as so only he was Mediator, but that he might teach Believers not to despair of any sorts of men for whom he (before) wills them to pray;

Because Christ was made Man, and sustained the person of all sorts of men.

3. As it is there said the Man, so it is said the Man Christ Jesus: That Man is the Mediator who is Christ (the Anointed of God) and Jesus who is so called, because he saves his people from their sins. But as mere man he cannot do so, it is no mere Man, but God who is the God of salvation: And although Christ might die merely as man, yet as a Mediator he must also conquer death, which he could not do but as he was God.

**Object. But the Apostle distinguisheth the Mediator there from God, saying, one God, and one Mediator; thus Bellarmine argues.**

Sol. And so the Apostle in another place distinguisheth Christ from man, (Gal. 1:1. Paul an Apostle not of man, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ) yet hence it will not follow that Christ only according to his Divine Nature did call Paul to be an Apostle; no more doth it here, because he distinguisheth God and the Mediator, that therefore the Mediator is not God.

But now to return to the proof of the Assertion that Christ is a Mediator in respect of both his Natures, as he was God, and Man; not as God only, nor as Man only, but as God Man; many Arguments there are to evidence it.

1. According to what Nature Christ did lay down his life, and raised it again, according to that Nature is Christ a Mediator (this cannot be denied, because Christ as Mediator died, and rose again, for us) but to lay down his life and raise it again, was an act of his Divine Nature, as well as of his Human. Ergo, for he died as man, and raised himself as God.

2. If Christ in respect of both his Natures be our Priest, and Prophet, and King: Then according to both his Natures he is a Mediator. But, &c Ergo.

1. He is a Priest as to both his Natures; This will appear if you consider Psal. 110:4. Thou art a Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek. Heb. 7:2. This Melchizedek was King of Righteousness, and King of Peace; and verse 3. Without Father, and without Mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but was like the Son of God, and abideth a Priest forever. Why, here is a clear Type of the Person of Christ as our Priest and Mediator, unto which Christ doth perfectly answer; and if as thus considered he answer to Melchizedek, then he must be (as Melchizedek was) without Father, and without Mother: And indeed so Christ was in a different respect to both his Natures; For as to his Human Nature he was without Father, and as to his Divine Nature he was without Mother: And moreover as such a Priest, he must be without beginning of days, and end of life, which cannot be affirmed of him but as God.

Again, Melchizedek as Priest is said to be like the Son of God: if so, then Christ as the Son of God is a Priest, but as the Son of God he is God; Ergo, as God he is our Mediator: Jesus Christ as a Priest must have not only a Sacrifice to offer, but an altar on which that sacrifice must be offered: The Sacrifice was himself in respect of his Human Nature; the Altar to sanctify that Sacrifice was his Divine Nature, and himself offering and sacrificing was the Priest consisting of both those Natures.

2. He is a Prophet in respect of both Natures; for in both his Natures he reveals the will of his Father unto us: In respect of his Human Nature he doth so, Heb. 1:2. God in these last days hath spoken unto

us by his Son; and in respect of his Divine Nature, it is said, Joh. 1:9. That was the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; and certainly to open the heart and mind as Christ did (Acts 16:14, Luke 24:32,45) is the work only of God.

3. He is also a King in respect of both his Natures: nor can his Divine Nature be secluded in this; for to call out a people to himself, and to renew their hearts, and to subdue their sins, and to rule in their hearts by his Spirit, belongs to Christ as King; but these cannot be erected by Christ but as God. Ergo,

#### SECT. V.

5. I Now proceed unto the fifth particular. viz. What did concern Christ to do and suffer for us as our Mediator.

The answer is this, That whatsoever we are bound to do, or to suffer by the Law of God, all that did Christ do and suffer for us as being our Surety and Mediator. Now the Law of God hath a double challenge or demand upon us; One is of Active Obedience in fulfilling what it requires; The other is of passive obedience in suffering that punishment which lies upon us for the transgression of it, in doing what it forbids: For as we were created by God, we did owe unto him all obedience which he required; and as we sinned against God, we did owe unto him a suffering of all that punishment which he threatened: And we being fallen by transgression, can neither pay the one debt, nor yet the other: We cannot do all that the Law requires (nay of ourselves) we can do nothing, neither can we so suffer as to satisfy God in his Justice wronged by us, or to recover ourselves into life and favor again: And therefore Jesus Christ (who was God made Man) did become our Surety, and stood in our stead or room, and he

did perform what we should, but could not perform: And he did bear our sins and our sorrows; he did suffer and bear for us, what we ourselves should have born and suffered, whereby he did fully satisfy the Justice of God, and made our peace, and purchased life for us.

I will speak something unto both these particulars.

1. Jesus Christ did perform that active obedience unto the Law of God, which we should (but by reason of sin) could not perform: In which respect, he is said, Gal. 4:4, to be made under the Law, that he might redeem them that were under the Law. So far was Christ under the Law, as to redeem them that were under the Law. But redeem them that were under the Law, he could not, unless by discharging the Bonds of the Law in force upon us; and all those bonds could not be, and were not discharged, unless a perfect righteousness had been presented (on our behalf who were under the Law) to fulfil the Law.

Now there is a twofold Righteousness necessary to the actual fulfilling of the Law; One is an internal Righteousness of the Nature of man; The other is an external Righteousness of the life or works of man; both of these doth the Law require: The former, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. which is the sum of the first Table; And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, which is the sum of the second Table. The latter, Do this and live, Levite. 18:5. He that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, is cursed, Gal. 3:10, and both these Righteousness's were found in Christ.

The Internal, Heb. 7:26. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, 9:14. And offered himself without spot to God. 2 Cor. 5:21. He knew no sin.

The External, 1 Pet. 2:22. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Joh. 17:4. I have finished the works which thou gavest me to do. Matth. 3:15. He must fulfil all righteousness. Rom. 10:4. Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to everyone that believeth.

2. As Jesus Christ did for us perform all that active obedience which the Law of God required; So he did also sustain or suffer all those punishments which we had deserved by the transgression of the Law of God, in which respect he is said, 2 Cor. 2:22. To be made sin for us. 1 Pet. 2:24. Himself to bear our sins in his own body on the tree 1 Pet. 3:18. For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Phil. 2:8. To humble himself, and to become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Gal. 3:13. To be made a curse, an execration for us. Ephes, 5:3. To give himself for us, an Offering and Sacrifice unto God. Heb. 9:15. And for this cause is he the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the Redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Now concerning the Passive obedience or suffering of Christ, I would present unto you these Conclusions.

1. Jesus Christ his sufferings were voluntary, and not constrained or forced. Saint Austin saith that Christ did suffer Quia voluit, & quando voluit, & quomodo voluit. Joh. 10:17. I lay down my life, verse 18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. Gal. 2:20 Who gave himself for me: His sufferings did rise out of obedience to his Father, (Joh. 10:18 This Commandment have I received of my Father, and Joh. 18:11. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?) and out of love to us, Ephes. 5:25. As Christ loved the Church,

and gave himself for it: Had his sufferings been involuntary, they never could have been a part of his obedience, much less could they have mounted to anything of merit for us.

**Object. Nor doth that earnest Prayer of his (Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, Matth. 26:30) denote absolutely his unwillingness, but rather set out the greatness of his willingness.**

Sol. For although Christ as Man was of the same Natural affections with us, and desires; and abhorrencies of what was destructive to nature, and therefore did fear and deprecate that bitter cup which he was now ready to drink; yet as our Mediator and Surety, and knowing it would be a cup of salvation to us, (though of exceeding bitterness to himself) he did yield and lay aside his natural reluctancies as Man, and willingly obeyed his Fathers will to drink it as our loving Mediator, as if he should say, O Father, whatsoever become of me, of my natural fear or desire, I am content to submit to the drinking of this cup; thy will be done.

2. Whatsoever punishments Christ did sustain for us, you must refer them only to the substance, and not unto the circumstances of punishment. And the reason is, because though the enduring of the punishments, as to the substance of them, could and did agree with him as a surety, yet the circumstances of those punishments could not have befallen him, unless he had been a sinner: And therefore every inordination in suffering was far from Christ, and a perpetual duration of suffering could not befall him; For the first of these had been contrary to the holiness and dignity of his Person, and the other had made void the end of his Suretyship and Mediatorship, which was so to suffer, as yet to conquer and to deliver: and therefore though he did suffer death for us (in the substance of it) yet he

neither did, nor could suffer death in the circumstance of it, so as forever to be held by death: For then in suffering death he should not have conquered death nor delivered us from death.

3. The punishments which Christ did suffer for our sins, these were in their kinds, and parts, and degrees, and proportion, all those punishments which were due unto us by reason of our sins, and which we ourselves should otherwise have suffered: Whatsoever we should have suffered as sinners, all that did Christ suffer as our Surety and Mediator, always excepting those punishments which could not be endured without a pollution and guilt of sin: The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and including the punishments common to the nature of man, not the personal arising out of imperfection, and defect, and distemper.

The punishments due to us for sin, were Corporal and Spiritual; and again, they were the punishments of loss, and of sense, and all these did Christ suffer for us: Shall I touch at these?

1. That he suffered Corporal punishments, the Scriptures clearly report unto us you read of the injuries to his Person; of the crown of thorns on his Head, of the smiting of his Cheeks, of spitting on his Face, of the scourging's of his Body, of the Cross on his Back, of the vinegar in his Mouth, of the Nails in his Hands and Feet, of the Spear in his side, and of his crucifying and dying on the Cross. 1 Pet. 2:24 Who himself in his own body on the Tree bare our sins. 1 Cor. 15:2. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Rev. 1:5, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

2. That he suffered likewise in his soul; The Scriptures likewise are express for it. Matth. 26:38. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Isa. 53:10. When thou shalt make his soul an



offering for sin, he shall see his seed, &c. Joh. 12:27. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. The Papists say that Christ did not truly and properly, and immediately suffer in his soul, but only by way of sympathy and compassion with his Body to the Mystical Body, and that his bare bodily sufferings were sufficient for man's redemption.

But these are unsound Assertions: For

1. Christ bare our sorrows, Isa. 53:4, what sorrows we should bear, but the sorrows due unto us for our sins were not corporal only, but Spiritual also; and those did Christ bear in his soul.

2. What Christ took of ours, that he in suffering offered up for us (for his assuming of our nature was for this end, to suffer for us in our Nature) but he took our nature in Body and in Soul; *Suscepit animam meam, suscepit corpus meum*, saith Ambrose. And he delivered our souls as well as our bodies; and the sins of our souls did need his sacrifice as well as the sins of our bodies (and our souls were crucified with Christ as well as our bodies; *Men's mea in Christo Crucifixa est*, saith Ambrose; & *incipio in Christo vincere, unde in Adam vinctus sum*, l. 4, in loco) *Si totus homo perit, totus beneficio salvatoris indiguit*, if our whole man was lost, then our whole man did need the benefit and help of a whole Savior; and if Christ had assumed only our flesh, our body, then our souls adjudged to punishment, had remained under transgression without hope of pardon.

3. Again, that punishment which was pronounced against the first Adam (our first Surety) and in him against us, that same did Christ the Second Adam (our next and best Surety bear for us, or else it must still lie upon us to suffer it.) But the

punishment threatened and denounced against Adam for transgression was not only corporal, respecting our bodies, but Spiritual also, respecting our souls. There was a Spiritual malediction due unto our souls, as well as a corporal, &c.

4. That fear which fell on Christ, and his agony, was a real fear and agony; and it was in his soul, and did not arise from the mere contemplation of bodily torments only. The very Martyrs in the encountering of them have feared little. Certainly there was some great matter that lay upon the very soul of Christ which made him so heavy and sorrowful, and so afraid, and in such an agony.

5. He shall see of the travel of his soul, Isa. 53. Here the soul is taken properly; and the travel of Christ's soul is his sufferings; for it follows, and he shall bear their iniquities.

6. Christ gave himself, &c. But the body only is not himself.

3. That the suffering of Christ in his soul was exceedingly high, and great, and wonderful, both as to the punishment of loss, and as to the punishment of sense; all which I shall express in four particulars.

1. Jesus Christ did suffer dereliction for a time.

2. Jesus Christ did feel and suffer the wrath of God.

3. Jesus Christ did feel and suffer the torments of hell.

4. Jesus Christ was verily made a curse for us, and did in his soul and body bear that curse of the Law, which by reason of transgression was due unto us.

1. That Jesus Christ did suffer dereliction of God really: He was indeed deserted and forsaken of God. Matth. 27:46. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Yet well understand me in this, I do not mean that there was any such desertion of Christ by God as did dissolve the union of the Natures in the Person of Christ (for Christ in all his sufferings still remained God and Man) nor do I mean an absolute desertion in respect of the presence of God (for God was still present with Christ in all his sufferings, and the God head did support his Humanity in and under his sufferings, but that which I mean is this; That as to the sensible and comforting manifestations of God's presence; thus he was for a time left and forsaken of God; as David (who in this particular was a Type of Christ suffering) cried out, Psal. 22:1. My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from my help? He was indeed really forsaken of God; God did indeed leave him in respect of his sense and feeling; so was Christ: Though God did still continue a God to David, yet in David's apprehension and feeling he was forsaken of God. Though God was still a God to Christ, yet as to his feeling he was left of God to wrestle with God, and to bear the wrath of God due unto us. Relinquit Deus dum non parcit, saith Tertullian. That was truly a dereliction, Ubi nulla fuit in tanta necessitate virtutis exhibitio, nulla ostensio Majestatis. So Bernard. Quoniam delicta aliena suscepi, etiam delictorum alienorum verbera suscepi, &c. So Ambrose. And as he saith, flagellata his ipse est ne nos flagellaremur, Christ was scourged that we might not be scourged; so Christ was forsaken that we might not be forsaken.

2. That Jesus Christ did feel and suffer the wrath of God, which was due unto us for our sins: The Prophet, Isa. 53:4, saith that he was plagued and smitten of God; and verse 5. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. To be plagued and smitten of God, is to feel and suffer the strokes of his wrath. And so to be chastised of God as to

make peace with God, or to appease him, is so to suffer the wrath of God as to satisfy God and to remove it: And truly how Christ should possibly escape the feeling of the wrath of God incensed against our sins, he standing as a Surety for us, with our sins laid upon him, and for them fully to satisfy the justice of God, is not Christianly or rationally imaginable.

**Object. And whereas some do object that Christ was always the beloved of God, and therefore could never be the object of God's wrath.**

Sol. I answer, by distinguishing of the Person of Christ whom his Father always loved, and as sustaining our sins, and in our room standing to satisfy the justice of God, and as so, the wrath of God fell upon him, and he bore it, and so satisfied the justice of God, that we thereby are now delivered from wrath through him; so the Apostle, Rom. 5:9. Much more being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath by him.

3. That Jesus Christ did feel and suffer the very torments of hell, though not after a hellish manner. Indeed Jesus Christ did not go down into Hell to suffer there amongst the damned in hell; nor did he suffer hellish darkness, nor the flames of hell, nor the worm that never dies, nor final despair, nor guilt of conscience, nor gnashing of teeth, nor impatient indignation, nor eternal separation from God.

These were absolutely inconsonant with the purity and with the dignity of his Person, and with the Office of a Mediator and Redeemer: But yet we say that Christ in his soul did suffer for our sins, such horror, agony, and consternation as amounted unto *Cruciatu Infernales*, and are in Scripture called the sorrows of hell (Psal. 18:5. The sorrows of Hell did compass me about) It was a great expression of a very learned man, that setting iniquity and eternity of

punishment aside (which Christ might not sustain) Christ did more vehemently and sharply feel the wrath of God, than ever any man did or shall; no not any person reprobate and damned excepted.

And verily I think the reason annexed to prove this expression is very weighty, because all the wrath that was due for all the sins of the Elect (all whose sins were laid on Christ, Isa. 53:6) was greater than the wrath which belonged to any one sinner, though damned for his personal sinning: And besides this, if you do seriously consider those sufferings of Christ in his agony, in the Garden, you may (by them) conjecture what hellish torments Christ did suffer for us. Not yet to speak of the cursed death which he also suffered; In that agony of his, he was afraid and amazed, and fell flat on the ground (Matth. 14:33. He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, verse 34, and saith unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death) and his sweat was at it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, Luke 22:44. He did sweat clotted blood in such abundance, that it streamed through his apparel, and did wet the ground; which dreadful agony of Christ, how it could arise from any other cause than the sense of the wrath of God, parallel to that in hell, I do not know.

4. I will add but one thing more about these sufferings of Christ, viz. That Jesus Christ was indeed made a curse for us, and did in his soul and body bear that curse of the Law, which by reason of transgression was due unto us, Gal 3:53. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on Tree.

Cur erubescam fateri quod Apostolus non ernbuit alta voice profiteri? Said Ambrose: Such a curse or execration was Christ made for us, as was that from which he redeemed us; and that curse from

which he redeemed us, was no other than the curse of the Law; and that curse of the Law included all the punishment which sinners were to bear or suffer for transgression of the Law, of which his hanging on the Cross was a sign and symbol, and this curse was Christ made for us (that is) he did bear and suffer it to redeem us from it; Qui Benedictus in sua justitia maledictus ob delicta nostra, said Austin.

**Quest. Now before I make Application of this unto ourselves, there is one question concerning all these sufferings of Christ, whether it were not against the justice of God, that Christ who was in himself innocent (without all sin, a Lamb without spot) should bear and endure all these punishments for us who were the offending, and guilty, and obnoxious persons only.**

Sol. The Socinians are very eager in this, who cannot see any satisfaction performed by Christ for us to God, nor yet any just proceeding in God, that Christ so innocent in himself should thus bear our punishments.

But truly setting aside the foolish Tragedy of their exclamations, the matter in question will be but this, Whether God were not unjust to give his Son Jesus Christ to be our Surety, and Mediator, and Redeemer, and Savior? For as much as Christ could not be any one of these, for and unto us, but by a willing susception of our sins, upon himself, to be for them responsible unto the justice of God, in suffering those punishments which were due for our sins.

**Object. And whereas they do object that God might have freely pardoned all our offenses and punishments without any of these sufferings of Christ; I answer, This is no more but to quarrel with the love and wisdom of God in giving**

**Christ to be a Mediator for us; and to teach God a better way to save sinners, than he himself hath devised and declared, who will so save sinners by his Son as Mediator, that both in his justice against our sins, and in his mercy unto our souls, his own glory may be admired and magnified.**

But now to speak a few words unto the main question, I say it is not always and in all cases unjust, but it is sometimes, and in some cases very just to punish one who is in himself innocent, for him, or those who are the nocent and guilty: Grotius in his Book de satisfaction gives divers instances, but I shall insist only on two; as

1. In case of conjunction, where the innocent party, and the nocent party do become legally one party: and therefore if a man marries a woman indebted, he thereupon becomes obnoxious to pay her debts, although absolutely considered he was not obnoxious thereunto.

2. In case of vadimony or Suretyship, where a person knowing the weak and insufficient condition of another, doth yet voluntarily put forth himself, and will be bound to the Creditor for him as his surety to answer for him; by reason of which suretyship the Creditor may come upon him, and deal with him as he might have dealt with the principal Debt or himself: And this course we do ordinarily take with Sureties for the recovery of our right without any violation of justice: Now both these are exactly applicable to the business in hand; for Jesus Christ was pleased to marry our nature unto himself; he did partake of our flesh and blood, and became Man and one with us: And besides that, he did both by the will of his Father, and his own free consent become our Surety, and was content to stand in our stead or room, so as to be made sin and curse for us (that is) to have all our debts and sorrows, all our sins and punishments laid upon

him, and did engage himself to satisfy God by bearing and suffering what we should have born and suffered: And therefore although Jesus Christ (absolutely considered in himself) was innocent, and had no sin inherent in himself, which therefore might make him liable to death, and wrath, and curse, yet by becoming one with us, and sustaining the Office of our Surety, our sins were laid on him, and our sins being laid upon him, he made himself (therefore) obnoxious (and that justly) to all those punishments which he did suffer for our sins. I do confess that had Christ been unwilling, and forced into this Suretyship, or had any detriment or prejudice risen to any party concerned in this transaction, then some complaint might have been made concerning the justice of God. But,

1. There was a willingness on all sides for the passive work of Christ: His Father (who was the offended party) he was willing, which Christ assures us of, when he said (thy will be done) and we sinners (who are the offending party) are willing, we accept of this gracious and wonderful Redemption, and bless God who loved us, and gave his Son for us! And Jesus Christ was willing to suffer for us: Behold I am come, said Christ: And shall I not drink of the cup which my Father hath given me? I have a Baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

2. No parties whatsoever were prejudiced or lost by it: We lost nothing by it, for we are saved by his death, and reconciled by his death: And Christ lost nothing by it. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and enter into his glory? Luke 24:26. And God the Father lost nothing by it, for he is glorified by it; I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, Joh. 17:4. Yea he is fully satisfied and repaired again in all the honor which he lost by our sinning; I say he is



now fully repaired again by the sufferings of Christ, in which he found a price sufficient, and a ransom, and enough to make peace.

I will now make some useful Application of all this unto ourselves.

Did Jesus suffer this (as you have heard) and could he not be our Mediator; could he not have made Peace, unless he had thus suffered?

Then, Behold the justice of God provoked by our sins, how sure it is, and how dreadful it is!

1. It is sure. God is righteous, and God hath revealed his wrath from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, Rom. 1:18. He said unto Adam, In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. 2:17, and he hath said, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them, Gal. 3:10. Now whatsoever death, or wrath, or curse God hath threatened against sin, God will certainly inflict it one time or other, he will do so: Although for a time he may forbear the sinner, yet in his appointed time he will be avenged on the sinner: His threatened wrath will be poured forth, his justice will never put up the dishonor, and the provocations, and the injuries which we by our sins have offered unto it: Our sins must and shall be punished (and we shall not escape) either in our own persons must we suffer for them, or else they must be sustained in the Person of a Mediator; death, and wrath, and curse are so necessarily entailed on sin, that God will as soon cease to be a just God, as he will alter the inflicting's of them; hence it was that Jesus Christ was made Man, and did suffer; for justice would not be satisfied without either our own suffering of an eternal duration, or Christ's sufferings which were of an eternal worth for satisfaction.

2. It is dreadful; the very glancing's of it, or shadows into which the godly sometimes fall, do extremely astonish them; and the vials of it poured on the consciences of the ungodly, do infinitely distract and sink them: but above all the effectual influence which we find of it on Christ himself, that is a plain demonstration of the dreadfulfulness of the wrath of God: Questionless the weight of it is inexpressibly heavy, which made the very Son of God (though supported with his Deity) to fall flat on the earth, to sweat drops of blood, to be amazed, to be in an agony, and to fear, and to cry out, My God, my God, &c.

When we Ministers preach against your sins, and tell you of the severity of God's justice and wrath which will befall you for them, you make light of them, but you will find (one day) that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and that God is a consuming fire, and that none is able to dwell with everlasting burnings. Why! If the wrath of his justice, if the drinking of that cup were so amazing and sinking unto Christ himself; what will it be to sinners themselves who are utterly deserving of the utmost of that wrath, and who are utterly destitute of such a power to sustain them, and deliver them as Christ had!

2. Behold your sins, what they will bring upon you, if you get not your part in Christ. We weep sometimes with a natural kind of sorrow when we read or hear of the grievous passions of Christ, and I am persuaded that some of us Admire at what this day we have heard of the several sorts of the sufferings of Christ. Well! But then let me tell you, what Christ did suffer, you should have suffered! And what Christ did suffer, all that you shall suffer if you believe not on him. Christ was amazed, and so shall you; and Christ was afraid, and so shall you; and Christ was in an agony, and so shall you; and Christ did drink the cup of his Fathers wrath, so shall you; and Christ was made a curse, and so shall you.

Indeed, a repenting and believing person may look upon the sufferings of Christ with joy and hope; but an impenitent and unbelieving person must look upon them with confusion and horror: The more he sees of Christ sorrows, and the sharper he finds Christ's sorrows, the more perplexed may his soul be: For what punishments Christ did suffer for sin, as to the substance, that same must the impenitent and unbelieving person suffer, as to the substance, yea and as to the circumstance of punishment. Christ suffered death, and thou shalt suffer eternal death; Christ suffered shame, and thou shalt suffer eternal shame; Christ suffered wrath for a time, but thou shalt suffer wrath forever, and fear forever, and separation from God forever, and the torments of hell forever.

3. Behold your Christ! Pilate said, Behold the man, when Christ was brought in with his Crown of Thorns. But I say, behold your Christ, look on him who was crucified for you, and look on him who was crucified by you.

There is a four-fold sight of Christ.

1. One in Carne, when he came into the world.

2. A second in Cruce, when he was leaving the world.

3. A third in Caelo, when he shall receive us unto himself out of the world.

4. A fourth in Judicio, when he shall come to judge the world: But the sight which I would desire you to behold, is Christ on the Cross, Christ suffering and dying for you. O look on this Christ awhile as despised of men, as forsaken of God, as sorrowful to the death, as wounded for our transgressions, as drinking the cup of his Fathers wrath, as crying out, as dying the cursed death of the Cross, as made

a curse for us: I say, behold your Christ in these sufferings, so long, until

1. You see his infinite love to your souls: thus suffering in your stead, thus suffering what you should have suffered; and thus suffering that you might not suffer.

2. Your hearts be melted into tears for your sins, which were the cause of all those sufferings by Christ: Look on him whom you have pierced, and mourn. Let your eyes weep for your making Christ to weep; let your hearts be wounded for wounding Christ; let your souls be humbled for making Christ to pour out his soul.

3. Your hearts can love this Christ who loved you, and gave himself for you, and washed you from your sins, in his own blood.

4. Your hearts can hate your sins, which made Christ a curse or execration; and until you forsake your sins which made Christ to be forsaken (for a time) of God; until you crucify those sins which did crucify your Christ.

Beloved! The more that Christ hath suffered for us, the dearer should Christ be unto us; his love should be unto us therefore the more sweet, by how much the more bitter his sufferings were for us: And our sins should therefore be the more odious unto our hearts, because they were so grievous unto Christ: The Apostle tells us in 1 Pet. 4. That because Christ hath suffered in the flesh, we should therefore cease from sin; and Chap. 2:24. That he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness. And therefore we should purge the old leaven (that is) our sinful lusts, because Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. 5:7.

Hath Jesus Christ as our Surety and Mediator, done and suffered so much for us? What comfort, what support may this be for all distressed, penitent, and believing persons!

Luther professeth that this is that Ineffabilis & infinita misericordia Dei, that Abyssus profundissima, & zelus ardentissimus divinae misericordiae towards us: That the Omnipotent God Creator of all things, should be so good and solicitous for me a lost sinner, a child of wrath, and eternal death, as not to spare his own Son, but give him up to a most ignominious death, that he should be made for me (a cursed sinner) sin and curse, &c. and therefore he urgeth us not to rest satisfied with believing only that Christ is purissima Persona (though he be so) and then know that he is God and Man; yet stay not there; for yet thou hast not Christ; but then vere habes cum credis hanc purissimam personam tibi donatam a patre, ut esset pontifex & salvator, imo Servus Tuus, who took on him thy sinful person, and bare thy sin, and death, and Cross, and was made a Sacrifice and curse for thee.

**Object. But you will say, Where lies the stay and comfort of Christ's sufferings for us?**

Sol. In this it lies; Then you are freed, then you shall never suffer in a way of satisfaction to Divine Justice; you shall never bear wrath, nor curse for your sins! And the reason is, because Christ hath suffered already those things due unto you for your sins.

**Object. O but did Christ suffer that which was due for all my sins!**

Sol. Yes, He suffered all, even to the worst and utmost for all that the Law threatened was a curse, and Christ was made a curse for us.

**Object. But did he not owe something for himself, and suffered for that!**

Sol. Surely no, for he knew no sin (of his own) but was made sin for us.

**Object. O but what if he suffered all, may I not yet be made to suffer!**

Sol. No; for what Christ suffered, he suffered as our Surety in our stead; and therefore what he suffered for us, is as if we had suffered all that ourselves.

**Object. But did he verily intend our good in all these sufferings?**

Sol. Ask the Apostle in 2 Cor. 5:22. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And Gal. 3:13. He was made a curse for us to redeem us from the curse of the Law.

**Object. But did God appoint him thus to suffer?**

Sol. He did so, Rom. 3:25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and 1 Cor. 1:30. He is of God made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

**Object. But did his sufferings appease God, and satisfy him, and reconcile him?**

Sol. It did so; For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, 2 Cor. 5:19, not imputing their trespasses unto them: And Ephes. 2:16. He hath reconciled both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body on the Cross, having slain enmity thereby.

Why! What a sum of comforts are here? Jesus Christ took upon him all our sins, they were all of them laid upon him: And he bare or suffered all the wrath and punishment due for them. And he suffered all as our Surety in our stead, and for our good; and his Father designed him for all this, and accepted of it, as sufficient and effectual on our behalf.

Did Jesus Christ as Mediator thus do and suffer for us? Then let believers in all their fears and conflicts, Remember the sufferings of Christ, and cleave to the sufferings of Christ, and plead the sufferings of Christ, and by faith offer up unto God all the sufferings of Christ for their souls: This is Luther's direction, *Discamus in omni tentatione, peccatum, mortem, maledictionem & omnia mala quae premunt nos, a nobis transfer in Christum*: Let us learn in every temptation which presseth us, (whether it be sin, or death, or curse, or any other evil) to translate it from ourselves to Christ: And all the good in Christ let us learn to translate it from Christ unto ourselves: Do your sins terrify you? Then remember Christ bare your sins in his body for you: Doth death appear deadly unto you? Then remember that Christ died for you, and his death did swallow up death in victory: Doth the curse threatened in the Law kill you? Then remember that Christ Redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us! Doth the wrath of God amaze you? Then remember that Christ suffered that wrath, that he might save and deliver us from wrath? Do desertions lie upon you? Then remember that Christ was forsaken that we might not be forsaken in judgment. Rom. 8:33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died? Do the fears of hell and damnation lie upon you? Remember the sufferings of Christ, who in them did deliver us from the power of darkness, so that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. This is your sure and only way under all temptations, and

fears, and conflicts, and doubts, and disputes by faith to remember Christ, and the sufferings of Christ as your Mediator and Surety! Tu Christ! & peccatum & maledictum meum, or rather Ego sum peccatum tuum, maledictum tuum, mors tua, ira Dei Tua, infernus tuus! And thou, O Christ! Tu es justitia, benedictio, vita, gratia Dei, caelum meum. O Christ! Thou art my sin, in being made sin for me! And thou art my curse, in being made a curse for me! Or rather, I am thy sin, and thou art my Righteousness; I am thy curse, and thou art my Blessing; I am thy death, and thou art my Life; I am the wrath of God to thee, and thou art the love of God to me; I am thy hell, and thou art my Heaven!

Why sirs! Let me tell you, that your hearts will sink into despair, if you think of God, and of your sins, without thinking on Christ: If you think of your sins, and of God's wrath, if you think of your guiltiness, and of God's justice, your hearts will fail you; for you can never bear that wrath of God, and you can never satisfy that justice of God: you do not only take Christ's Office of Mediatorship out of his hand, nor only deny and renounce him for your Surety; but now you draw yourselves from all helps, and hope, in exposing your poor souls to stand at the Bar and Tribunal of God's Justice alone, and you take all your sins upon yourselves, and all the punishment of your sins upon yourselves, and so you yourselves must be either a sacrifice for them, which is impossible, or you must be damned for them, which is certain, but yet intolerable: Therefore come off from yourselves, and look up by faith unto that Mediator whom God hath appointed for you, and who hath done and suffered all for you, and in his Name, and upon his Account plead with God to pardon your sins, to excuse you from wrath and curse, because Jesus Christ hath suffered these for you! This you may plead because Christ is yours, and you are his; and what he did he did for you, and what he suffered he suffered for you. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus



Christ the Righteous; who is the propitiation for our sins, and he was made sin for us, and he did shed his blood for the Remission of our sins, &c.

## SECT. VI.

6. Having discoursed of the Obedience of Christ (both Active and Passive) as our Mediator: It now remains to speak a few things of the Virtues, and Benefits and Efficacies depending upon, and flowing from the Actions and Passions of Christ our Mediator. He did perform an Active obedience, which we did owe unto the Law, and he did suffer the punishments due unto us for the transgression of the Law, which (otherwise) we ourselves should have suffered, and from these there did ensue five most excellent and precious benefits.

1. Satisfaction.

2. Remission.

3. Reconciliation.

4. Redemption.

5. Acquisition, or purchase.

6. The confirmation of the Covenant.

1. They were a satisfaction unto the justice of God for us: The Socinians (who utterly deny the satisfaction of Christ) do say that Christ did indeed suffer and die for our good, but not in our stead, only for our good, that we might the sooner be induced and persuaded to embrace that Doctrine and way of Salvation which he

brought down from Heaven, and Revealed unto us by his Word, and by the good example of his life, and confirmed the same by his death, and so merited for himself an exaltation and dominion over all men, and to give eternal life to all that will imitate him: But that Christ did die for our sins to expiate them or in our stead, or to satisfy God for us, or to pay our debts: or that God ever imposed this on him, or expected it from him, or that ever Christ did undertake such a work on himself, they do absolutely deny; as also they do deny any placation of the wrath of God by Christ, or reconciliation made by Christ; or remission of sins upon the account of Christs death and blood! This is the sum of their Doctrine, against which I shall oppose several Conclusions drawn from the Scriptures: And truly sirs! As I never did, so I trust I never shall decline the opposing of any corrupt Doctrine (falling in my way) much less these corrupt Opinions of the Socinians, which (if I mistake not exceedingly) do plainly subvert the faith of Christians.

But now to the Point in hand concerning the satisfaction made for us by Christ, I would lay down these Conclusions.

1. That God (Salvo jure) could not pass over sin, so as absolutely to let it go unpunished.
2. That God was resolved never to let it so escape.
3. That though a satisfaction for sin were necessary, yet there was some kind of Relaxation in exacting of that satisfaction.
4. That Jesus Christ did really make a satisfaction.
5. That his satisfaction was not only for our good, but also in our stead, and therefore it was in our stead, that it might be for our good.

1. That God could not (*Salvo jure*) pass over the sin of man, so as absolutely to let it go unpunished; It being against his Justice, and against his Truth. Every sinner is worthy of death (They which commit such things are worthy of death, Rom 1:32.) Now God is just and Righteous (It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, 2 Thes. 1:6.) yea and God did therefore set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, Rom. 3:25. To declare his Righteousness that he might be just, verse 26. If God be a Just and Righteous God, then sin cannot absolutely escape unpunished; for it is just with God to punish the sinner who is worthy of punishment. And truly God must deny himself, if he will not be just; But God cannot deny himself, 2 Tim. 2:13. And besides this, as God cannot but be just (and therefore sin cannot escape unpunished) so God cannot but be true; and if he cannot but be true, then what he hath threatened against sin, that must be performed: But he hath threatened punishment for sin, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the death, and the soul which sins shall die.

**Object. And whereas some do object, That it is lawful for any man, *de jure suo remittere quantum velit*. To abate of his right as much as he pleaseth, and therefore God may do so.**

Sol. I answer.

1. That is not a true Rule absolutely amongst men: A Magistrate cannot dispense with any so that the Laws may be violated, and Justice be overthrown. Nor a father with the wickedness of his Children, so that they shall go wholly unpunished. David did so indeed about Absalom, and Eli about his sons, but they paid dear for it.

Only it holds in some cases which are not in, *fraudem tertij*, or *salvo jure tertij*.

2. And as for God, it holds not; for although God may be pleased so far, *cedere de jure*, as to admit of a Surety, yet he cannot so far yield as to abrogate his own Law, and quietly to sit down with injury and loss to his own justice, himself having established a Law, &c.

2. That God will not let sin go unpunished, *Exod. 34:7*. He will by no means clear the guilty. He is unchangeable. *Ezek. 18:20*. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. And the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. *Rom. 2:6*. He will render to every man according to his deeds; Look on sin in any Creature whatsoever, God would not let it pass unpunished.

1. In the Angels that fell, *Jude* verse 6. The Angels that kept not their first estate, but lost their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

2. In Men, whether Reprobate or Elect. If Reprobate and unbelievers, then they must bear their own punishment of sin forever: If Elect and Believers, yet Christ must bear their punishment; for God will not suffer sin to pass unpunished; he doth perfectly hate and abhor it, his wrath is sealed against it, he will give no encouragement for any to sin, but would utterly deter men from it, and his Righteous Law must and shall be maintained.

3. That though a satisfaction for sin be necessary, yet there is some kind of Relaxation and mitigation in the exacting of that satisfaction; for although God as just, must and will punish sin, yet it is not against Justice for to exact the punishment, or that

the satisfaction of it may be joined with some mitigation; therefore we distinguish of *Justitia Rigida & Temperata*. Indeed in *Justitia vindicante per modum rigoris*, (which we call *summum jus*) there is no mitigation at all, neither of the substance of punishment, nor of the circumstances of it; but in *Justitia temperata*, where there is a mitigation of levying the punishment, this is not contrary to justice: And with this kind of justice did God prosecute the sins of his Elect, for which though he would be satisfied, yet it was with a moderation, which I call a mitigation of justice: For whereas in Rigor of Justice God might;

1. Have insisted strictly with sinners, as to their own person, to have suffered for their sins, yet he did not so, but allowed of a Surety (on their behalf) to bear their sins, and to suffer for them.
2. Might have refused what another offered for them (although in itself sufficient to satisfy his Justice) yet he did accept thereof.
3. Might have challenged an eternal duration of punishment which he had threatened, and the nature of sin did deserve; yet he did repute the dignity of the person (who did suffer and die for their sins) as Equivalent unto an eternal duration of suffering and dying; and the suffering of such a Person, it did virtually amount thereunto: and in all these respects there was a temperature or moderation of Justice in the exacting of satisfaction for the sins of the Elect.
4. That Jesus Christ (by his death and sufferings) did really and truly make satisfaction: For whether you take satisfaction for punishment endured equal to the fault committed, or for so much done and suffered, and *ipso facto* as *de jure* did *solvere debitum*, discharge the debt to be paid, so that God in justice cannot Renew the suite against us, but ought to acquit us, having Received a full Payment; In both these respects did Christ make satisfaction.

1. Jesus Christ did endure punishment equal to the fault: What our sins did deserve, and what justice might lay upon us for those sins, all that did Christ suffer or bear, and therefore certainly Christ did make satisfaction. If you will admit of any satisfaction at all in criminal cases for sins and offenses, it must of necessity lie in the commensuration of the punishment with the fault, when so much punishment is sustained for sin, as justice requires for the guilt of that sin: Now Jesus Christ did so suffer for our sins, as that his sufferings were fully answerable unto the demerit of our sins; And I think I may safely deliver it; That God in justice (for the satisfying of it) could not (in genere poenarum) require anymore, or lay on any one more punishment than Jesus Christ did suffer for our sins: And my Reason is this, because Christ bare all our sins, and all our sorrows, and was obedient unto the death, and was made a curse for us; and more than this, the Law of God could not require: And if Christ did suffer all that the Law of God required, then certainly he suffered so much as did satisfy the justice of God, viz. as much punishment as was commensurated with sin.

2. But secondly, Christ did lay down and suffer so much as fully paid all our debts; which if he did, then questionless he did satisfy God's Justice; and that Jesus Christ did so, the Scripture clearly and abundantly testifies it, Colos. 2:14. He blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary unto us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross. It is indeed differently conjectured what this Chriographum or Syngrapha was: In the general it was something God had against us, to show, and convince, or prove that we had sinned against him, and were his debtors (some think that this Chriographum was the Covenant of God with Adam; others think it the Ceremonial Law, others the Moral)

But I suppose that this hand-writing was principally the Moral law, obliging us unto perfect obedience, condemning us for the defect of the same, and likewise those Ceremonial Rites which (as Beza observes) were a kind of public confession of our debts. Now these were against us, and contrary unto us, inasmuch as they did argue us guilty of sin and condemnation which the Moral Law threatened and sentenced, &c. But saith the Apostle, Christ hath blotted out the hand-writing, and hath taken it out of the way, and nailed it to his Cross; (that is) Jesus Christ hath not only abrogated the Ceremonial Law, but also the Damnatory power of the Moral Law (as our Surety) by performing an act of obedience which the Law did require, and by undergoing the punishment which the Law did exact from the transgressors of it: And so Christ by doing and suffering what we were bound to do and to suffer, he did thereby blot out the hand-writing, and cancelled it: And is not the Creditor fully satisfied when he gives in his Bond to be cancelled? Matth. 20:28. The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many; Lutron, precium redemptionis. 1 Tim. 2:6. Who gave himself a ransom for all; Antilutron, the word signifies a price, a valuable price for another. Heb. 9:15. For this cause is he the Mediator of the New Covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament (*Morte intercedente ad redemptionem earum praevaricationum*) Here the death of Christ is called a Redemption for sins: And such an Apolutrosis is nothing else but a compensation or satisfaction made for them *Intercedente Lutro*, by laying down a price considerable, as was the death of Christ, by which we are Redeemed or freed. And truly the word Lutrosis, and Apolutrosis signifies such a kind of deliverance which is not by force (as was deliverance from Pharaoh) nor yet which is by favor (as was that from Babylon) but that which is obtained

Justo precio soluto, by paying a full price, by which one becomes satisfied, and another thereupon delivered. Heb. 9:26. He hath appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself. And this full price is in Scripture sometimes called the life of Christ, Matth. 20:28. And sometimes the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. 1:19, and sometimes Christ himself, 1 Tim. 2:6.

5. That this satisfactory price was laid down for us, both for our good, and in our stead, or room. 1 Pet. 3:18. Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God: What the unjust sinner should have suffered, that did the just Christ suffer for him. 2 Cor. 5:21. He was made sin for us (that is) an Offering, a Sacrifice (in our stead) for the expiation of our sins. Isa. 53. He was wounded (or tormented) for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him. Verse 6. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Rom. 4:25. He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification, 1 Cor. 15:3. Christ died for our sins, Gal. 3:13. Christ hath Redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.

Before I pass to the other Benefits redounding unto us from the sufferings of Christ, I would make a little Application of this first Benefit, namely that Christ's Sufferings were Satisfactory to the Justice of God, and that for us.

If Christ's sufferings were a satisfaction unto God's Justice for us;  
Then;

1. The sufferings of Christ were more than mere sufferings; there was something of infinite value and dignity connected with them, and going along with them: Not without cause doth the Apostle Peter say,



That we were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ; It was precious blood indeed which was able to make such a compensation to the Justice of God, to proclaim unto all the world, I have found a Ransom, I have received enough, I neither do, nor can require anymore payment. If you do consider any one sin in the natural and proper demerits of it, who is able to fathom the eternal depth of guilt in that one sin? Or the eternal height of wrath unto which that one sin doth expose the sinner? What infinite measure of wrath then may the infinite justice of God inflict upon us for innumerable transgressions? Yet Jesus Christ hath satisfied Divine Justice for them all. And his satisfaction must have not only a proportion, but also an equal correspondency with the guilt of all those Sins. There must be as much in Christ's Recompence, as in the sinners offense; as much for payment by Christ as there was of debt by the sinner; as much every jot to satisfy God, as there was in sin to wrong God; and therefore his sufferings must needs be of infinite value; for had they not been so, they could not have been satisfactory; and my Reason is, because then the payment had been less than the debt; and if short of the debt, then short of the satisfaction.

2. Then all the Grounds of despair are utterly broken down, and taken out of the way: There is no poor broken-hearted sinner in the world that hath just cause to despair; why? Because Jesus Christ hath suffered, and hath satisfied the justice of God for him.

Despair ariseth upon these three grounds.

1. The accent of the guilt of sin, that it is so high and exceeding, that nothing can be found to answer Divine Justice for it.
2. That though something may be found able to satisfy Divine Justice, yet Divine justice is not satisfied; the payment is not brought in for that great debt.

3. Though a payment sufficient and satisfactory be brought in, yet it is not laid down for my sins? Perhaps for others, but not for my soul.

Now the satisfactory sufferings of Christ come in to relieve the distressed sinner against all these grounds of despair. For;

1. There is as much to be found in Christ, as is to be found in our sins: There is as full and as high a Righteousness in Christ, as there is unrighteousness in you: And there is as infinite a price in the death of Christ, as there is of demerit in your sins: And Christ hath as much to pay to the Justice of God, as you (for all your sins) do owe to the justice of God; Nay, where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound: The sufferings of Christ are in every respect as able to recompense and satisfy God, as your sins were to wrong God, and to expose your souls for wronging of him.

2. Christ's sufferings did indeed satisfy God's justice for your sins: His blood was the satisfying payment: He did give his life a Ransom, or Redemption, a Price that Redeemed you by satisfaction: He was made sin, and he was made a curse, and he did bear our iniquities and sorrows, and did appear to take away sin.

3. And lastly, Those sufferings of Christ which were thus satisfactory to the justice of God, were on your behalf. He bare our sins, said Peter; and died for our sins, and was made a curse for us, said Paul: So then Divine Justice may be satisfied, and it is satisfied, and for us, and for our sins; and therefore no penitent or broken-hearted sinner hath any just cause to despair.

3. Then rest in the satisfaction of Christ, and never take upon yourselves that work; why? Because to make satisfaction to the Justice of God, is the work of a Mediator which belongs to him, and

which he by his Active and Passive obedience hath performed, and no mere man can do it.

The Papists divide this great work 'twixt Christ and sinners: As they do about Mediatorship, they hold that Christ only is the Mediator of Redemption, but then they make many Mediators of Intercession; so do they deal in the work of satisfaction. They grant the satisfaction of Christ as to eternal punishments; but then they set up our satisfactions to God's Justice for temporal punishments: Christ must suffer and satisfy for them; but we must satisfy and suffer for these; and hereupon they erect works of Penance, and Pilgrimage, and endurance of the flames of Purgatory, &c. as satisfactions to God's justice for their sins, and verily believe (by them) to compound the matter 'twixt God and their sinning souls.

But against this proud and vain glorious Opinion, we thus reply.

1. Jesus Christ did bear all our sins (they were all laid upon him) as he did bear all our sorrows, and he did Redeem us from all iniquity; And he gave himself Antilutron, a Ransom and a sufficient Price for them: If so, then there remains nothing for us to satisfy for: Either Christ took on him to pay all our debt, or he did not; and did pay it, or did not; if he took upon him the whole debt, and paid it, then there is no room for our satisfactions; if he did not, how was he then our Surety, and how can his death be called a sufficient price?

2. If Jesus Christ did so fully satisfy God that all our sins be forgiven; Then there can be no place admitted for man's satisfaction; for where sins are discharged, there the sinner is loosed in point of any further satisfaction) And besides that, all satisfactory punishment falls off upon the remission of sins, (forasmuch as *omnis paena fundatur in reatu*. Punishments cannot justly be inflicted, but where the guilt of sin remains unsatisfied; a guiltless person may not be punished, why

should he? For sin committed? But that is pardoned; for nothing? That were unjust.) But in and by Christ's satisfaction all our sins are forgiven. Col. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses. To have all sins forgiven, what is it but to have all forgiven which all our sins did deserve? And truly this will reach unto all punishments both temporal and eternal.

3. Christ did endure temporal punishments; either they must be for his own sins (but he had none) or for our sins; but his enduring was his satisfying.

4. There is no ground at all in Scripture for our own satisfactions: And for the Doctrine of the Papists concerning them, where do we find any such distribution and portioning of punishments (in that manner) to be satisfied for, as the eternal by Christ, and the temporal for us? Or where read we that Christ did satisfy for us by procuring grace that we might satisfy? Or where do we find in Scripture that the endurance of temporal punishment by any sinner, is styled a satisfaction, though not in strict justice, yet in God's favorable acceptance, as the Papists do distinguish, and yet but weakly? For how is that to be reputed a satisfaction to justice, which indeed is not so?

5. But allow them a little to dream, and to dishonor Jesus Christ in his satisfactions by setting up their own also with his for temporal punishments, are they ever able to resolve us?

1. Whether God lays temporal punishments upon every sinner, and expects from him a satisfaction?

Or 2ly. How much, and how long any sinner must endure temporal punishments before God will be satisfied? Hath God set down the days or years of endurance in Purgatory?

Or 3ly. How they come to know the qualities and heights of the punishments in purgatory, for the enduring of which God is satisfied?

Or 4ly. That if there were such punishments in Purgatory; How can any be certain, and assured that God will accept of the endurance, of them as a satisfaction to his justice?

Or 5ly. How a sinner, suffering of deserved punishment can rationally be a satisfaction to Justice, to deliver him from suffering of punishment?

Or 6ly. Whether any Papist knowing what horrid punishments are to be endured in Purgatory (for they teach that they are the very same that the damned suffer in hell, and differ only from them in eternity) is willing to suffer them before he comes thither; and when he is there, that he doth willingly and patiently bear them, and what grounds for this? For if the endurance of them be involuntary, and impatient, then it is sinful still, and a sinful endurance cannot be satisfactory?

Or 7ly. If the sinners suffering of these punishments be a satisfaction to God's Justice, and is necessary; therefore whether it be not dangerous and prejudicial to press others for money to help souls out of Purgatory, where they are so well employed as to be satisfying of God's Justice?

Or is it not needless so to do, seeing the endurance of those pains will alone satisfy the Justice of God? Or if they must be helped by the pecuniary charity of the living, whither there be not an insufficiency and invalidity in the endurance of those pains to make a satisfaction? But I leave these to their foolish inventions, and self-satisfaction: Let us (for our parts) labor to know and acknowledge Jesus Christ

crucified, and him alone, as undertaking and satisfying the Justice of God for us; and to have no confidence in any but in Jesus Christ, and to rejoice only in the Cross of Christ.

Is satisfaction the result of Christ's suffering for us? What satisfaction, and comfort, and support may this afford to all Believers? Paul triumphs in this; Rom. 8:33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect! It is God that justifieth, verse 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. And Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

O sirs! I cannot express the treasures of comfort in this, That God is satisfied, that Jesus Christ hath satisfied the justice of God for us! Had Christ suffered all, yet if thereby God had not been satisfied, we had been still in our sins, and still under the wrath of God, and still under the terrors of his justice, and still under the horror of conscience! And still under the power of accusations, and condemnations; and still under fear of a fiery indignation, and everlasting destruction; But because Jesus Christ hath suffered for our sins, and hath for them fully satisfied the justice of God on our behalf, our souls may return unto their rest; we may now look upon an appeased God, and stand no longer as Prisoners at the Bar before a severe Judge; but as reconciled children before a pacified and reconciled Father: Beloved, that God's justice is really and fully satisfied by Christ for us;

1. This answers all accusations. O saith Satan, what, is the wrath of God revealed against all your sins? It is very great; but Christ hath satisfied! O but saith Conscience your sins are many, and God is just! True; But Christ hath satisfied the just God for all my sins. O but God will remember your sins, and judge you for them! He will not, for he

is satisfied by Christ and therefore he will never reckon with me, nor judge and condemn me. O but the wrath of God is dreadful! It is so, and Christ felt it so, and hath satisfied God's wrath by enduring of his wrath, and thereby hath delivered my soul from wrath.

2. This quiets all. Quiets;

1. Conscience as to guilt; when satisfaction is made, when God hath as much as he requireth, why should not this quiet the heart of a man? Will nothing content thee unless thou thyself art able to pay God the utmost farthing?

2. Impatience as to sufferings: we meet with many afflictions in this life, and with many crosses which are bitter unto us: Well, but yet the justice of God is satisfied by Christ; and therefore though your afflictions be crosses; yet they are not curses; though there be bitterness in them, yet there is not revenging wrath in them; though they be sent for our correction, yet they are not sent for any satisfaction: They never come from a revenging God, but only from a loving Father.

3. This assures all: There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1. You shall never perish; your sins should be your sorrows, but they shall never be your Hell, or damnation; why so? Because the justice of God is satisfied; and if his justice be satisfied, then eternal punishment is taken off; and if eternal punishment be taken off, then your souls shall never be separated from God, nor be damned of God, &c.

2. The second benefit or fruit of the sufferings of Christ for us, Is the remission, or forgiveness of our sins.

The Socinians flatly deny that remission of sins hath any foundation on the sufferings or satisfaction of Christ; but that it depends upon and flows only from the mercy and grace of God without any respect unto Christ. It is strange how these men are set against Jesus Christ, and will by no means be beholding unto him for any satisfaction, or justification, or mercy: But let us search the Scriptures, and be led by them, and we shall find that the forgiveness of our sins hath a dependence both on the free mercy of God, and on the sufferings of Christ. Isa. 43:25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Luke 7:42. When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. In these places you see that forgiveness of sins depends on the free mercy and grace of God; but then peruse some other Scriptures. 1 Joh. 2:12. I write unto you little Children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Namesake (that is) for Christ's sake. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins: In these places you see that forgiveness of sins depends upon the blood and sufferings of Christ. Ephes. 1:7. In whom you have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace: And in this place you see that forgiveness of our sins hath a dependence on both, on the blood of Christ, and on the rich grace of God.

**Object. But how can this be? For a free Remission of sins is directly opposite to satisfaction: A free pardon is without the making of any satisfaction, and a satisfaction for sin is contrary to a free Remission.**

Sol. I answer, Consider these as to the same subject they are so. The sinner himself cannot satisfy, and yet be freely pardoned; and he cannot be freely pardoned, and yet make satisfaction: His satisfaction for his own sins, and God's free forgiveness of his sins,



are indeed inconsistent: Nevertheless both these may very well agree in divers subjects or parties, viz. As to Christ, and as to us.

In respect of Christ, Remission of sins is not the effect of mercy, but of justice; it did cost him dear, for he suffered and satisfied for our sins, paid our debts; and therefore it is just with God for Christ's sake to forgive our sins.

But in respect of us (who paid no Debt nor Ransom for ourselves, it did cost us nothing) the Remission of sins is mere mercy, and free grace: God did not express his full justice and mercy on Christ together, nor did he express his full mercy and justice together on us: But he expressed his justice on Christ who fully satisfied it, and he expressed his mercy on us, yet for the satisfaction made by the blood of Christ; Amongst many places which might be brought to prove that the remission of our sins doth depend on the blood or sufferings of Christ, I will mention only one more; It is in Heb. 9:22. Without shedding of blood there is no remission. Verse 26. But now hath he (speaking of Christ) once in the end of the world appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Verse 28. So was Christ once offered to bear the sins of many: what can be more clear? There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood, and therefore Christ appeared to put away our sins by the shedding of his blood (per immolationem sui ipsius) by the Sacrifice of himself: As when the Sacrifices (called expiatory) were offered, sins were taken away and pardoned; so when Christ offered up himself by death a Sacrifice to God, this was of real virtue to expiate our sins.

Now what an unspeakable comfort is this, that Jesus Christ (as our Mediator) did shed his blood for the remission of our sins!

1. Our sins in Scripture are sometimes called Bonds (and indeed they are the heaviest and dreadfulest Bonds of all others, lying heavy

upon the conscience, and binding us over to God's Tribunal to answer) but these are loosened and released through the blood of Christ.

And sometimes they are called Debts (for the payment of which we do owe unto the justice of God, the endurance of everlasting pain in soul and in body) but these debts are forgiven us for Christ's sake.

In every sin there are two things considerable; One is, the Offence done to God, by reason whereof he is displeased; The other is, the Obligation of that person so offending God unto everlasting wrath and condemnation: And both these are removed in the remission or forgiveness of sins; the offense or fault is removed; God is not now offended or displeased with the offending sinner anymore; and the obligation unto eternal wrath and condemnation is so far cancelled, that it shall never redound unto the person: Although guilt and obligation be natural unto, and inseparable from sin, yet this obligation shall never be put in suit; nor shall that wrath and condemnation (deserved by sin) be ever inflicted on the sinner, because there is a forgiveness of sin wrought by Jesus Christ: And therefore the Apostle saith, That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, 2 Cor. 5:19. (that is) not laying of them to their charge, not suing of them, not reckoning with them, but forgiving them.

2. Secondly the comfort from this will appear yet to be more, if you do consider that this remission of sin by Christ, as it takes off the guilt of sin (which is the Arrow in the Side, the gnawing Worm in the Conscience, the Thorn in the Foot, and the breaking of our Bones) so it doth extend to all our sins: We do diversify our sins by the times of them, some are past, some are present, and some are future: And by the quantity of them, some are small, and some are great: And by the

quality and circumstances of them, some are of ignorance, and some are of knowledge, some are voluntary, and some are involuntary, &c. Now whatsoever our sins are (always supposing us to be Elect, believing and penitent persons) they are all of them forgiven through the blood of Christ. Colos. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses, Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

**Object. What all? Everyone!**

Sol. Yes. And there are five Arguments to satisfy us concerning this.

1. Jesus Christ (as our Surety) took upon him the whole state of our sinful debts: He did not undertake this or that particular sin only, but the whole debt, the whole reckoning, all the sins of which we might be conceived guilty, and of all of them gave himself a Sacrifice to put away sin.
2. He did so satisfy God's justice for our sins, as that there is now no condemnation to them that are in him; and verily, if all condemnation be removed, then all sin is pardoned: If any one sin remained unpardoned, then condemnation would still be in force upon us for that one sin.
3. His death was a price Equivalent unto the merits of all our sins, and preponderating them; and God having accepted thereof, it would be unjust in him not to remit all.
4. All enmity is slain by the blood of Christ between God and us. He hath reconciled us by his Cross, having slain enmity thereby. But if any sin was not forgiven, all hostility is not slain.

5. The great end of Christ's death was to save us, to make us blessed, to bring us to the enjoyment of eternal life, which end could never be attained, unless God did (upon the account of Christ) give unto us a plenary and total remission of sins: Because of any one sin unpardoned the wages is death, which the Apostle delivers in opposition to eternal life, Rom, 6:23.

3. Nor doth our comfort from the remission of our sins by Christ end in this; it goes one step yet further, and that is this, as the Remission is total and perfect, so it is stable and irrevocable. Hence those expressions in Micah 7:19. Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the Sea (as if our sins lay drowned and buried forever, never to rise up against us anymore) Isa. 44:22. I have blotted out (as a thick cloud) thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. When a Bond or Writing is blotted out, there the writing against us can be read no more: Or when a Cloud is blotted out, it is so scattered and dispersed that it appears no more. Jer. 33:34. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Jer. 50:20. The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve: Why! What comfort is this! That there is Remission of sins procured for us, and of all sins, and that by Christ, and that God hath forgiven them; and as long as God is God, and Christ is Christ, they remain forgiven; God alters not, and Christ alters not, and forgiveness of sins alters not.

Is Remission of sin the effect and fruit of Christ's sufferings and satisfaction for us? Then you see whether to go under the sense of the guilt of your sins, and what to trust unto: when the Law of God sets upon you, and Satan gives in against you, and your own wounded consciences charge on you the guilt of great and many sins; O it is a dreadful time indeed with you; what shall I do? And what will

become of me? Whether shall I fly? Who can give me ease? I cannot satisfy justice, and I cannot escape justice, and I cannot bear the strokes of justice! I would do anything, I would suffer anything for a time. But O distressed sinner? These will not, and these cannot help thee: Why then my condition is desperate! So it is for ought that thou canst do; but is there not a God in Israel? So say I to thee, is there not a Mediator? Hath not he suffered? Hath not he died? Hath not he shed his blood for the Remission of sins! In him we have Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins: And If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins: And herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. And therefore in your agonies of Conscience, in the troubles of your souls, under the guilt of your sins, look up to Jesus Christ whose blood was shed for the Remission of sins, and offer him up, and his blood up to God; See, O Lord! This is thy Christ, who appeared once to put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself, and who was once offered to bear the sins of many! Here is my satisfaction, and here is the price laid down for my sins, and here is the blood, without shedding of which there is no remission: O Lord pardon, O Lord forgive my sins, all my sins for his Name sake, &c.

3. I now proceed unto the third Effect or Benefit flowing from, and depending upon the sufferings of Christ our Mediator, and that is Reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Whereas formerly we lay under the wrath of God deserved by sin; we are now by Christ delivered from that wrath; God is appeased, and we are received into favor and friendship with him. Rom. 5:10. When we were sinners, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Ephes. 2:14. He is our Peace. Isa. 53:5. The chastisement of our peace was upon him.

The Socinians deny all this; they deny that God was ever angry or displeased with us, or that any of us did lie under his wrath, or that ever Christ did appease, pacify, remove the wrath of God, or wrought Reconciliation 'twixt God and us.

Against which Opinion of theirs, I shall lay down these Conclusions.

1. That there was a real breach, or difference, or enmity made between God and Man by reason of sin, and we were under his wrath for it. The Scripture is clear for this, calling sin an enmity. Ephes. 2:16. Having slain the enmity thereby. Rom. 8:7. The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God: It is not subject to the Law of God, &c. Sinners enemies (If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. 5:10.) Those whom he calls Sinners, verse 8, he calls Enemies, verse 10. Col. 1:21. You that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now he hath reconciled: Here you see that by reason of sin we are alienated, and we are enemies; Alienated in respect of the near union and conjunction which (once) we had with God; and enemies in respect of that hostility which did arise 'twixt us and God by reason of sin; Sinners do hate God as their enemy, and God doth hate them as his enemies; and their ways are an abomination unto him, Prov. 15:9.

And truly because sin is in its own nature the greatest dissimilitude with, and repugnancy unto the nature of God, as it therefore breaks up all friendship, so it likewise raises up the strongest alienation and hostility: But besides this, the Scripture doth as clearly hold out the wrath of God under which men lie by reason of sin, Joh. 3:36. He that believeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him: He saith not *Non veniet super eum, sed manet: Jamdudum enim involvit omnes Adami filios, & illis supe incumbet donec removeatur per*

Christum Mediatorem, saith Austin: Rom. 1:18. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness: Doth God reveal, and threaten, and inflict wrath upon sinners, and yet is he not wrath with sin or with sinners? Eph. 2:3. And were by nature the children of wrath as well as others. How often do we read of the provocation of God by sin, and of God's abhorring of people for sin, and of casting them out of his sight, and of the separation which sin makes, and of his forsaking, and punishing, and damning of sinners? Certainly then sin makes a real breach and enmity 'twixt God and us.

2. That Jesus Christ (as our Mediator) did step in between God and us, and made up the breach, and slew the enmity, and reconciled us again; Now here observe two things.

1. Jesus Christ did appease the wrath of God against us; He did pacify him, and took off all provocation on our part, and displeasure therefore on God's part. All the peace-offerings in the Old Testament (upon which his wrath fell off and ceased) were but Types of Christ, who was the real and true Peace-offering, by whom God is appeased and pacified with us: Hence is that of the Prophet, Isa. 53:5. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. It was Christ who made peace for us; and as Christ is called our Peace, and Peace-maker, so he is called our Appeasor, or Appeasement, Rom. 3:25, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiatory, ἱλαστήριον, 1 Joh. 2:2. And he is the Propitiation for our sins, ἱλασμός, placamen, not placationis testimonium; but placamen effectivum.

Now ἰλάσκειν is placare, to appease a person, and so to appease him, that wrath and displeasure in him is removed, or taken off: God be merciful to me a sinner, said the Publican, Luke 18:13. Be merciful to me; the word signifies, Be propitious, be appeased, be pacified: And

truly upon the account of this part of Reconciliation by Christ, we are said to be delivered, or saved from the wrath of God by him. Rom. 5:9. We shall be saved from wrath by him; and to have all enmity slain, Ephes. 2:16.

2. Jesus Christ did not only take off wrath, and discord, and variance by appeasing God, but he did moreover restore us again into his favor, and friendship, and drew up a state of concord, or perfect agreement between God and us. Rom. 5:11. We also joy (or glory) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

And if I be not much mistaken, the propitiatory which resembled Christ, doth plainly inform us in what a state of grace or favor we now do stand with God by Jesus Christ: So that now we are no longer enemies, and strangers, and Foreigners, but friends, and favorites, and children of God, and he is well pleased with us, and delights in us, and is pleased to hold communion with us.

3. That Jesus Christ did reconcile God and us by his blood or death. The Scripture is so full and clear in this, that it is an amazement unto me to see with what face any man can deny and oppose it. Rom. 5:10. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. 3:25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Ephes. 2:13. We are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Verse 14. For he is our Peace. Verse 16. That he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross. Col. 1:21. You that were sometime alienated, and enemies, &c. yet now hath he reconciled. Verse 22. In the body of his flesh through death. Before I make some useful Application unto ourselves, there are a few Doubts and Objections to be removed.



How can Christ as Mediator Reconcile us to God, because he himself is God? And none can be a Mediator of Reconciliation unto himself, but between different persons.

Sol. 1. Though that of the Apostle may satisfy us in this, 2 Cor. 5:19. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

2. Yet we thus distinguish of Christ the Son of God, that there is a twofold consideration of him.

1. One is as to his Divine Nature or Essence absolutely, in which respect he is God equal with the Father, the self-same one God; and so is he the offended party.

2. Another is, as to that condition or estate which he did voluntarily undertake; Namely to be God Incarnated or to be made Man, according unto which he became Mediator: And as thus considered, he is a middle Person 'twixt God and us. Now though Christ absolutely as God, was the offended party, and received a Sacrifice by which he was appeased; yet as God incarnated (as God-Man) he offered up that Sacrifice of Reconciliation: By the merit and virtue whereof he made our peace with God: For thus considered, he was a middle party 'twixt God and us, and as so, did not Reconcile us to himself, but to God.

God doth love his people with an everlasting love; he loved us before he sent Christ into the world for us; For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. Now if God loved us with an everlasting love, what need is there of Reconciliation by Christ? Reconciliation needs not amongst friends, but between enemies.

Sol. To those that make this Objection against the need of our Reconciliation by Christ, because of God's eternal love; I would entreat them to consider that place in 1 Joh. 4:10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins: Mark the place; though God did love us, yet he sends his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins; whence it is most evident that a Propitiation or Reconciliation by Christ is necessary, notwithstanding the love of God towards us. Nevertheless I will not thus quit the Objection and difficulty, unto which divers answers are given by learned men.

1. One saith that God did in a wonderful way love us, when yet he did hate us, and was displeased with us; he did love us in respect of what himself had made, and yet he did hate us, and was displeased with what we ourselves did make (that is) he loved our nature which himself made, but hated the sin which our nature contracted: And therefore though he loved our natures which himself made, yet there was a need of Reconciliation to be made, to remove that hatred and wrath which we contracted by our sins; and as Aquinas adds, to take away the cause and ground of all hatred and displeasure in God, namely by taking away of sin by the death of Christ, which was the cause of it.

2. But with your favor; I shall (I suppose) satisfy the doubt by a distinction of a twofold love of God.

1. There is *Amor benevolentiae*, which is that love in God by which he wisheth, and intendeth good unto us: For although God was angry and displeased with us by reason of sin, yet that anger was not such as did shut up thoughts of love and mercy towards us: For notwithstanding that exceeding displeasure with us for sin, yet his love did intend, and did issue forth a way of

Reconciliation and Pacification by the blood of Christ: And with this love, the wrath of God is consistent, and with this wrath of God his love is consistent; he was wroth with us for our sins, yet he did so far love us, as to give Jesus Christ for the pacification of that wrath, according to that forementioned place in 1 Joh. 4:10.

2. There is Amor amicitiae, which consists in laying aside all wrath, and accepting of us into a league of favor and kindness: With this love (I grant) that wrath cannot consist: And this love was procured unto us by the death of Christ: So then although God did love his people with an eternal love of benevolence, out of his mere mercy and grace; yet there is a love of friendship, with which he did not love us, until his wrath against us for our sins were removed by the death of his Son Jesus Christ.

**Object. And whereas it was objected, that there needs no Reconciliation to be made 'twixt friends.**

Sol. I grant it: But God and we were not made friends but by the blood of Christ, which did pacify his wrath against us: notwithstanding his love of benevolence, we were in a condition of wrath; and that love of benevolence did not take away wrath, although it did make a way thereto by sending Jesus Christ to be a Propitiation for our sins.

There is no mention in all the Scripture, That God is reconciled to us, though indeed frequently we are said by Christ to be Reconciled unto God.

Sol. 1. If we do find that we are reconciled to God, this is enough to evidence that God is reconciled unto us; As if we know such a woman is married unto such a man, we need not be solicitous to prove that

such a man is married unto such a woman: Or supposing Paul and Barnabas have been at difference; if Barnabas be reconciled to Paul, we may well conclude that Paul is reconciled to Barnabas: Reconciliation 'twixt different parties is in the very nature of it, a conciliation or accord of both parties; if either of the parties stand off, and will not yield, it cannot be called a Reconciliation of them, or between them.

2. But secondly, the Scripture will give in testimony enough for God's being reconciled unto us. Ezek. 16:36. That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth anymore because of thy shame when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord: Here God himself is said to be pacified towards them; and what is it for God to be pacified, but to be reconciled? Exod. 30:10. Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of the Altar once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering; what doth this Typify, but the Reconciliation made by the blood of Christ for our sins; and with whom is this atonement made? With God who is displeased with us because of our sins, &c. Isa. 54:9. I have sworn that I will not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. Isa. 57:16. I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wrath.

Is Reconciliation with God the fruit and effect of the blood and death of Christ? Then consider seriously of three things.

1. How powerful and efficacious the blood of Christ is! It hath done that which all the righteous men on earth, and which all the Angels in heaven could never do. If all the righteous men on earth should have come forth and offered their lives, their souls and bodies unto God, and have said, Lord, take all these at our hands, so that thou wilt be reconciled and at peace with such a sinner; they could not have made his peace: Yea if all the angels in heaven had offered

themselves to God, and said, Lord, we are content to be put out of Heaven, so that this may satisfy thy justice, and so that this may make peace for sinners, neither would this have took up the difference and made peace: There cannot be found in any creature sufficiency enough to be a Peace-maker, to be a Days man between God and sinners, to take off the wrath of God due to a sinner: No, no, it is not our tears, nor our confessions, nor our repentance, which can make reconciliation; it is Jesus Christ only: He was only able to open the book, and he only is able to shut the book: None but Christ, and nothing but the blood of Christ is able to satisfy and to pacify God: His blood was the blood of atonement or reconciliation, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him: The debt was so great, and the provocation by sin was so high, and the wrath of God against sin was so infinite, that nothing could discharge that debt and pacify that wrath, but the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. How much are we beholding to Jesus Christ who by his blood reconciled God to us and us to God, and hath made peace! O said Luther concerning the 118th Psalm; I am more beholding to this Psalm than to all the Potentates of the world: This Psalm hath done more for me in my distress, than all the world could do for me: we may much more say that of Jesus Christ, we are more bound to Christ than to all the world besides; for Christ hath done more for us; why? Because he hath reconciled us to God; we had lain under the wrath of God forever, had it not been for Christ: and we should never have seen the face of God, had it not been for Christ: He hath pacified his wrath, and brought us into favor and friendship again: O sirs, ponder it well what I am about to speak unto you, that you may know how much you are beholding to Christ. What a miserable unhappy creature is the sinner who is separated from God, and at variance with him, and whiles he is separated from God! God only is happiness, and nothing can be our happiness but the enjoyment of

him; and therefore the falling away from God, and the separation from him is an infinite loss, and misery and infelicity: Cain thought it a peculiar curse, I shall be hid from thy face! And the Church cries out, he bides his face from us: why I cannot express the darkness, the loss, the curse, the death, the hell of this, that the sinner is fallen out with God, he hath forsaken God, and God hath forsaken him; he is none of God's, and God is none of his, he is an enemy to God and opposeth him, and God is an enemy to the sinner, and doth abhor, and will curse him: but besides this, consider also how terrible the wrath of God is, and how dreadful it is for a poor sinner to be a child of wrath, and to live under the wrath of God. On the wrath of God it is a consuming fire; and who can stand before his wrath! If his wrath be kindled but a little, saith David. How doth the conscience tormented with the apprehension and sense of God's wrath make men cry out and roar, and tremble and quake, and be restless, and easeless, and hopeless! But now Jesus Christ by his blood hath reconciled us and God; he hath quenched this devouring flame of fire, he hath slain enmity, he hath saved us from wrath, from that wrath which is so infinitely dreadful, and which otherwise would have burned and consumed us forever, and ever, and ever; And besides that he hath made us nigh, and hath made us one again; we may now with the Prodigal come back again unto our Fathers house and be kindly accepted and received, Well! If you know the Scriptures, and if you know what a just and wrathful God is, and if you know what a sinning creature is, or what sin is! Then bless God for Christ, and bless Christ for himself, and for his love, and for his blood, and for his death, who hath taken up the greatest controversy that ever was; as he took up the nature of the different parties into his own Person so he took off the differences twixt them by his own blood. Father, said Christ. I will die, I will shed my blood, so that thou wilt be friends again with these poor sinners and enemies, so that thou wilt pardon them, and be pacified towards them, and take

them into favor again, and own them; and Christ did this, and God accepted of this: O love this reconciling Christ!

3. By all means strive to get into Jesus Christ, to receive him, to make him yours, and to become his: why so? Because if he be not your Christ, he cannot be your peace; and if he be your Christ, assuredly he is your Peace-maker. Is there anything in the world which can concern you more than this? What! To have the justice of God satisfied, to have all your sins pardoned, to have God reconciled! If a great man and you fell out, and were at deadly variance, as he has you in his power, and might every moment of the day seize on you, and take away your life, and cut you in pieces, would you be quiet and contented? Especially when you yourself were the just cause of all the difference and danger, would you not seek peace? Would you not be glad to be reconciled, especially if he should offer it? Why, you and the great God are fallen out, and you are the cause of it; you sinned against him, and did that which his soul did hate, and did him wrong, and provoked him to wrath, and his wrath is revealed against you, and he can (when he will) at any time, in any place lay hold on you by the hand of his power, and execute his righteous judgments on you, and destroy and damn you forever! And yet will you neglect to make peace with him? Will you dally in this case, especially seeing he is thus far indulgent as to show you the way how to take hold of him, and make peace with him! There is no way in the world for this, but by coming in to Christ, and receiving of him by faith; and therefore if you would indeed escape the wrath of God, if you would indeed enjoy God as appeased and pacified, and reconciled, then lay hold on Christ by faith; I say on Christ, who only is our peace, and who only can make our peace: In whom the Father is well pleased, and by whom he is well pleased with us.

**Ob. Now whereas some profane spirit may reply, But Christ hath shed his blood already, and made peace and reconciliation already; and what he hath done in that kind shall stand, and never be reversed: And therefore I will not look after Christ, nor trouble myself.**

Sol. Beloved, pardon me if I be mistaken; but in my conscience this is the general opinion of ungodly men: They hear that Christ Jesus died to take away sin, and to make peace for sinners, and therefore they will take no thought after Christ, but will live basely, and boldly in their sinful ways! But as Jehu said to the messengers of Jehoram, What hast thou to do with peace? So would I say to such ranting Atheists, what talk you of peace made by Christ? There is no peace saith God to the wicked, Isa. 57:21, and to them that do not obey the truth, God will render indignation and wrath, Rev. 2:8, and tribulation and anguish, verse 9. And what though Jesus Christ did make reconciliation for some! Must this be presently for such as you, who will not know the day of your peace, and who slight and refuse the Prince of peace, and all the terms of peace! By your favor Sir, Christ never yet made such a reconciliation, that all sins whatsoever though they live in unbelief, and in impenitency, shall share in it, but only penitent sinners, and believing sinners.

Is Reconciliation the fruit and effect of Christ's death and sufferings? What comfort is this unto all Believers? Unspeakable comfort, God is reconciled, all is peace, all is well again: We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Atonement, Rom. 5:11.

Reconciliation, one distinguisheth of three moments of it.

1. Ante mortem Christi; as it was in the purpose of God by Christ, To have all his wrath pacified.



2. In morte Christi; as it was in the suffering and offering of Christ, where God set to his seal, to lay aside all wrath, and to be friends.

3. Post mortem Christi; as it is an Application and fruition, and this is when a sinner becomes a believer, when he believes on Jesus Christ, and by Christ is presented to God the Father who now owns him, and clasps him with peace and favor. Beloved, whatsoever the disputes of men are about the latitude, or narrowness of Reconciliation by Christ: and of what strength or weakness that Arminian distinction may be of Deus placabilis, & Deus placatus: This is agreed on all sides, that Reconciliation is obtained for, and actually applied to all Believers: Every Believer is in Christ, and everyone in Christ hath his peace made by Christ: Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 5.

Though others will but dispute for a share, yet you are sure for your part; and though others doubt, yet you may be confident that Christ is your peace, and hath reconciled you to God.

**Object. But where lies the comfort of this, that God and Believers are reconciled by Christ?**

Sol. I will tell you briefly If God be; reconciled unto you, then

1. There is your answer to all that Satan can say; But God is satisfied, and reconciled, my peace is made.

2. There is an end of all differences and disputes; but God is reconciled: The Egyptians are all drowned, &c.

3. There is sure rest for the Conscience, that is now at shore and quiet; for God is reconciled; nothing can quiet and pacify Conscience till God be pacified.

4. You shall never hear from God in wrath anymore forever; for all is taken off, and forever upon reconciliation by Christ.

5. You may look upon God, and approach his Throne of grace, and confidently treat with him, and sue unto him; for he is reconciled unto you; he is appeased, he is your friend, your Father.

6. You and he shall never be enemies more; for Reconciliation by Christ looks not only to the time past (in taking off all old and former differences) but also it looks to the time future, in preventing all succeeding breaches of separation; It is the everlasting Bond of Peace: As Christ's Righteousness is everlasting Righteousness, so Christ's Peace is everlasting Peace, a perpetual Incense.

7. You may enjoy yourselves, and all your comforts with exceeding comfort; for God hath accepted of you, and is Reconciled unto you; his Candle shines upon your Tabernacle: A wicked man cannot enjoy anything with comfort and peace, because God and his conscience are not at peace.

8. In all the troubles and differences of the world, you may yet clear yourselves; for in Christ you have peace; and though men vex, and wrangle with you, yet God is reconciled to you.

9. Are they not happy who have the Lord to be their God? What will not a reconciled God do for you? His love and friendship is as fruitful of mercies and blessings, as his Justice and wrath is of punishments and miseries.

10. Can anything hinder you from being saved? 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.

Is Reconciliation the fruit and effect of the death of Christ? Then let trembling, broken, humbled, even sinking hearts under the weight of their sins, and bitterness of God's wrath and displeasure, I say let them in this condition make in to Christ, and look up to Christ, and trust on Christ to make their peace: Ah poor creature! Why dost thou take this work upon thyself? I confess we must use means to find peace, but we have not power to make peace; we must pray, and confess, and repent, &c. but these are not our peace.

**Object. Will not these do it?**

Sol. No, but Christ only, 1 Joh. 2:1,2. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our sins. And therefore if ever you would have the wrath of God removed; if you would see all partition walls broken down, if you would have God to be pacified, to be friends with you again, to be at peace with you; then go to Christ, and make him your friend.

Object. Do not lose time by impertinent disputes and reasonings, But may we come to Christ! And can he, and will he make peace for us, and take up our differences!

Sol. Let me tell you,

1. Dispute what you will, you shall never find peace with God but by Christ; his Name only is Prince of Peace, he only is the Mediator of Peace, he only reconciles God and sinners.

2. It is his Office to reconcile God and sinners, and make peace; that is his work unto which he was called, and for which he was set apart: He is that Merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the sins of the people, Heb. 2:17. Mark the place, the Office of Christ is to be a Priest, &c. One chief work of that Office is to make Reconciliation for the sins of the people; and he is one that is very good in his Office; you need not be afraid to go to him for the work of his Office; for saith the Text, He is a merciful High Priest; very tender, very affectionate, very compassionate, easily wrought on by any distressed sinner that comes to him, and calls on him, Lord Jesus, my soul is afraid, and oppressed with the fear of God's wrath, and sense of his displeasure; I am grieved for offending and displeasing of him: O that thou wouldest undertake for me! I beseech thee step into the breach, make my peace, reconcile my soul, get thy Father to be friends with me, &c. He is a faithful High Priest: O he will not fail you, he will not put you off, he will not thrust you aside, he will surely undertake your condition, he will make Reconciliation for our sins.

3. It was the work of Christ from first to last; in life and in death. Heb. 9:26. He appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself; yea and it is his work now in heaven; He appears in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9:24, and he ever lives to make intercession for us, Heb. 7:25.

4. You of all other have special grounds of hope and trust, that Christ will be your Atonement and Reconciliation; Not only because the Reconciling Christ calls you (thus burdened) to come unto him, and he will give you ease, Matth. 11:28, but also because that the day when the people's souls were to be afflicted for their sins, on that day was the Priest to make an Atonement for their souls, Levite. 16:29,30.

4. The fourth great benefit which we have by the sufferings of Christ our mediator, is Redemption or deliverance.

Alas sirs! In what a miserable condition were we by reason of sin? Methinks the more virtues and blessed fruits that I read accruing by Christ unto us, the more do I still discern of our deep and involved misery by reason of sin: Sin was such a debt as none but Christ could satisfy for: Sin was such an offense as nothing but the blood of Christ could expiate, or get the pardon of it. Sin was such a breach, and such an enmity, as nothing but the death of Christ could take up and reconcile: And sin was such a bondage and thralldom, as nothing but the blood of Christ could redeem us from: In him (saith the Apostle, Ephes. 1:7) we have Redemption; but then he adds, through his blood; So Pet. 1:18,19. Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. In this Redemption by Christ, there are two things considerable. 1. The parts of it. 2. The degrees of it.

1. The parts of it are two; one is Privative, and respects that from which we are redeemed or freed; the other is Positive, and respects that state unto which we are translated; or if I may so express it, of which we are made free.

1. The Privative part of Redemption is that from which we are freed by Christ, and that is from all the chains of Spiritual bondage. Now there are six chains of bondage with which every sinner is bound, and from them all there is Redemption by Christ.

1. With the chains of bondage under the power of sin, 2 Pet. 2:19. Of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage; Every servant of sin is a Bond-slave to his Lusts; and so many sinful lusts as he hath, so many Tyrants doth he serve as a slave. And there is no slavery or bondage like unto that of sin; for sin never gives rest nor wages, but is infinite in its commands, and damns us at last for a

requital of all our services: But from this bondage doth Christ redeem or deliver us: For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil, 1 Joh. 3:8. Those works of the Devil were our sins, as the same verse expounds them. Rom. 6:6. Our Old Man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Two things in sin, from which Christ delivers us.

1. Jesus Christ hath by his Redemption delivered us from the dominion of sin. Rom. 6:14. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are under grace; by his Spirit which sanctifies: 2. And from the damnation for sin. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1, by his blood which justifies.

2. With the chains of bondage under the power of God's Justice: By reason of sin we fall into the hands of a just God who hath threatened sin, and revealed his wrath against it: So that wheresoever the sinner lives, he lives under this cloud of God's wrath (which at any times) may break and fall down upon him, and utterly and eternally overwhelm him. This is a very dreadful bondage, worse than his who sat eating with a great sharp sword hanging over his head with a little weak small thread: And worse than his who hung by a rotten bough, which if it brake, he had immediately fallen down, and had been dashed in pieces upon the Rocks. But Jesus Christ hath redeemed us out of the hands of God's justice, by satisfying and appeasing the same, and so hath delivered us from wrath. 1 Thes. 1:10. Even Jesus who hath delivered us from the wrath to come, we are saved from wrath through him. Rom. 5:9

3. With the chains of bondage under the power of the Law of God. The Law of God speaks death and curse unto every sinner, and under that is the sinner concluded: The soul that sins shall die; and cursed is everyone who continues not in everything that is written in the Law to do it: What a heavy bondage is this for a sinner to carry about with him many Indictments and accusations in his own heart, and to read as many curses pronounced against him in the Law of God: For this sin thou art cursed, and for that, and for everyone, &c. so that the sinner is condemned, and cursed, and dead in Law: Which curses (if the Law be not satisfied) will as surely befall him, as God is God: But from this bondage also hath Christ redeemed us. Gal. 3:13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. From the 1. Execution of the Law by his active obedience. 2. Condemnation of the Law by his passive obedience.

4. With the chains of bondage under a guilty, accusing, and condemning conscience: For out of every sin there doth arise a particular guilt, which guilt binds over the sinner to the Judgment Seat of God to answer for it, and to receive that condemnation threatened against it, and this lies heavy on his Conscience. *Terret me conscientia mea, ubicunque vadit mecum, Testis, Judex.* And truly this chain of bondage is such an iron yoke, and such a fiery furnace, and such a restless Sea, and such an amazing wound that none can bear it, who yet must bear it; It is the very spirit of bondage, the very terror of the Almighty, the very hell on earth: Yet also from this bondage doth Christ deliver us by making peace in his blood, and by speaking peace through his Spirit unto our spirits; and by preaching and sealing the forgiveness of our sins. Matth. 9:2. Son, be of good

cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee: And now Conscience is quiet, ceaseth to accuse and condemn, and excuseth and comforteth.

5. With the chains of bondage under the power of Satan who is the Prince of the power of the Air: the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, Ephes. 2:2, who takes us captives at his will, 2 Tim. 2:26, and whose lusts and will we do (naturally) serve, Joh. 8:44. Power of his 1. Dominion. 2. Operation and temptation. But Jesus Christ hath redeemed us from this bondage also: He hath bruised the head of this Serpent, Gen. 3:15. And by his Cross hath spoiled Principalities, and Powers, and triumphed over them, Col. 2:15, and overcome that danger, Rev. 12:8,9. And hath destroyed him that hath the power of death, that is the Devil, Heb. 2:14. And hath delivered us even from this power of darkness, Col. 1:13. He hath bound the strong man (so is Satan called, Matth. 12:29) who bound us, and ruled over us, and now we may by Faith quench all his fiery darts in the blood of Christ, Ephes. 6:16.

6. With the chains of bondage under the fear of death and hell: A perpetual fear of which lies upon the conscience of the sinner, who although in the presence of his mad and wild companions, and in the midst of his cups and delights, seems to be either unmindful or slighting; yet when he is alone, and more serious, his heart doth tremble at the thoughts of death and judgment; I would not die, I am afraid to die! But from this bondage also, all that believe in Christ are redeemed or delivered: Who, Heb. 2:15, did deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject unto bondage: And so, 1 Cor. 15:56,57. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ: And thus you have the Privative part of our



Redemption by Christ, viz. The evil from which by him we have deliverance.

2. Now follows the Positive part of our Redemption by Christ: For his Redemption is not a mere deliverance, as if one should only be freed out of prison, or only be kept from drowning, or only be reserved from condemnation: But besides the evil estate from which we are delivered by Christ, there is also a good estate unto which we are brought by the Redemption of Christ: As when the Israelites were Redeemed, they were not only delivered out of Egyptian bondage, but they were also brought into that goodly Land of Canaan: And truly so it is with our Redemption by Christ: As it is an outlet from all evil and misery, so is it an inlet to all blessings and mercies. The reason whereof is this, because this Redemption was not only a sufficient price to satisfy, but it was also a superabounding price to purchase: There was not only enough in it to get off all evil, but more yet remaining to merit and purchase all the good which our souls did need. Col. 1:13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. For that now we are 1. Under another Lord. 2. Under other Laws and commands. 3. Under the best Liberties and Privileges. Rev. 5:9. Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Verse 10, and hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth. Here you see what an excellent estate the Redeemed by the blood of Christ are brought into: They are redeemed unto God, so as to become his in a peculiar way of relation and possession; and so as to be made Kings and Priests unto him. Highest Dignities and Employments, which if I mistake not is expounded in 1 Pet. 2:9. Ye are a chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people: By all which is meant that high and heavenly estate with all those excellent Enjoyments, and Graces, and Dignities, and Privileges, and Communion derived unto us by the Redemption of

Christ: In one word, that estate purchased for us by the blood of Christ our Redeemer, is Grace and Glory, eternal happiness, and all that brings us thereunto: A new Relation, a new Spirit, Mercy Peace, Joy, Calling, Justifying, and Glorifying: And whiles we live on earth, all the good things thereof which are necessary for us: But of these (perhaps) I shall speak more ere long.

## 2. The degrees of Redemption by Christ.

I call them so, not simply as to the work and purchase of Christ (who at once fulfilled the same in the once offering of himself, and laying down the price of his blood) but respectively unto us in respect of our manner and order of participating of that his Redemption, in respect whereof Redemption is partly imperfect, and partly perfect and complete: In this life our participation of it is in some respects imperfect, but at the last day it shall be consummate and perfect, when we shall enjoy all and all fully, which the Redemption of Christ comes unto: It is true, that in this life we have such a Redemption by Christ as that thereby we are ransomed, and delivered from the servage or slavery of sin, and Satan, and death; sin shall not reign in us, and Satan shall not hold us captive, and act, and command us at his pleasure: And we are freed from the wrath of God and damnation. Nevertheless there still cleave unto us many sinful corruptions, and we are beset with many temptations, and are straitened with many corporal miseries, from which we are not, and shall not actually be delivered, until our Redeemer comes with his last and perfect Redemption; therefore Christ said, Luke 21:28. Lift up your heads, for your Redemption draws nigh.

I cannot slip off from this great effect of Christ's death, viz. Redemption, without making some Use of it unto ourselves.

1. Value your souls, set a higher rate on them; the Redemption of which did cost Christ so dear: Many men do despise their souls, and make light of them, and cast them away for every base lust: They swear away their souls, and whore away their souls, and drink away their souls, and play away their souls, and idle away their souls! Every sin is a venturing of your soul, it is the pawning of the precious soul, which cannot be redeemed but by the blood of Jesus Christ: Our souls deserve more regard from us, they are of more worth than we are aware of: We were redeemed (saith the Apostle) not with corruptible things, as silver and gold: But with the precious blood of Christ. Therefore value your souls more, and be not so prodigal of them, to throw them away for every base lust.

2. Look after your souls in what condition they are, whether in bondage still, or under Redemption. Naturally every man, and every soul is in bondage! Whatsoever ye do, do not suffer your souls to lie and rot in prison.

O that we did all see in what a Spiritual bondage our souls do lie? And under the sense of it could cry out (as Paul once) O wretched men that we are! Who shall deliver us? If thou hadst a child taken by the Turk, and made a Gally-slave, and tormented with cruelty every day in the Goale, thy heart would yearn for him, and request would be seriously made, and followed to ransom that poor embondaged child; why then! Be as merciful and pitiful to thy captivated soul, as thou art to thy captivated child. Thy soul (naturally) is in the worst, and heaviest, and saddest of all bondages; it is under the wrath of God, and under the power of sin, and Satan, and under the curse of the Law: Do not, do not let it rest thus, but make in by faith unto Christ, and beseech him to redeem thy soul; O Lord, saith David, Deliver my soul! So do thou; O Lord Jesus, redeem my soul, deliver me out of the hands of all mine enemies.

Alas! Why are we satisfied with other things, with this friend, and with that honor, with this profit, and with that pleasure! What of all these, if our precious and immortal souls have yet no portion in Christ, nor in the Redemption by Christ? As long as we are in the hands of God's justice, and in the hands of Satan's commands, and in the hands of our reigning sins, and in the hands of our raging Consciences, and in the hands of a sentencing, condemning, cursing Law! Is this a condition to rest in? You rest in it, because you are not sensible of it: were you indeed sensible of it, you would make out to Christ who is a Redeemer of our souls, and you would not be satisfied until Christ were made of God unto you Redemption.

3. Value the Lord Jesus Christ more than ever you have done, even for this reason, because he did shed his most precious blood to redeem you. When you had brought yourselves into such a miserable bondage, as nothing was price enough to pay your ransom, and to purchase your liberty; then did the Lord Jesus Christ come down on earth to break all the bonds of your distresses: He took your sins upon himself, to deliver you from your sins, and he was made under the Law to redeem you from the Law, and he was made a curse to redeem you from the curse, and he bare wrath to deliver you from wrath, and he suffered death to deliver you from death; and he conflicted with Satan, to deliver you from the power of Satan; and he fell into the hands of Justice to ransom you out of the hands of Justice: And he laid down his soul, that he might ransom and redeem your soul: Methinks such a Friend, and such a Christ, and such a Redeemer, should be more esteemed, and be more loved, and be more entertained, and more thanked: If it should cost one many thousand pounds to ransom you out of prison, or out of bondage, and after this, when he comes to your house, you would shut the doors against him, and not give him the least entertainment; what a barbarous ingratitude were this? It is much worse, and more base,

that after it hath cost the Lord Jesus Christ so much as his precious blood to redeem us, yet we will not give him any entertainment in our hearts and affections.

4. By all means accept of the Redemption by Christ: Be not like that foolish Hebrew servant, who when the year of Jubilee was come, and he might have gone free, yet he chose rather to be a servant: So when Christ hath wrought Redemption for us, and offers that plenteous redemption unto us, now to refuse it, and not accept of it; But to say, I had rather serve my sins still, and I like my bondage better; why! If you will not be persuaded to accept of deliverance and redemption by Christ, but your Spiritual slavery and captivity doth better please you, then remain as you are; But woe unto you if you do so, for within a few years, or weeks, or days, when God and Conscience, and Death, and Hell fall upon for your sins, you would give ten thousand worlds (if you could command them) that you had accepted of your Redemption by Christ: but then it is too late.

5. Then you who take yourselves to be Christ's, and to be the Redeemed of the Lord; Carry yourselves like redeemed Persons, and walk worthy of the Redemption which you have by Christ.

1. Give way unto your Redeemer; suffer him to rule your hearts, and to order your ways; for you are his by a right of Redemption: As the men of Israel spake to Gideon (Judge. 8:22) Rule thou over us, for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midean. So say you to Christ, Lord Jesus Rule thou over us, for thou hast redeemed us from the hands of all our enemies: Thou hast bought us with a price, and we are not our own, but thine.

2. Give not way to any works of bondage; return not to Egypt again, but walk on strait in the way to Heaven, and abound in all good works. Tit. 2:14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us

from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

3. Spend not your days in vanity; neither fashion yourselves unto the present course of the world; why so will you say? Because Christ hath redeemed you! Why is this contrary to our redemption by Christ? It is so, whatsoever you may think. 1 Pet. 1:18,19. You were redeemed from your vain conversations with the precious blood of Christ. Not only iniquities, but vanities fall under our Redemption by Christ. Gal. 1,4. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God.

6. Long for the day of your full and perfect Redemption by Christ: Be not so afraid of death, nor of the coming of Christ to judgment: Death will nothing disadvantage you, nor will the coming of Christ to judgment anything prejudice you: No, no; that is the day of perfect Redemption, both in point of deliverance, and in point of possession: Then shall your bodies also be wholly ransomed from the grave, and in soul and body shall you be glorified forever with the Lord your Redeemer.

7. Be exceeding thankful; if you be brought into Christ, and do partake of Redemption by him. O sirs! What mercy is this Redemption? Think a little of it, what a mercy it is, that your sins shall never damn you; that the curse of the Law shall never fall on you; that the wrath of God is taken off; that your sinful lusts which you formerly served, and which ruled you, are broken down, and you will serve them no more, nor shall Satan command you as heretofore &c. that you are brought into a state of Spiritual liberty.

8. If any poor soul lying in bondage, and groaning for deliverance, would be redeemed, then let him by faith look up to Jesus Christ, for he only is the Redeemer. Do so, For

1. Whatsoever your bondage may be, Jesus Christ is a suitable Redemption: Perhaps your bondage is under sin; perhaps it is under Satan's temptation, perhaps it is under slavish fear of wrath and death! But Christ is perfect Redemption, and full, and plenteous Redemption.

2. He is made of us unto God Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30. God hath set him up, and raised him up to be your Deliverer.

5. A fifth singular benefit depending upon the sufferings of Christ as our Mediator is, his Meritorious purchase, or Acquisition.

The sufferings of Christ had a double aspect.

1. One unto the Evils under which we lay, and to which we were obnoxious: In which respect his sufferings were a satisfaction.

2. Another unto the good which we did need, and would enjoy, and in this respect his sufferings were a purchase: Jesus Christ did suffer not only to deliver us from an evil and miserable condition, but also did restore us into a good and happy condition: And his sufferings were not only a price of payment to get off our debts, but they were also a price of purchase to procure (and that Meritoriously) all blessedness for us. Where sin abounded, Grace did abound much more, Rom. 5. Ephes. 1:11. In whom we have obtained an inheritance.

There are six things which Jesus Christ our Mediator hath purchased by his death.

1. All the Elect; They are his by way of Donation (Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, Joh. 17:6.) And they are his by way of

purchase: The Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, Acts 20:28.

2. Everlasting life, which is called the purchased possession, Ephes. 1:14. And the gift of God through Jesus Christ, Rom. 6:23. The blood of whom is worth Heaven itself. We have no right unto the heavenly and glorious inheritance, nor any hope thereof, but by Jesus Christ. Grace reigns through Righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5:22.

3. Nearness of Relation: Adoption of Sons; we who were in bondage, who were strangers, who were enemies, are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, Ephes. 2:13, and do by him receive the adoption of Sons. Gal. 4:5. To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.

4. The Holy Ghost: In his graces, assistances, and comforts. Not one grace, nor comfort, nor answer which you have, but it is the fruit of Christ's purchase. Jesus Christ hath purchased and obtained this. Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Verse 26. But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name; he is made unto us sanctification, 1 Cor. 30.

5. The forgiveness of our sins: Your sins are forgiven you for his Name-sake, 1 Joh. 2:12. In him ye have Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, Ephes. 1:7.

6. What shall I say more? He hath purchased all for us; all is ours; because Christ is ours, God himself becomes our God by Christ, and his Love, and Mercy, and Promises, and Peace, and Joy, and Hope, Heaven itself, and all that brings to heaven. Christ in you the hope of glory, Col. 1:27.



Why! This is wonderful comfort unto us, that the sufferings of Christ were a purchase: That there was such a dignity in them as paid all our debts, and such a value in them that amounted (moreover) unto a purchase of all blessings and blessedness. They were not a mere *Legael Debitum*, but also a *Superlegale Meritum*.

There are three choice comforts in this purchase by Christ.

1. You are begotten again to a lively hope: There is now good hope through Christ, that a poor sinner may see the face of God again, and that his poor soul may at last be found in Heaven, and that in the meantime he may partake of Grace, of the Divine nature, and of all that will bring to salvation, why so? Because Jesus Christ's blood and sufferings were a purchase, and a purchase of all these.

2. You have now a right to all these things, and a sufficient plea: Indeed you have no right or title of your own, you cannot say, Lord, I expect and challenge Heaven upon mine own obedience, upon mine own righteousness; this I am, and this I have done, and this I have suffered; therefore thou owest me heaven, and therefore mercy is due to me. No, no, if God should give you no more than what you deserve, you should have nothing but wrath and damnation: But though you have no right or title of your own, yet you have a right and title in and by the purchase of Christ. As a stranger hath no title of his own, yet if he be adopted to be a Son, upon this adoption there falls in a right or title: Or as if a poor Beggar should have an estate of Inheritance bought for him by another, and settled upon him by another; he may now expect and plead for that Inheritance, It was purchased and bought for me. So may we now go to God, and press him humbly and believingly, Lord, show me mercy, forgive me all my sins, give me thy Spirit, give me eternal life; why saith God, who are you? And what right and title have you? And what have you to show

for such heavenly lands and possessions! Lord, I have nothing of my own to show, but yet I have the blood of Christ to show; he bought me, and he bought all these at thy hands for me, it cost him dear, even his precious blood, therefore give me these things for his Names sake.

3. You shall assuredly possess all that good which Christ hath purchased for you. The Lord is faithful and just, he will not deal injuriously with his Christ, nor with us: It was expressly concluded in the Agreement 'twixt him and Christ, That if he would make his soul an offering for sin, he should then see his seed and of the travel of his soul, that he should be the Head of the Church; and that all that come in to him should have mercy, and grace, and glory: Now the Lord by no means will deal deceitfully with Christ, he will not put him to sorrows, and deliver him to death, and after all his bitter agonies and sufferings deny him what he hath so dearly bought: No, there is no possession more sure and safe, than that which depends upon the purchase of Christ: And if that reason of God's inviolable compact with Christ will not convince you of it; Then let this also help to strengthen your weak faith, viz. That Jesus Christ who hath purchased and merited all for you. He himself is God equal with the Father; and as God, will himself bestow and settle what as mediator he hath bought and purchased. Joh. 17:24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, that where I am, they may behold my glory.

Are the sufferings of Christ a Meritorious purchase? Then strive for two things.

1. To believe them to be so: This is not an easy work, but this is a necessary work: Though we do not perhaps at present so fully weigh it, yet ere long we shall see great reason to think on it, when we come

to die, when we come to the parting way, when we come to our last, and behold an eternal hell before our eyes, which we do deserve, and an eternal heaven before our eyes, which we deserve not; and when our title and right comes to be scanned, two things (at that time) will be extremely necessary.

One is to believe that Jesus Christ hath made a purchase of glory and happiness.

Another is, to believe that Jesus Christ hath made this purchase for our souls.

**Object. But you will say, We do believe both the one and the other!**

Sol. I am afraid that many do not so, although they say they do so: and I will give you four reasons for what I say.

1. If you do indeed believe that heaven depends upon the purchase of Christ, and forgiveness of sins depends upon the purchase of Christ; Why then do you depend so much upon yourselves? Upon your own righteousness? Why are not your hopes only fixed upon Christ? But you hope to be saved for your good meanings, and for your devout servings of God, and for your alms, and good works! Do you believe that salvation is to be had only upon the account of Christ's purchase, when in the mean time you do set up your own righteousness, and deny the righteousness of Christ, and place confidence in yourselves, and not only in Christ?

2. If you do indeed believe that salvation, and all saving good, properly depends on the sole purchase of Christ; Why then do you slight Christ so much, and mind him so little! If you do indeed believe that there is salvation in no other Name, and mercy in no

other Name, and peace in no other Name; whence is it that your souls are all this while destitute of Christ himself? And that he cannot persuade you to hearken unto him, so as to come in and obey him, that your souls may live? Tell me plainly, Is not this your fancy, that you may have the portion without the Person? The blessings which Christ hath purchased, though you never give up your hearts unto Christ who makes the purchase? But you are mistaken (and shall one day find it so) for as our persons are the first things which Christ hath purchased; and blessings and blessedness for them, the next: so it is Christ himself unto whom we must be first united before we can have any portion or communion in the good things purchased by him: If you did indeed believe that all your right and title to mercy and glory lay in the purchase of Christ, you would never be at rest until Christ himself were yours, &c. Col. 1:27. Christ in you the hope of glory, 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us of God &c.

3. If you do indeed believe that all your saving good depends upon the purchase of Christ, Why do you not go to Christ, and get from him some of that good, yea all that good which he hath purchased for us in this life?

Beloved, the purchase of Christ

1. Contains much good for this life: All that Christ hath purchased, is not a reversion of heaven hereafter; there is exceeding much good to be had in present possession: There is for this present life, a holy nature, a discharge of all sins, a power of new obedience, the presence of the Spirit, communion with our God.

2. There is nothing which Christ hath purchased for us, but it is very precious and very necessary: Christ did not die for small things; all that Christ hath purchased, he did purchase the same with his

precious blood; and if all that he purchased is worth his blood, then surely it is worth our care and our reception.

But why, is it not thus? You look on Christ's purchase only in the reversion, as if heavenly glory were the whole sum: It is not so, there are many precious things of a present possession which he hath purchased: And why are you so careless about them! If you do indeed believe them that they are precious and necessary; why take you no more pains to enjoy God as your reconciled God? Why do you not seek his favor and love which Christ hath purchased? And why are you so negligent to make peace with God, and to sue out that peace which Christ hath made? And why do you not seriously beg for holiness, and for all the graces of the Spirit of Christ? For these hath Christ purchased as well as glory: verily many men do not believe that Christ hath purchased anything; and many believe only that he hath purchased heaven; but for all other things; they fall neither within their faith, nor within their care.

4. If you believe the meritorious purchase of Christ, why do you keep off and stagger in your expectations and hopes, and confidences for glory and mercy, for any good, and doubt your enjoyments? Is it not because you doubt either of Christ's title, or of your own right.

2. Mind and improve the sufferings of Christ as a meritorious purchase: do not rest in the sufferings of Christ as a satisfaction only, nor as a deliverance only; but go on further, and consider them as a purchase, and accordingly improve them.

Beloved, ponder well what I say.

1. Your estate is not full without the purchase of Christ, and the good things purchased by his blood: Suppose you have God's justice satisfied for the sins which you have committed, and suppose that

Christ hath delivered you from wrath and condemnation: yet this is not enough that all a man's debts be paid; is this enough, unless you set him up with a good stock again? As deliverance from sin, and death, and wrath is necessary; so a right unto, and a possession of grace and glory is necessary: As you must show your acquittance from misery, so you must show your title to blessedness, and this lies in the blood of Christ as a purchase: the estate is not full, it is not repaired, unless you come to possession again.

2. As the estate is not full, so it is not safe without the enjoyment of what Christ hath purchased, nor without his title for the same. Rev. 22:14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City. Heb. 12:14 Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Rom. 8:30. Whom he predestinated, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Heb. 10:39. We are of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Acts 11:18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life! Lo, here are things purchased by Christ In ordine ad finem, holiness, repentance, justification, faith, and obedience; and without these there is no entering into life, &c. And therefore by all means look after the purchase of Christ, this is your salvation and Rock to build upon.

3. Your conscience will never be satisfied else; it will break down your Consciences from heaven if you have not Christ as your purchase; your rejoicing must be in Christ Jesus, and your hopes in Christ Jesus: And you must be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith, &c.

**Quest. But here some may demand, When should we improve the meritorious purchase of Christ?**

Sol. I answer, you should improve the meritorious purchase of Christ

1. All the days of your life; when at any time you find a need of any good that concerns your souls, and desire to enjoy the same, now remember what Christ hath purchased and bought for you, and now go in his Name to God the Father for it. Joh. 14:14. If you ask anything in my Name, he will do it. Chap. 16:23. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.

**Object. O the matters are so high, and so great, I shall never attain them!**

Sol. Do you find them within Christ's purchase? If so, then they are within your faith, and you may take them into your Prayer, and you shall certainly speed.

2. At the time of death; when all your hopes to all eternity depend on Christ; and when the great business and estate of immortality and life comes to the issue; and when all forever is reduced to the merit and power of Christ's death and purchase; when if Christ fails, all fails; and if his merit holds, heaven is sure, and you souls are sure! This is the great time, the last time to improve the meritorious purchase of Christ: Now lay hold on him, and fast hold on him, on his death, on his blood; O blessed Jesus! Thy Person have I accepted, thy blood have I relied on (on that precious and purchasing blood) I have relied hitherto on it, and it hath brought grace into my heart, and peace into my conscience, and joy into my soul, and forgiveness of sins, and the taste of much mercy and goodness; I read, and I do believe the future inheritance purchased by thy blood, and reserved in heaven for me: I die in the faith of it, I believe also to enjoy the Crown of Righteousness, the Kingdom of glory, that eternal life which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ my Lord.

6. I will super-add one great benefit more which results from Christ's Suffering as our Mediator, which shall be the close of all the rest, and that is this, The sufferings, or death, or blood of Christ is the confirmation of the Covenant; you read of a twofold confirmation of the Covenant.

1. God confirmed the Covenant, and he confirmed it by an Oath, Heb. 6:17, and Psal. 89:35. Once have I sworn by my holiness, &c.

2 Jesus Christ confirmed the Covenant, Gal. 3:17. The Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ; and Jesus Christ confirmed it by his Oath, therefore his blood is called the blood of the Covenant, Heb. 13:20. And the blood of the New Testament, Matth. 26:28.

Now Christ confirms the Covenant in a twofold respect.

1. In that his death gives force unto it: To this agrees that of the Apostle, in Heb. 9:16 Where a Testament is, there must also of necessary be the death of the Testator. Verse 17. For a Testament is of force after men are dead: In this place the Covenant is called a Testament, or a last Will, wherein Estates, and Legacies are bequeathed, and which cannot be challenged until the Testator dies; but upon his death the Testament is of force (that is) all concerned in the Will and Testament may come, and demand, and take out the Legacies bequeathed unto them.

**Object. And whereas you may object, that the Saints before the death of Christ obtained all blessings.**

Sol. It is answered, that Jesus Christ was a Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, Rev. 13:8. Jesus Christ was reckoned both



with God, and with his Church of old as dead, and the promise of laying down his life for his people, accepted in their time, as if it had been performed; and his very death appeared unto them in the Sacrifices of the Law, and accordingly the Testament was of force unto them.

2. In that his death seals the Covenant, as firm, and stable, and unalterable, saith the Apostle, Gal. 3:15. Though it be but a man's Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto: There is now no question to be made of the intentions of God, or of his promises in the Covenant, for they are all of them Yea, and Amen in Christ, they are sure and stable; the blood of Christ hath confirmed and ratified all; there cannot possibly be an higher confirmation of the Covenant than this; If a man offers you his Oath to assure you, this is high; but if a man will lay down his life upon it, if he will take his death upon it, he cannot give an Higher Testimony or Confirmation unto a Truth.

Now to take off all doubting's on our part, and fully to settle our persuasions concerning the Covenant, as God gives us his Oath, swearing by himself. Heb. 6:13. (And God could go no higher than to swear by himself) So the Son of God gives us his life, he takes his death upon it, that all shall be performed, and further he cannot go.

**Object. But will some say, What if Christ did die? Why must there be thereupon a confirmation of the Covenant? Must all the Covenant be sure for performance, because Christ died? What was there in his death for such a purchase?**

Sol. I answer; The death of Christ was the death of a Surety; and of one who was therefore to die, that the Covenant might be established: There are three things considerable in the death of Christ: One is Satisfaction to God's Justice: The other is Merit of all

the good which we do need and God will bestow: And there is also Efficacy; Jesus Christ will see all made good; and in these respects his death comes to be a confirmation of the Covenant; but I will not stand any longer on this Point; only I will make a little Use of it, and so pass on.

Hath Jesus Christ as Mediator confirmed the Covenant? Not only established it to be unalterable, but made it firm, and sure, and unquestionable for the performance of all the good which God hath therein promised? Then you who are brought in to Christ, who are the people of God in Covenant (you whose treasures are laid up in the Covenant, and whose whole portion is settled there) why do you doubt, and why are ye afraid? And why are your hearts troubled? You cannot possibly have a better, or fuller portion than God hath already settled upon you in this Covenant; and you cannot possibly have a better or stronger assurance to confirm you in the expectation of all that good of the Covenant than the Oath of God, and the death or blood of Christ: You have the Promise of God, and the Oath of God, and the blood of Christ to assure you; what would you have more, and what can you have more? It was a sharp aggravation of the infidelity of the Jews, in John 12:37. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. And verily it is a just exprobatation of our unbelief, that though we have the promise of God to perform his Covenant, and though we have the Oath of God to perform his Covenant, and though we have the Blood of Christ to confirm the Covenant unto us, yet in every occasion, and in every strait we are calling all into question; we doubt, and fear, and suspect, and question whether the Covenant of God with us be a faithful word, as if God who cannot lie, would deceive and fail us, as if the God of Truth would forswear himself; as if the Lord Jesus Christ having sealed the Covenant with his own blood, might be found a deceiver, and a false witness! The Lord humble us for this

unbelief, and cause us to fear, and to abhor this sin of unbelief, as that which is most dishonorable to God, and as most prejudicial and dangerous unto our own souls.

Hath Christ our Mediator confirmed the Covenant by his own death! Then you who do believe in Christ (and therefore are interested in the Covenant) make out to your God for all the mercy, and for all the good, and for all the blessings which your souls do need. Heb. 4:16. Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that ye may obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need: God hath put his seal to the Covenant that it is sure, and Christ hath put his seal to the Covenant that it is sure; Now do you put your seal to the Covenant that it is faithful and sure; your believing is your sealing: He that hath received his Testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true, Joh. 3:33.

There are four Arguments which do testify that we have set our seal to the Covenant, that we do indeed believe that it is surely established, and surely confirmed by Christ, so that it will not fail to be of force and efficacy unto us.

1. If we be much in drawing near to God, entreating him to remember his word of Covenant. It is good for me to draw near to God: He hath not said, seek ye me in vain.
2. If we be much in rejoicing in the word of the Covenant, and in the death of Christ confirming it to us; If the blood of Christ will hold, I shall not fail; and yet I have bond and seal sure enough.
3. If we still patiently wait on God, expecting the performance of his sealed, sworn, and confirmed Covenant: I will wait for the God of my salvation, I will look for him, my God will hear me!

4. If we oppose and strive to silence all unbelieving suggestions against the fidelity of the Covenant. Psal. 42:11. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the help of my countenance, and my God. Psal. 73:26. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Tit. 1:2. God who cannot lie hath promised.

Hath Jesus Christ our Mediator confirmed the Covenant by his death! Then O Christian, keep up thy Faith, and draw out thy faith, and exceedingly rejoice in Christ; for thy estate is sure, and thy soul is sure, and thy salvation is sure, all is sure, because all is surely confirmed by the death of Christ: The death of Christ was a ratification to the whole Testament, to the whole Covenant, and to every part and title of it: and as sure as Christ hath died, so sure art thou to enjoy all that God hath Covenanted with thee for there shall not fail one word of all the good he which hath promised.

**Object Not one word? Not one good thing?**

Sol. N. o, not any one; why then Mercy shall be thine, and Grace shall be thine, and Peace shall be thine, and Joy shall be thine, and Glory, and Salvation shall be thine, for all these, and more than these are promised by God in his Covenant, and are sealed by his death.

**Quest. It is a poor dispute of Popish and low spirits against the certainty of a Christian. How can you possibly attain unto assurance? And how can any man be sure of God's love, and of God's mercy, and of his salvation?**

Sol. Indeed upon the grounds that they go upon, no man can be sure; for;

1. They lay a foundation of their own works, and of their own righteousness, and of their own free will, upon which assurance can never be built.

2. But as the Apostle spake in another case, we have a most sure word of Prophecy, so the Christian hath very sure ground for grace, mercy, and glory: He hath the sure Covenant of God, he hath the sure Oath of God, and he hath the sure blood of Jesus Christ; God hath brought him into Covenant, and he will surely perform all his Covenant; you have the Oath of God for it, and you have the blood of Christ for it, that all shall be surely and certainly accomplished: And therefore O Christian, rejoice in believing, for God will surely bless thee, will surely keep thee, will strengthen thee, and will surely save thee.

## SECT. VII.

Quest. 7. There is one Question more which I mentioned in the beginning, viz. What Jesus Christ still doth for his people in Covenant, unto whom he is a Mediator.

Sol. For answer unto this, be pleased to consider that the works of Christ our Mediator are distinguished into five sorts.

1. Those of his Life on Earth.
2. Those of his Death.
3. Those of his Resurrection.
4. Those of his Ascension.

5. Those of his Session, at the right hand of God the Father in heaven: Of these last I shall only speak at this time.

The works of Christ as Mediator are considerable under a three-fold notion.

1. As to the susception of, and engagement for them. (Heb. 10:7,9, Then said he, Lo I come to do thy will O God; in the volume of the book it is written of me) In this respect Christ applied himself to the work of a Mediator before he came into the world, and assumed our Nature by way of condescension and compact.

2. As to the performance and execution of them: Thus he acted them being on earth, in becoming man, or God Incarnated, and fulfilling all righteousness in respect of his Active and Passive obedience, which were both satisfactory and meritorious.

3. As to the application of all (in time) unto us; and this is the great work of Christ now in heaven for us as our Mediator; this is a very choice Point, and I would speak unto it.

First in general, That Jesus Christ doth act or work for his people, as now exalted and sitting at the right hand of God in heaven.

Secondly, in opening the special work, that eminent work of Christ in heaven, for his people on earth.

1. That Jesus Christ doth think on his servants, and doth act or work for them, he being now in heaven, the Scriptures plainly affirm. Heb. 9:24. Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figure of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (as an Attorney appears for his Client) 1

Joh. 2:1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous (the Advocate pleads, &c.) verse 2. And he is the Propitiation for our sins. Besides these Scriptures, there are several Arguments to demonstrate it.

1. His Office doth still continue, although he be now in heaven. Heb. 4:14. We have a great High Priest that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God. Heb. 7:16. He is a Priest made not after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Verse 17. For he testifieth, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek; whence I thus argue, That if the Priestly Office of Christ still continues in Heaven, then there is some work which Christ still doth in Heaven: Because an Office is therefore given, and therefore continues in regard of some work that is to be done, and to be continued by him who is invested with such an Office: It were absurd and ridiculous to imagine that Jesus Christ should still enjoy an Office of Priesthood to no use or purpose, there being nothing for him to do in that Office.

2. He is very sensible of our conditions here on earth, both in a way of apprehension, and in a way of compassion. In a way of apprehension; Rev. 2:8. I know thy works and tribulation and poverty. Acts 9:4. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? In a way of compassion; Heb. 4:15. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities: and Chap. 5:2. He hath compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. To what end were these, if Christ could or would not, or might not do anything for his servants, because he is in heaven, and they on earth?

3. His love remains as strong unto them now he is in heaven, as it was unto them whiles he was on earth, Rev. 3:9. I will make

them to know that I have loved thee: And love is active in the behalf of them who are beloved.

4. His Relation is as near as it was; the same union, and the same relation still: He is the Head, and we the Members; he is the Root, and we the Branches; he is the Husband, and we are his Spouse still; if the same near relation continues still, surely works of kindness continue still.

5. You have his Promise to act for you, though he be now in heaven. Joh. 14:13. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do. Verse 16. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.

6. Our Faith would be at a loss in all our accesses and approaches, if Jesus Christ should give over all working for us; nor, it is not sufficient that we represent his sufferings and merits, unless he himself doth the same on our behalf.

2. But now let us inquire what is that eminent and great work which Christ doth in heaven for us; it is Christ's Intercession for us. Rom. 8:34. It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Hebr. 7:25. He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

I will open two things concerning the Intercession of Christ our Mediator; viz. 1. The nature of it. 2. The virtue or benefit of it.

1. The Nature of it.

You read in Scripture of a three-fold Intercession.

1: Our intercession one for another. 1 Tim. 2:1. I exhort therefore that Supplications, Prayers, Intercession, and giving of thanks



be made for all men. Moses interceded for the people of Israel when they fell into that great sin of Idolatry, which did so much provoke God to wrath. And David made intercession for the life of his child, and Paul for Epaphroditus and Onesimus. All the people of God on earth do pray one for another; but this is not in their own name, but in the Name of Christ.

2. The Spirits Intercession. Rom. 8:26. The Spirit itself maketh Intercession for us, &c. Verse 27. He maketh Intercession for the Saints according to the will of God. And his Intercession is not a formal and meritorious intercession as Christ's is, but only a causal or virtual intercession by teaching us what to pray for, and by giving us hearts and abilities and affections for to pray.

3. Christ's Intercession; which was partly done while he was on earth. Joh. 17:9. I pray not for the world, but for all them that thou hast given me: and Luke 22:31,32. Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee! And partly done while he is now in heaven: And it may be thus described.

This Intercession of Christ is a glorious and authoritative work of Christ our High Priest and Mediator, wherein he takes upon him the cause and condition of all and every Believer, and wills the effectual application of all and every good which he hath merited and purchased for them, which will, or request of Christ, the Father hears, and always grants.

There are many things observable in this description.

1. The Intercession of Christ is a glorious work. There were works of Christ's Humiliation, as to be born, and die; and there are works of Christ's Exaltation, amongst which Intercession is

one: He doth this work now being in his glory, and he doth it after a glorious manner; not by prostrating himself as once he did in the Garden, or by falling down on his knees as he did on earth; but by presenting of his Person and sufferings, and merits unto his Father on our behalf in heaven, as the reason of the good which we desire to enjoy.

2. And therefore I add, that it is an Authoritative work. There is a praying (as one distinguisheth) out of humility, which is a desire or request for things unmerited: And there is a praying out of Authority, wherein one doth not merely present his request to be granted, but also his right that it ought to be granted: Such is the Intercession of Christ which is grounded not absolutely In promisso, on God's gracious promise, but principally In precio, in his own satisfaction and merit, upon which he may justly demand and challenge audience and performance.

3. Christ's Intercession in heaven, respects not himself, but his Church, and every Member thereof on earth: When he was on earth he many times prayed for his, and for himself; but being now in heaven, and glorified, he prays not for himself, but only for his on earth. For as their Intercessor he takes upon him their persons and their cause, and their condition; as Paul entreated for Onesimus, and Judah for Benjamin unto his Father: You read of the High Priest, that when he went into the Sanctuary, he went in with the names of the twelve Tribes upon his breast. So Jesus Christ when he went up to heaven, he did as, it were carry up with him every Believers name, and every one of their wants and necessities, and for every one of them makes requests unto his Father.

4. Christ's Intercession in Heaven is the presenting of his will unto his Father for the application of the good which he hath purchased on the behalf of his servants. Joh. 17:24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, &c. When you pray for mercy, for grace, for strength, for deliverance, for any good, then Jesus Christ appears for you, Father he is one for whom I undertook, for whom I died, and satisfied, whom I have reconciled unto thee, on whose behalf I purchased and merited all this; now for my sake, and upon my account hear him, and answer him; This is the Intercession of Christ, when his blood speaks good things for us, Heb. 12:24, and obtains the application of all which he hath merited for us.

5. The Intercession of Christ is powerfully and effectually prevailing, and it is always so. God the Father is well-pleased with him, and with us in and for him: and accepteth of our persons, and grants our Petitions for his sake. Joh. 11:42. I know that thou hearest me always. Rev. 8:3. There was another Angel that came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense that he should offer it, with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne. Verse 4. And the smoke of the incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints ascended up before God out of the Angels hand.

6. This work of Intercession is a fixed, permanent, continued work: My meaning is, that as long as there remains any one Elect person, any one Believer on earth, until everyone of them be gathered up into heaven; so long doth Christ's Intercession continue: even until Jesus Christ hath brought them all and everyone into his Fathers house, and settled on every one of them eternal glory, and saith, Now you do perfectly enjoy as

much, and all that I have suffered for, and purchased on your behalf.

2. Now follows the Virtues and Benefits, of and from the Intercession of Christ.

1. Access unto the Father, with whom we may freely hold communion, and unto whom we may put up all our requests with confidence. Heb. 10:19. Having therefore boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. Verse 20. By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh: verse 21. And having a high Priest over the house of God. Verse 22, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of Faith. In this Scripture the Apostle exhorts the faithful to seek and to hold up communion with God in heaven: And for this end propounds several Arguments.

1. Their Liberty by Christ. Christ hath opened Heaven for us by his blood, so that by this blood we may enter into the Holiest, unto the presence of the most holy God by faith in him: And we may freely speak all our minds unto him in Prayer (so the word boldness signifies, a freedom of speech) telling God all our mind, all our griefs, all our fears, all our desires.

2. The Ground of this Liberty: In the price and purchase of it, even the blood of Jesus.

3. The extent of this Liberty: All that are brethren, enjoy it; all that are the Children of God, and Members of Christ are Brethren; and though some are strong, and others are weak, yet they are admitted to come and enter into heaven freely to pour out their prayers.

4. There is way made for them, a new way (that is) of grace, and upon the account of Christ, and a living way; Christ ever lives to make intercession for them, and to help them, and it is consecrated for us, set apart on purpose for us.

5. They have Christ still for their Priest, who once offered Sacrifice for Believers, and reconciled them, and doth still intercede for the reconciled: And he is a Priest over the house of God; he hath authority to bring whom he pleaseth, and to speed and help them: And therefore he presseth them to draw near with a true heart (sinners though weak) and with full assurance of Faith, being settled and fully confident to be accepted through Jesus Christ, and find favor and audience, and dispatch by his blood and intercession.

2. Encouragement against all the shortness, imperfections, and mixtures of our holy services, and performances: Our best services are very weak and imperfect (more is to be done than what we do) and much sinfulness mingles with our very prayers: there is the Candle and the Snuff; the Fire and the Smoke; the Gold and the Dross; the Wheat and the Chaff; enough in our best doings to undo them and us, to move the holy God to hide his eyes, and stop his ears at our Prayers: But Jesus Christ our Intercessor covers those imperfections, and takes away the dross in our sacrifices, and by his Merits makes them to be an acceptable offering unto the Lord, and a sweet savor unto him. Exod. 28:36. Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it Holiness unto the Lord. Ver. 38, and it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord. So Jesus Christ, &c. Rev. 8:3. He is that Angel having the golden Censer, and much Incense to offer it with

the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne: Though in respect of ourselves, and our own services as performed by us, we cannot expect acceptance, nor answer; yet in respect of Christ our Intercessor, that promise shall be made good, Isa. 56:7. Even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their Sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine Altar.

3. A security against all charges, objections, and accusations, and condemnations, Rom. 8:33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Ver. 34, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; or rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us. This sin, and that failing may be objected against us, but Jesus Christ maketh Intercession; Father, for my sake forgive it, and pass it by, Heb. 9:29. Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; and who can appear against us, if Jesus Christ appear for us? He can answer all, and silence all.

4. A Restoration in case of sinning, and falling, and offending; that yet the breach may be made up: 1 Joh. 2:1. My little children, these things I write unto you, that you sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Ver. 2. And he is the Propitiation for our sins. As if he should say (You that have fellowship with the Father and with the Son) take heed of sinning! O but do what we can we many times do sin, and this is a sore grief and fear unto our souls! But yet do not despair saith the Apostle, this breach may be made up again; for, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, &c. He can plead your pardon, and put away your sins, and make your peace again: As Jesus Christ made our peace by being our Redeemer, so he keeps the peace by being our Intercessor: the purchasing of our peace belongs

to his blood, and the conserving of our peace belongs to his Intercession.

5. A pledge of sufficient help, and of all good, be it never so great, never so much, it will come, it shall be had, because Jesus Christ makes Intercession. Heb. 7:25. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost (perfectly) that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make Intercession for them: Christ's Intercession is grounded on his Merits which have bought and purchased all for us: and Christ's Intercession is the Application of his Merits, for the giving out of all the goodness he purchased; it is able to carry any suit for you.

6. A certainty of perseverance and duration in the state of grace; Why will you say? Because Christ makes Intercession for that in particular, and Christ's Intercession is always effectual. It cannot be denied, if God will hear us, and grant us what we do ask in the Name of Christ (as he saith he will) surely then he will never deny the Petition of Christ himself: But Jesus Christ did make particular Intercession for the perseverance of his people unto the end. Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Joh. 17:11. Holy Father, keep through thy Name those that thou hast given me. Ver. 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Luke 22:32. I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not.

7. Assurance of salvation. Joh. 17:24. I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me. As he is gone to Heaven to prepare a place for them, so his Intercession will set them in that place.

8. A clear certainty of enjoyment: What shall I say more? As Christ makes Intercession for us, so he hath an Authority to confer and bestow upon us whatsoever he prays for, &c. One says well, *Praestat cum patre quod postulat à patre, quia Mediator est, & Creator. Mediator est ut poscat, Creator est ut tribuat*; whatsoever Christ prays to his Father for to give you, that same he himself also can with the Father give unto you.

I shall now make some useful Application from this Doctrine of Christ's Intercession for us.

First, it discovers unto us the Erroneous Doctrine of the Papists, who set up other Intercessors with Christ in Heaven. Although they seem to hold but one Mediator of Redemption, yet they do expressly maintain many Mediators of Intercession; and though Bellarmine confesseth one only Mediator of Intercession which is Christ, yet he extremely contends for many mediate Mediators of Intercession, as are the Saints now in Heaven, who though they do not implere, grant what we do pray for; yet they do impetrare by their Merits for us, and accordingly we may pray unto them to pray for us unto God.

But this Popish Opinion is

1. Most injurious to Christ, who alone is designed by God, and hath that Priestly Office for Redemption and Intercession; who is the Angel that offers up the Prayers of the Saints; our Advocate with the Father, and ever lives to make Intercession for us: And for us to assign Mediators whom God never assigned; and to join them in Commission with Christ for our help to God, whom God never joined; as this is a most daring presumption, so is it a plain derogation to Jesus Christ, as if he were either insufficient alone unto that work, or else unwilling and backward to hear and help us.



2. It is impious, or at least superstitious; for we have not one word of Command in all the Bible to look up to glorified Saints as Intercessors, nor any one Word of Promise that God will hear them for us, or us using their names.

3. It is needless; for Christ saith, Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, I will do it, Joh. 14:13.

4. It is an Opinion (among themselves) of wonderful uncertainty; for they cannot assure us, that if we do pray unto them that they do hear our Prayers; and in this they do extremely puzzle themselves, especially about Mental Prayers which are only cognoscible of God himself; some of them say that those glorified souls, *Mira quadam celeritate quodammodo ubique, & per se audiunt preces supplicantium*, a most silly unrational fancy.

Others that they know *Ex Relatione Angelorum*, every man having his Angel Guardian, who go away to Heaven with our Prayers: But what then of the Prayers in the meantime made? And what Scripture have they for this? Others, that *In Deo vident omnia a principio suae Beatitudinis qua ad ipsos pertinent, & ideo Orationes*. Others deny that, and say, that our Prayers are then revealed unto them by God when we are making of them; but how know they that? It must be so or no way.

**Object. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; so prays Moses. Ergo.**

Sol. 1. To whom prayed he so? 2ly. The Covenant he means that God made with them; not their present prayers in heaven. 3ly. For according to their Opinion, Not at that time in Heaven.

**Object. Unto which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee? Said he in Job.**

Sol. 1. Means he of them in heaven? 2ly. Not unto any one.

**Object. Dives in hell prayed to Abraham.**

Sol. But who on earth? Is it safe to imitate the damned? Quando Pater a filio, Quando Deus a Christo.

5. It is Ridiculous to whistle thus to Saints; for they must thereupon apply themselves to Christ, and then they must back again with Christ's Merits! And why not without any more ado to Christ at first?

**Quest. But before I pass on, I would speak a word unto a more material Scruple; viz. Whether Christ's Intercession in heaven, be not a probable Argument of the imperfection of Christ's Merits at his death? If his death were sufficient to purchase all good for us, what need then of his Intercession?**

Sol. I answer, the death of Christ was sufficient Ad promerendum; but the Intercession of Christ is required only Ad applicandum. There was no imperfection at all in his death, for it was a plenary satisfaction and merit; nor doth the Intercession of Christ argue any imperfection in his merit, because his Intercession is not a new meriting, but only a continual application of that which he hath already merited by his death.

Doth Jesus Christ now in Heaven make intercession for us? How sad then is their condition who have no part in Christ? Who have not him for their Advocate with the Father; not appearing for them; not interceding on their behalf?

You that will not be persuaded to hearken, to receive Christ, but resist his Spirit, and slight his Gospel, and reject him, what will you do in the days of your distress and death?

1. All saving mercy comes unto us upon the Intercession of Christ; his Intercession is the application, and the donation of Righteousness, Reconciliation, Forgiveness, and Salvation unto us.

2. And can you have faith on him to be your Advocate and Intercessor, who would not receive him to be your Lord and head? O stand out no more against the Offers of Christ least you; shut out yourselves from the Intercession of Christ. One day you will find a need of Christ to help you; you will pray for mercy, and you will pray for salvation, and these Prayers will not prevail without Christ's Intercession: If you do indeed desire to be heard in what you pray, then hear Christ in what he speaks to you, and prays you to hearken to him; hear his voice, receive himself by faith, obey his will, hearken unto him, that he may hearken unto you.

You that are Believers, perhaps as yet are but weak, and are apt to be shaken, and afraid of yourselves, and of your requests, how they will speed, and whether they will speed, and many times are ready to be silent in Prayer! O do not so, but Remember that you have an Advocate with the Father: Remember that Jesus Christ ever lives to make Intercession for you: Remember that what is purchased by his death, that will he apply unto you by his Intercession. In all your addresses, and prayers, look off from yourselves, and look more on your Intercessor: Believingly consider

1. Who he is; even Jesus Christ the Righteous, your Lord, your Christ, your Mediator, your Priest, and Intercessor.

2. What his Intercession is; on what it is grounded; not on your merits, but on his own. The end of that Intercession, viz. To give out to you what he hath purchased for you.

3. The qualifications of his Intercession.

1. It is Mighty and Powerful; It never fails, it is never denied, nor can be.

2. It is Pitiful; he is full of compassion towards you, is very sensible of your infirmities, presently hears you, and is ready to help you.

3. It is Universal; First, As to every one of you. Secondly, As to everyone of your Requests; for Mercy, for Favor, for Grace, and strength, &c.

4. It is sufficient; Though all the Members on Earth pray at one time from all the Quarters of the Earth, he hears you all, will plead for you all, will speed you all.

5. It is Absolute; his Intercession carries it against your unworthiness, for his Own sake.

6. It is Perpetual; every day you pray, and every day, every hour, yea forever he lives to make Intercession for you.

**Object. Why then are we not presently heard?**

Sol. You are so, but not supplied always presently, because as it belongs to the Fidelity of his Intercession to speed you, so it belongs to the Wisdom of the Intercessor when to deliver out unto you that help.

Jesus the Mediator of the Covenant.

And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

- Heb. 12:24.

I have discoursed of Jesus Christ our Mediator in Relation unto his Person, and to the Natures united in his Person, and unto his Obedience both Active and Passive; and likewise unto the Virtues or Benefits by him as our Mediator, viz. Satisfaction, and Remission, and Reconciliation, and Redemption, and Purchase: And then of the great Work which Jesus Christ doth still for us in Heaven as our Mediator, viz. his Intercession.

I shall now close up this Discourse with the Resolution of three notable Question which shall be instead of the general Uses for the whole matter.

1. Whether Jesus Christ as Mediator did die for all and every man; and those forementioned Benefits of his death were intended and extended unto all?
2. Whether any Person can certainly know the particular intention of Christ's death in the Benefits of it unto himself?
3. How a person may evidently know that Jesus Christ died for him, and satisfied God's justice for him.

#### SECT. VIII.

1. Quest. Whether Jesus Christ as Mediator died for all, and every man? Redeemed all? Reconciled all? Purchased Salvation for all?

Sol. Concerning this Question there are several Opinions of men.

1. Some have held that Jesus Christ died for all things (that is) for all creatures whatsoever, because the Apostle saith that Christ by his blood Reconciled all things; and therefore they conclude that the Sun and the Moon, and the Stars, and all the Elements, yea and the very Devils were Reconciled by Christ: a vile Opinion; As if Jesus Christ who appeared to put away sin, by the Sacrifice of himself, and to Reconcile God unto us, and is the Mediator betwixt God and men, should be a Mediator also for damned Devils, who are eternally judged for their transgression, or should satisfy God's justice for the Heavens and Earth, and such like Creatures which were never capable of offending or sinning against God! But by all things which the Apostle saith Christ hath Reconciled, he means the universal Church, which is now partly in Heaven, and partly in earth.

2. Some have held that Jesus Christ hath died for all mankind, without any difference of sins or sinners; that he took upon him all the sins of all men, and did by his death expiate all their sins, and Ipso facto reconciled them to God without any respect to believing or not believing: Nay let them speak out their own Opinion, Christ (say they) did suffer, was crucified, and died, and satisfied no less for them that are now damned, and that hereafter shall be damned, then for the sins of Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, and all that shall be saved: This was the Opinion of Jacobus Andreas in the conference of Montpelgart, and one Haberus followed it fully: Jesus Christ (saith he) died not for some men only, but for all the posterity of Adam, not one man of universal mankind excepted (no not Judas himself) whether they do by faith challenge that salvation, and remain in it, or whether they do by infidelity refuse that salvation, and thereupon perish eternally: Methinks it is great pity that any were in Hell before Christ died, and that Jesus Christ should suffer so exceedingly for men's salvation who are already damned.

3. Others are of opinion that the death of Christ was universal for all men, thus far, That Jesus Christ as to this work, wrought Redemption for all, not only in a way of sufficiency (which respects the dignity of his Person) but in a way of sufficiency as to God (that is) he satisfied Divine Justice for all, and purchased deliverance and salvation for all, and if any miss of that salvation and Redemption the fault is not in Christ who paid the Ransom for all, nor in God who accepted it for all; but only in particular men's Unbelief who refuse Christ, and that universal salvation by him: So that according to this opinion the Redemption of Christ is universal on Christ's part; and as to his work though it prove to be but particular as to the unbelievers part, all men are

in a salvable condition, and shall be saved, if they themselves will not refuse it.

4. Others are of Opinion that the Redemption of Christ hath a double consideration; One as to the dignity of the price which he laid down, which was sufficient in itself for all! Another as to the intended scope and efficacy of his death, which they make commensurable with the will and purpose of God, and the compact 'twixt God and Christ in the behalf of all the Elect of God. Now in this Opinion they hold Redemption by Christ in some respect to be universal, namely as to all the Elect of God; but yet so, that in respect of the whole world, it is only particular.

This distinction is the same in sense with that of Reconciliation.

1. General, made on the Cross, which as to the value of the Sacrifice, was not only universal, but infinite.
2. Particular, which is the application of that Reconciliation (which in itself hath power to reconcile all) unto the hearts and Consciences of men by faith.

But leaving the variety of speeches. 1. I will show in what sense Christ's death and redemption may be said to be for all.

2. What my own thoughts be concerning the question proposed.

In five senses the Redemption or Death of Christ may be styled General or universal.

1. As to the valor, sufficiency, or dignity of him that died.



2. As to the efficacy of it for all the Elect, and all that believe in Christ; and therefore the Author of the Book De vocatione gentium (whether it were Ambrose or Prosper) spake well, *Populus Dei habet suam plenitudinem. In Electis est quaedam specialis universitas, & de toto mundo totus mundus liberatus; & de omnibus hominibus omnes homines videantur assumpti, &c.* And so likewise it is universally effectual for all that believe in Christ: For as the sin of Adam hath an universal efficacy on all that come from him; so the Redemption by Christ, (who is the second Adam) hath also an universal efficacy on all who are by faith brought in unto him.

3. In this sense also, the Death and Redemption, and salvation by Christ may be said to be universal, or to be for all; namely That all who are Redeemed and saved, they are Redeemed and saved by Christ. As a School-master in a town is said to teach all the Children in that town, not because every Child in that town is taught by him, but because every Child that is taught, he is taught by him; so saith Austin, Christ Redeems and saves all, not that every particular man is Redeemed and saved by Christ: but that all who are redeemed and saved, are redeemed and saved by him, there being no other Name but his by which we must be saved.

4. In this sense also you may hold it general as to the Gospel Annunciation (as Musculus speaks) or offer as we speak; although the grace and virtue of Christ's Redemption reacheth not unto all, yet the offer and invitation of it by the Gospel is unto all; and therefore Christ in his Commission unto the Apostles, saith, *Matth. 28:19. Go and teach all Nations. Mark 16:15. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; yet with this condition annexed, He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned, verse 16.*

5. In one sense more, Christ may be said to die for all, and to redeem all, namely as unto Genera singulorum, the kinds of all men, though not to singula generum, every Individual of those kinds, Revel. 5:9. Thou hast Redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation. Christ died for some of all Sexes, of all Relations, of all States and Conditions; for Kings as well as for Subjects, for the Poor as well as for the Rich, for Servants as well as Masters, for Wives as well as Husbands, for Children as well as Parents, for all sorts of men; but yet not for every man under that sort or kind; not for every Parent, not for every Child, nor for every Master, not for every Servant.

These things being thus premised, I desire to give mine own judgment concerning the Question proposed, in these three conclusions.

1. That Jesus Christ did effectually die for all the Elect, and every one of them, whether Jews or Gentiles; and all the benefits of his death do reach unto every one of them, when they come to believe on him.

2. That there was such a sufficiency of price and redemption by Christ, that if any sinner whatsoever comes by faith unto Christ, he shall receive all the benefits and fruits of redemption by the death of Christ.

3. That the death of Christ was never actually effectual for the Redemption, Reconciliation, Expiation, and salvation of all the sons of Adam, and for every particular sinner in the world.

1. That Jesus Christ did effectually die for all the Elect, and Believers: My meaning is, that he did by his death satisfy God's justice for them, expiated their sins, made their peace, and purchased salvation

for them; and of all these, every Elect and Believing person shall partake. The Scriptures are expressly clear for this assertion; and I do not know any modest and understanding Writer who doth gainsay it. Matth. 1:21. Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins: His people are all the Elect given unto him, and all Believers who receive him. Ephes. 5:23. Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Savior of the body. To whom he is a Head, of them he is a Savior; but he is the Head of the Church (and they are Believers) Ergo. Verse 25. Husbands, love your Wives, as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. It was shed for many, which is the same with Which was given for you, for you that believe on me; for (as Luther saith well) Fides facit haeredes, it is faith which makes us heirs of all the good in Christ's Testament. Joh. 17:19 For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth. Joh. 10:15. I lay down my life for the sheep: The sheep are believers. Verse 26. Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. Verse 27. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. Verse 28. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Joh. 15:13,14. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend. Ye are my friends, &c. Besides these general testimonies for the death of Christ in relation to the Elect and Believers, you shall find a particular application of the virtues of the death of Christ unto all believers. 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. Rom. 13:22. The Righteousness of God (is manifestea) which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe. This Justitia qua Justi censemur, ad universos per fidem pervenit, & fide Allata Justi omnes redduntur Judaei simul & Graeci. Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins. Rom. 4:25. Who was delivered for our

offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Acts 13:39. By him all that believe are justified. Col. 1:13, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son. Rom. 5:1. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Ephes 2:14. He is our peace. 1 Joh. 2:1. We have an Advocate with the Father. Heb. 5:9. And being made perfect, he became the Author of salvation unto all that obey him. Joh. 3:36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life. 1 Tim 4:10 Who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe. Other men enjoy a common salvation, but Believers an eternal salvation by him: Here are most of the chief benefits resulting from the death of Christ, and all of them settled upon, and enjoyed by all Believers: And verily this must needs be so, whether you consider

1. The intention of God's love in giving of Christ, which was this, That whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16.

2. The intention of Christ in his suretyship and death, for whom he became bound, and for what end, viz. that he might see a seed, and the travel of his soul, and that they who were called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, Heb. 9:15.

3. The joint application of all the good by Christ unto persons upon union with Christ; for when persons are united unto Christ (which certainly they are when they do believe) then doth God apply all the benefits of Christ unto them, justifies them, imputes the righteousness of Christ unto them, forgives their sins, gives his Spirit to sanctify them, &c. and then believers apply and lay hold on all the promises of God unto them in Christ.

4. Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, and therefore unquestionably all who are interested in that Covenant, do, and shall partake of the benefits inserted therein by promise, and sealed therein by the blood of Christ, and such are all believers.

2. That there is such a sufficiency, and dignity, and fullness in the death of Christ, that if any sinner will come in unto him, he shall partake of Redemption, and salvation by him effectually.

I do purposely lay down these Conclusions for two Reasons. One is to stop the clamors of evil-minded men, who give out, that if Redemption by Christ be not universal, then we shut the door against sinners, and discourage them from coming unto Christ. Another is to encourage the hearts of all broken-hearted sinners to draw near to Christ, though all men are not effectually redeemed by him.

I would concerning this Point clear unto you these two positions.

1. That though effectual Redemption by Christ be not universal, but particular; yet this is not in the nature of it, a Doctrine to discourage any sinner from coming unto Christ. We have familiar Similes to illustrate this; as that of a Race, wherein though but one shall certainly enjoy the prize or Laurel, yet this doth not discourage any one from running the Race. And as if any place be void in a Society, though only a few can be chosen and possessed of those places, yet this doth not discourage many from standing for those places: So although effectual Redemption by the death of Christ be particular, yet this discourageth none from looking after Christ, or coming by faith unto him: For

1. No sinner knows any particular exclusion of himself: No sinner (at least unto whom the Gospel comes) can say, I am sure that Christ never died for me, and I am sure that though I should come to Christ, I shall never receive any good by him. Though the effectual Redemption be particular, yet no sinner knows that he is in particular excluded from the benefit of it.

2. The Gospel gives encouragement unto every particular sinner to come to Christ: Come, for all things are ready, Luke 14. It calls upon him, Come and hearken, and your soul shall live, Isa. 55:2. And saith, that whosoever believes shall be saved, Mar. 16:16. And him that comes to me, I will in no wise reject, Joh 6:37. 1. The Gospel puts no conditions of Ante-grace: 2. Or worthiness, but offers freely. 3. All former things passed by. 4. Complains of unbelief.

The way which the Gospel useth to bring men in to Christ is proper to work on any sinner, though the benefit be peculiar to some: though the Gospel doth not say that all shall be saved by Christ, yet the Gospel saith that all who believe shall be saved; and all who believe not shall be damned; Ergo. It discourageth none from coming to Christ.

3. The Gospel holds out enough for any particular sinner to lay hold on: It holds out a sufficiency in Christ for any, and offers Christ indefinitely. A willingness in Christ to receive any that come unto him.

4. It offers Jesus Christ to any sinner; yea to the vilest and most wretched: To the persecuting Paul, to the adulterous Magdalene, to the Sodomitical Corinthians, &c. 1 Tim. 1:13, 1 Cor. 6:19.

5. Any sinner may accept the offer without any sin; for it is worthy of all acceptance, 1 Tim. 1:15.

2. Let any sinner whatsoever come in by faith unto Christ, and he shall effectually partake of Redemption and salvation by Christ. Rev. 3:20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Rev. 22:17. Let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. John 7:23. If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. Joh. 3:16. Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish: You see here many promises to assure any sinner of an effectual interest in the benefits of Christ, if that he doth hearken, and believe, and come in by faith unto Christ.

1. Do but consider, as faith is the condition required on our part, so it is the only condition; there is no more, no other thing required to bring you in to Christ, nor to bring you into communion, or fellowship, or participation of himself, nor of the benefits of his death, but faith: If you do believe Christ is yours, and if you do believe you are justified and if you do believe you shall be saved and if you do believe you have an immediate, certain, and full interest in Christ and his merits.

2. Again, where the Gospel is revealed unto a people; the reason why any of them miss of salvation, and are damned, is because they believe not, Joh. 3:8. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. Ver. 36. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Now if this be so, that unbelief cuts the sinner off, that it hinders him of life by Christ, that it is his condemnation, that it seals the wrath of God on

him; then certainly faith in Christ (in any man whatsoever) will bring him to life, to all good in and by Jesus Christ.

3. That the death of Christ as Mediator was not effectual for all; it was not a universal effectual Redemption, Expiation, Reconciliation and Salvation for all sinners, and for every particular sinner.

There are three things which I would offer unto you about this Conclusion.

1. Proofs from Scripture, as to the Assertion in general.

2. Proofs in particular, that the Death and Redemption, and Reconciliation, &c. by Christ, was not universally effectual either 1. In God the Fathers intention, nor in Christ's intention: 2. In the real Impetration of Christ. 3. In the Application of it in time unto all the sons of Adam.

3. Answers to some of the chief and specious Arguments which are insisted on to the contrary.

1. I shall endeavor in the general to prove this Negative truth, that the death of Christ as Mediator was not effectual for all and every man, for Reprobates as well as Elect, for unbelievers as well as believers, for the damned as well as the saved. Joh. 10:15. I lay down my life for the sheep: Those for whom Christ did die, were his sheep: But all and every man are not his sheep; Ergo, he did not die for every man: The first Proposition Jesus Christ delivers in this Scripture (I lay down my life for the sheep) The second Proposition Christ himself also delivers in verse 26. (But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep.)



### **Quest. If the question be put, But who are Christ's sheep?**

Sol. Why! Christ also resolves that Question, and so resolves it, that he plainly demonstrates all are not his sheep. See verse 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Verse 28. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. The sheep are described by their own property, and by Christ's bounty and care. They are Christ's sheep, who do hear Christ's voice, and so hear his voice that they follow him: But all and every man doth not the one nor the other: again, Christ says, I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish. Doth Christ give unto everyone in the world eternal life? And shall not any one in all the world perish! Why then doth the Scripture say, He that believeth not shall be damned, Mar. 16:16. And we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul; Heb. 10:39. Now what can be replied unto this! Christ died for his sheep; Ergo, all and every man are not his sheep.

There are two shifts which are made instead of answers unto this Scripture.

1. One is that of Haberus, That all men are sheep; he must mean the sheep of Christ, or else he answers nothing: But this Christ himself as we have heard of from verse 26, expressly opposeth, saying to the unbelieving Pharisees and Jews, ye are not my sheep.

There are but two respects upon which men may be called the sheep of God, or of Christ.

One is in respect of vocation, whether external only, or internal also: The other is in respect of Predestination, because God hath Chosen them, and designed them for Christ; and in neither of these respects can all and every man be called the sheep of Christ; Neither in

respect of Predestination, for few are chosen; Nor in respect of Vocation; for though many be called, yet not all called, no not with an External Vocation, which yet is the more general.

2. Another is that of the Remonstrants, who said that Christ did lay down his life for the sheep, but it is not said for the sheep only, for them alone: Paul saith, Christ gave himself for me; It will not hence follow that Christ gave himself for Paul only, and for none else, nay, we read that Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. 5:6, and therefore not for his sheep only.

Sol. This is a shift much like that of the Papists, who when we press the Scripture for justification only by faith, they say the word [only by faith] is not expressed; unto whom we reply, that virtually it is; for the Scripture opposeth Justification by faith, unto justification by works; and denying it unto works, therefore it ascribes justification only to Faith: And verily thus it holds as to the present dispute; Christ died for his sheep; if for none but his sheep, than for them only: when Christ said, I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, Joh. 17:9. This is as much as if he had said, I pray only for them whom thou hast given me. So when Christ saith, I lay down my life for my sheep, and afterwards so describes his sheep, that all unbelievers are none of the sheep for whom he died: now it will follow that he died only for his sheep: And indeed I would fain know for whom Christ should die for besides his sheep? Should he die for them who were never given unto him? Of whom he never took care? To whom he never was a Shepherd? For them that were never a part of his flock, and charge? Is this the commendations of a good Shepherd, to lay down his life for such as have no Relation at all unto him, nor he unto them?

**Object. But it is said that Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. 5:6.**

Sol. 'It is true, yet not for all the ungodly; for those who are made his sheep by grace, were indeed in themselves ungodly sinners; those ungodly spoken of there by the Apostle for whom Christ died, verse 6, and 8, in verse 9, are said to be Justified by his blood, and that they shall be saved from wrath through him, and verse 10, are reconciled by his death, and therefore much more (being reconciled) shall be saved by his life: And truly, such ungodly as these, who in themselves were so, and sinners, and enemies, but by the death of Christ were justified and reconciled, and should undoubtedly be saved by him, were no other than those whom he here calls his sheep; not that his do continue ungodly; but that the estate from which he justifies and saves them, was so.

**Object. And for that conclusion from Paul, saying, Christ gave himself for me; Hence it cannot be inferred, therefore for none else but Paul.**

I answer; that speech is not alike with this, I lay down my life for my sheep: Here is the full number: For as in a Testament where common Legacies or Estates are bequeathed unto all the Children, and Kindred, and Friends; though this Child, or Kinsman, or Friend cannot say, this is given to me; Ergo there is nothing given to any other besides me; yet all, and every one of them can say, This Estate is given unto us mentioned in the Will, therefore it is not given to any other but ourselves, who only are mentioned therein. So though no particular Believer can appropriate the death and virtues of the death of Christ unto himself in exclusion of any other Believer (who are all mentioned in the Will and Testament of Christ) yet all Believers (who are the sheep of Christ) can say that Christ hath died for us, and hath

purchased, and left the inheritance to us only, none other being mentioned in his Testament, nay, all unbelievers being expressly left out.

But I proceed unto another proof, Acts 20:28. Feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, Christ is the Head of the Church and the Savior of the body. Ephes. 5:23,25. Husbands, love your Wives, as Christ also loved his Church, and gave himself for it. Verse 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. Verse 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

In these places you see plainly five particulars.

1. That the Church of God was purchased by the blood of Christ; his blood was shed to Redeem and purchase it.
2. That the love of Christ was to his Church, and that from his love to his Church, did flow the giving of himself for it.
3. That the end why he gave himself for his Church, was to make it holy and glorious.
4. That of that Church (for which he gave himself) He is the Head.
5. That the same Church is the body of Christ; and that of that body, he is the Savior.

Whence I thus Argue;

Those whom Christ purchased by his blood, were the Church of God; those whom he loved, were his Church; those for whom Christ gave

himself, were his Church; those to whom Christ is Head, are the Church; and those of whom he is a Savior, are his body the Church. But all men whatsoever, and every man whosoever, are not the Church of God, nor are Members of the Church of Christ, nor is he the Head of them; therefore he did not die, or give himself for all and every man; nor is he a Savior to them: The Major. Proposition, is the express Letter of these Scriptures; the Minor Proposition is also most certain: viz. that all and every man is not the Church of God, nor are they Members of the Church of Christ. Consider the Church in any Scripture-acceptation, this cannot be denied. The Church is either;

1. Invisibilis, which is Coetus fidelium. Or,
2. Visibilis, which is Coetus profitentium.

All and every man comes not within either of these; they are neither believers on Christ, nor professors of Christ.

Again, There is a Catholic Church of Christ; viz. Believers in any time, or part of the world; and there is a particular Church of Christ, which is a number of professing Believers joined in the worship of Christ, in this or that particular place; Under neither of these Considerations, are all and every Man Members of the Church of Christ.

Again, there is the Militant Church here on earth suffering for Christ; and there is the Triumphant Church reigning in Heaven, and glorified with Christ; all and every man cannot fall in with either of these. If all and every man cannot be found within the compass of the Church of Christ; if this never was, and is not, and never will be, then Christ did not die, nor give himself for all and every man.

**Object. 'It is true that Christ gave himself for his Church; but it is not said only for his Church; and that he is the Savior of the body, but not only of the body.**

Sol. 1. If one should thus argue from the precedent part of the Verse, (Verse 25) Husbands love your Wives, as Christ loved the Church, that they may love others besides their Wives, because it is not said, Love your own Wives only; we should look on such a Gloss as somewhat Atheistical, and Scoffing, and Scurrilous; so when we read that Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it, &c. Or Hosea 2:19. I will Marry thee to myself, it is not said Only; yet Marriage is a particular and exclusive contract; but let us review the place again, and try whether it will not yield us as much as Only for the Church.

Those for whom Christ (here) gave himself, of them he is said to be the Head; but he is the Head only of his Church.

2. Those for whom Christ gave himself, of those he is the Savior; but he is the Savior of the Church, which is his Body.

3. Those for whom Christ here gave himself, He is said to sanctify and wash, that he might present it unto himself a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle; and those are only his Church; none but his Church are sanctified and fitted for a glorious Church. Ergo, &c.

3. A Third Scripture which I would make use of against the Universal efficacy of Christ's death, for all and every man, shall be that in Rom. 8:32,33,34. Verse 33. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also give us all things? Verse 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth; Verse 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right

hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us. Verse 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

This place affords unto us many considerable passages.

1. A delivering up of Christ to death for all the Elect and Called of God (Pro Nobis omnibus) not simply for all, but for us all.

2. A certainty of enjoyment of all things; of all the good things which God the Father hath promised, and God the Son hath purchased for all them for whose sake Jesus Christ was delivered up (How shall he not with him also give us all things?) As if he had said, God having given his Christ for you, will certainly give you all other things with Christ; if he gives the greater, he will not stand with you for the less; whatsoever good you need, you shall assuredly possess and enjoy it.

3. That the death of Christ is effectual for the absolution of all those for whom Christ was delivered up. It is effectual against anything that can be brought in against them (who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth) And it is effectual against all condemnation; there is none to condemn them! If anyone, it must be God; but he hath justified them; if for anything, it must be for sin. But saith the Apostle, It is Christ that died, who by his Death hath satisfied the justice of God, and hath put away sin (Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that Died.)

4. There is a Connection 'twixt the Death of Christ, and the Resurrection of Christ, and the Session of Christ at the right hand of God, and the Intercession of Christ; those for whom Christ did Dye, for them he did rise; and those for whom he died, and rose, for them (that is) for their good, He now sits at the right hand of God, for them also he makes Intercession. And one thing more; from the love of Christ shall none of those be separated, for whom he died, and

rose again, and ascended, and makes Intercession: Now how all this can be affirmed of all and every man in the world, that ever was, is, or shall be, is a conceit beyond any solid reason of man, or faith of a Christian to reach.

1. Can all and every man be assured, or assure himself, because Christ was delivered to death, therefore God will unquestionably deliver, or give him all things?

2. Is there no condemnation to any man in the world, notwithstanding Christ hath died? Nay, saith John, He that believes not, is condemned already; and this is the condemnation, That light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light.

3. Is every man justified by God, so that nothing can henceforth be laid to his charge, seeing that God is the justifier only of all them that believe; and they only that believe, do receive the Remission of their sins? If ye believe not that I am He, you shall die in your Sins, said Christ.

4. That Jesus who died here on earth, and rose, and ascended to heaven, and there presents himself before his Father, and makes Intercession; that all this should be for all and every man, the Arminians themselves are afraid, and dare not to affirm; for though they say, that *Mortuus est Christus Adequate pro peccatoribus*; yet they say also, that *Resurrexit & intercedit cum salvandi intentione adequate pro fidelibus*: But you see, first that the Apostle knits and joins all these together, the Death, and Resurrection, and Intercession of Christ. And secondly, how miserably they delude poor ignorant people, with the flash of a universal Redemption by the Death of Christ; when yet notwithstanding this death, and universal Redemption, there is



not any one saving good that ever shall befall them, unless they do believe in Christ; which will amount to no more than what we do maintain, that Christ died not effectually for all and everyone, but only for all and every Believer.

2. Thus have I in the General, brought some places of Scripture against the Opinion of Universal Redemption by the death of Christ. I shall now discourse of it in a more particular way.

Where I shall endeavor to clear,

1. That God the Father never did intend or purpose such an effectually Universal Redemption of all and everyone by Christ.

2. That Jesus Christ the Son of God, did never intend it.

3. That Jesus Christ never obtained, or impetrated the same; no, not in the sense of the Universalists themselves.

4. That a Universal Application of this, as it never shall be *In Rerum natura*, so never was it *In Dei aut Christi proposito*.

1. That God the Father did never intend this latitude of Redemption, and Reconciliation, and Salvation, when he gave Christ, and sent him into the world. 'It is true that he had the Salvation of sinners, and their Redemption, and Reconciliation, in his design of giving of Christ. But I say, this was not his design for all and every man whatsoever: which I shall demonstrate in four Arguments.

1. What God intended, that he Willed and Decreed (this I think no rational Christian will or can deny) but God never willed a General Redemption, and Reconciliation, and Salvation, by the death of Christ; which I prove thus; If he did will and decree it, then that Decree was either absolute or conditional; if it were an

absolute Decree or Will, then it is effectual; for no man hath resisted that Will, which is an infallible cause of all which it doth will; and then all and every man shall actually partake of Salvation by Christ; which assertion as the Scriptures do manifestly contradict, so the Arminians and their followers professedly deny. If it be a Conditional Will in God (as they say it is, in case of believing on Christ) then it is but particular, of some men, and not universal, of all men; for all men have not Faith; nay, (comparatively) very few have Faith. Who hath believed our report? Unto whom is the arm of the Lord Revealed? Isa. 53:1.

2. If God did really intend the Redemption and Salvation of all and every man effectually by Christ, then he did intend, and in time did bestow all the means which might effectually bring all and every man to the participation of that salvation by Christ (for every Agent who really and seriously intends an end, he doth likewise as really intend the means effectually conducing unto that end. And as it doth not beseem the Wisdom of God to intend an end without means; so neither doth it suit with the goodness and love of God, to pretend a common salvation for all, when yet he intends not to give means unto all, effectual to bring them unto that salvation. But God doth not give means effectual unto all and every man, to bring them to salvation by Christ, which I thus demonstrate; The means necessary to an effectual participation of salvation by Christ, are;

1. Outwardly; the preaching of the Gospel, which is therefore called the Power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, Rom. 1:16, for therein is revealed the righteousness of God from Faith to Faith, Verse 17.

2. Inwardly; the Grace of Faith by which we are brought in to Christ, and made one with him, and so partaking of him, we come to partake of life and salvation by him. Eph. 2:8. By Grace are ye saved through Faith. And Mark 16:16. He that believes, shall be saved; And 1 John 5:12. He that hath the Son, hath life. But now God doth not give unto all and every man either of these means.

1. The Gospel (which is the means of Faith) is not given unto all. Psa. 147:19. He showeth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel. Verse 20. He hath not dealt so with every Nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them. Act. 14:16. Who in times past, suffered all Nations to walk in their own ways. And we know it by experience, that the Gospel hath not been, and is not Preached unto all. And if it be not Preached unto all and everyone, how can we rationally fancy an intention in God to save all by Christ? Suppose a Physician should give out, that he had a medicine to cure all diseases, and that he would impart it unto all, that so all and everyone may be cured by it; nevertheless he doth indeed make it known but unto a few, that he hath provided that remedy or medicine; you would certainly conclude that he never intended that everyone should be the better for it, seeing he will not communicate the knowledge of it unto them; If he will not give them the knowledge of it, doth he intend to give them the benefit of it? Or suppose a potent Prince should say, He had provided a Mass of money to Redeem all Captives and Slaves, and that it is his serious intention (by that provided Treasure) to Redeem and Free them all and everyone; yet nevertheless he never gives notice of his intention and kindness, unto all of them by himself, or any Messenger from himself; questionless he doth not intend it: For men to Print, and Preach, and Dispute, that God intends to save all by Christ, and that he gave Christ to be an Universal

Redemption, to set all men free, &c. And yet we find both in Scripture, and in Experience, that God doth not give the Gospel unto all (which is the Messenger bringing glad tidings and reports of Christ's death, and God's Intention touching the Salvation of sinners) but suffer them to live in darkness and silence; not any one Messenger being dispatched to report to them, and to their children, any one Word of Christ, or Salvation by him; This cannot stand with such a serious intention in God, to Redeem and Save all men by Christ.

**Objection, O but the Gospel was revealed to Adam, and so continued in the posterity of Noah, and so down to Christ and his Apostles, and by them promulgated to all the world, to all Nations, to every creature.**

Sol. We grant the knowledge of Salvation by Christ in Adam, and his family; in Noah and his family, in Abraham and his family, in the Israelites that came from him: But what is this to all the rest of the world, whom God left to themselves, and did not make the Gospel of Salvation by Christ known?

And as for the Apostles, their Commission was general, and they did in their times make the sound of the Gospel to be heard in most part of the world; but what is this to the succeeding generations of men in all the world who never heard of Adam, nor Noah, nor Christ, nor his Apostle, nor Gospel of Christ?

If God did intend to save all men in all generations by Christ, surely he would have revealed the Gospel to all men in all generations; If his intention were so rich in goodness unto them all, his care and Providence would have been manifested unto them all.

**Object. But perhaps the reason why the Gospel did not descend in a universal manifestation of Salvation by Christ unto all succeeding generations, might be the ingratitude and unbelief of those to whom it was first revealed.**

Sol. Perhaps many of them were unthankful and unbelieving; but if the knowledge and notice of salvation by Christ must presently fail the posterities of men, because of the unthankfulness and unbelief of Parents and Predecessors, then it seems that the latitude of the Gospels publication depends on the will of man, and not on the will and goodness of God, whose intention to publish this universal Redemption and salvation unto all is stayed and altered upon the neglect and refusal of Christ, and so for their sakes there must not be now a notice given to succeeding generations who never heard, and therefore never refused the Gospel.

2. As the Gospel is not universally given to all, so neither is Faith universally given unto all; for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, Rom. 10:17. If therefore the hearing be not universal, then unquestionably faith cannot be universal; and if faith be not universal, then there cannot be a universal participation of Redemption and Salvation by the death of Christ.

**Object. But it may be replied; though faith be not universal as to every man's possession, yet it is universal as to God's intention; he intended for his part, and as much as concerns him to give faith to all and every man.**

Sol. I answer, this is not true:

For if God intends to give faith unto all and every sinner as will put forth so much towards it as concerns him, then every sinner shall undoubtedly have faith given unto him, because as Christ saith, Joh.

6:45. Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me; and the Apostle saith that Faith is the gift of God, Ephes. 2:8 If God will give a man faith, he shall have it; for there is no gift which God will give, but he hath power to make it his to whom he will give it.

**Object. But men will not receive it, though God will give it.**

Sol. God doth not give faith upon that condition, if man will have it; this is an offer, not a gift. But God (saith the Apostle, Phil. 2:13) worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. To give us a will to believe and come to Christ, this is God's work; and therefore if God will work (towards faith) as much as concerns him, he must remove our unwillingness and make us willing.

2. The giving of faith is commensurable with the election of God (so saith the Apostle, Act. 13:48. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed) and indeed it is the fruit and effect thereof, and therefore it is called the faith of God's Elect, Tit. 1:1, and stands as a necessary means in the way of participation of all our saving good unto which we are elected, and which was purchased for us by Christ.

3. A third Argument that God did not intend such an universal Redemption and Salvation by Christ, is this; If God had intended such an universal work and benefit for all men by Christ; Then he would have given all men to Christ for such an end and purpose as their Redemption and salvation by him (for if God would never give them to Christ, we may well suspect that he never intended to save them by Christ; if they must not belong to the Savior and Redeemer, then Redemption and salvation shall never belong to them. But God did not give all and every man to Christ; neither ex parte tituli, so that he should acknowledge them as given unto him by the Father, nor ex

parte debiti, nor ex parte Rei, that he should stand charged and bound fought their Redemption and Salvation: Ergo.

That all were not discriminated given by God the Father unto Christ ration tituli is manifest in Joh. 17:6. I have manifested thy Name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. And verse 10. All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. Nor ex parte Rei. Joh. 6:37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me.

Here you see,

1. That those who were given unto Christ, they were given out of the world, not all the world, but some out of it.
2. That they who were given unto Christ, God the Father had first a particular interest in them (thine they were, and thou gavest them me) but all men whatsoever never had such a particular Relation to God, nor God to them, as that it can be said, Thine they were.
3. Those that were given to Christ, he saith of them, they have kept thy word, verse 6, and have received thy words, verse 8, and they have believed that thou didst send me; Can this be said of all and every man? Nor doth Christ acknowledge or own all men whatsoever as given to him. Verse 9. I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine: and verse 10. All mine are thine, and mine are thine. Neither were all given to Christ ration debiti, that he should stand charged and bound for their Redemption and salvation. Joh. 17:2. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Here is the extent of his Commission and Charge which he is bound to make good, and that is to give eternal

life to as many as thou hast given him (i.e.) effectually to save all them, &c.

4. I will add but one Argument more to prove that God intended not a universal Redemption and Salvation by the death of Christ; and that shall be taken out of Rom. 9:13. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Ver. 15. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Verse 22. What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction! Verse 23. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. The Apostle in this place doth purposely handle the doctrine of Election and Preterition; that election he proves to be particular, and not universal; this he doth by instance, and by Reason: The instance is given in Jacob and Esau, God loved Jacob, but he hated Esau; ver. 13. The reason of this speciality of love in Election he presents in verse 15. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and verse 18. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will, he hardeneth. That God should love one, and hate another; choose one, and pass by another; show mercy to some, and leave others to be hardened; the reason of this is, his own will; he will love whom he will love, and elect whom he will elect, and show mercy to whom he will show mercy.

**Object. Now whereas some murmuringly reply against God for such a particular love, and election, and purpose of mercy, as if God dealt not fairly in it, thus differently to deal with his Creatures, verse 19. &c.**

Sol. The Apostle defends this proceeding of God in the authority which he hath for it, ver. 21. Hath not the Potter power over the clay



of the same lump to make one vessel of wrath fitted for destruction, verse 22, and to magnify the riches of his glory of his grace on the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory? Verse 23. By all which it manifestly appears that there are some whom God never loved, but hated; whom he never elected, but passed by; whom he intended not to show mercy unto, but to leave them to be hardened; that he would not make them vessels to honor, but to dishonor; that were vessels not of mercy aforehand prepared to glory, but vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; which if it be so (and so the Apostle saith it is) then undoubtedly God did never intend an universal Redemption, and universal purchase of peace and mercy and salvation by Christ, for all and every man: For by Paul's Doctrine he doth not intend to show mercy to the vessels of wrath; and yet by the Arminian Doctrine, he doth intend to show mercy to all.

2. I now proceed to the second Conclusion; As God the Father never intended a universal Redemption and Jubilee by the death of Christ: So neither did Jesus Christ the Son of God (who did die to save sinners) intend such a latitude for all and every man. The intention and mind of Christ in this, I humbly conceive cannot be better discerned than by

1. The entering into his Office of Mediatorship as a Surety.
2. The opening of his last Will and Testament, when he was near death to seal it.
3. The prosecuting of all their interests who were concerned in him, and his death.
4. The disowning of some, as such as he never had respect unto.

1. When Christ entered into, or took on himself the office of a Mediator, he then declared himself also a Surety or Sponsor. Therefore as he is styled, Heb. 12:24. The Mediator of the New Covenant; so is he said to be made the Surety of a better Testament, Heb. 7:22.

The Argument runs thus; Jesus Christ is a Surety for all those to whom he is a Mediator, Redeemer, and Savior. But he never was a Surety for all, and every man. Ergo.

The first of these Propositions cannot be denied; for the Scripture calls Christ our Mediator, and Redeemer, our Surety, and saith expressly, that Christ once suffered for sinners, the Just for the unjust, 1 Pet. 3:18. (i.e.) in their stead, and for their good, and that he bare our diseases, and carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and our iniquities were laid upon him, Isa. 53:4,5.

But then for the second Proposition that he never was a Surety for all and every man. Will the Arminians speak plainly to this? Was he, or was he not? If he were not, then every sinful man's debts are not paid by Christ, and then every man is not redeemed, and then God is not reconciled to every man; for if that debt be not paid, and God satisfied, then Redemption is not wrought, &c. If he was a Surety for all and every man, then Jesus Christ put himself in the room and stead of every sinner of the world, as a surety doth for everyone to whom he is a Surety, and bound himself as responsible to Divine Justice to satisfy all that could be charged against any sinner, as the surety doth for everyone he stands bound for: I will be surety for him, said Judah to Jacob about Benjamin, Gen. 43:9. Of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, let me bear the blame forever. So Jesus Christ as Surety

to God, did actually satisfy the Justice of God the Father for us, and pay, and discharge all the debt; so that wrath, and curse, and damnation are utterly removed, and can never befall the sinner, because Christ as a Surety hath perfectly satisfied for all, and cleared all; Sed ira Dei manet infidelibus, Joh. 3:36. Nay as a Surety he did not only satisfy to the discharging of all sin and punishment, but merited also and purchased mercy life, grace, and glory; and God is bound to give in all this; So that if Christ be a Surety for all and every man, and as a Surety died for them all, then is God's Justice fully satisfied, God hath no more to say against any sinner; he cannot damn any (because all sin is satisfied for, and discharged) and every man shall certainly be saved, because Christ as a Surety hath purchased this, and must, and will see it performed and enjoyed.

But this no Arminian that ever I read or heard of, will maintain, &c.

2. Secondly, we may find out the very mind of Christ concerning the latitude of Redemption and salvation by his death, if we peruse his last will and Testament, where his mind is plainly opened unto us, and which he sealed and confirmed by his death; there you read for whom he died, Matth. 26:28. This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. Mar. 14:24. This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many. Luke 22:20. This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you. Heb. 9:15. For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the Redemption of the transgressors that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Verse 28. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Matth. 20:28. The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many: Here you see all along in the Testament of Christ, no mention made for all men, but only for many, for many, and for many; and so God speaking of his Christ, My righteous

servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their sins, Isa. 55:11. And he bare the sins of many, verse 12.

3. Thirdly, Jesus Christ did not prosecute a universal interest of all the world, but a particular interest of some. Ergo. He did not intend a universal Redemption and Salvation. Joh. 17:9. I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. Doubtless, if Christ did intend to redeem and save all, he would have done so much as to have paid for all: It is strange that he should lay down his life for all, and yet would not lay out a prayer for all; that he would die to save them, and yet not pray to save them; if Christ would not do so much as to prosecute their salvation by a Prayer, I verily believe he never intended their salvation by his death.

**Object. The Arminians to decline the edge of this Argument, tell us of a double interceding or praying of Christ.**

One is particular, and this indeed is only for Believers.

Another is universal, and this is for the whole world.

Sol. A handsome evasion I confess; methinks they should also distinguish of a twofold death, and Redemption, and salvation by Christ; one particular for all believers; and another universal for all the world; that effectual and doing good; this ineffectual, and profiting none.

**Object. But may we know any Scriptures for Christ's universal Praying, and intercession? Yes, they quote Luke 23:34. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**

Sol. True, here is Christ's Prayer indeed, but yet here is not the universal prayer for the whole world: here is his prayer for them that Crucified him out of ignorance; and we hear of the fruit of this prayer in Acts 3:17, compared with Acts 4:4, these men who through ignorance crucified Christ, and for whom Christ prayed, Pater Remit, they were not the whole world; this place therefore will not make out an universal interceding or praying for the whole world.

**Object. Therefore they bring another Scripture, Isa. 53:12. He made intercession for transgressors.**

Sol. 'It is true, he made intercession for transgressors; but where is that intercession which he made for all transgressors? Where is the universal intercession? The transgressors for whom he made intercession in this 12th verse, are those sinners which he calls many, and justified them in the 11th verse.

4. Fourthly, Jesus Christ doth professedly disown some, as being such that he never had any affection or respect unto; did he ever intend to die for these, and to do as much for their salvation, as for the salvation of others? Matth. 7:22. Many shall say in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not Prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful works? Verse 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye workers of iniquity.

Many shall say, and yet Christ will say to those many, I never knew. He doth not say, I do not now know, or own you, or I did once know you: but I never knew you: Christ is said to know his sheep, Joh. 10:14, for whom he laid down his life, verse 15. But there are many to whom Christ will say, I never knew you, never acknowledged you, never loved you, never liked you; no not when they Prophesied, and wrought miracles in his Name. Christ will not then know them,

because they rejected him, and were wicked workers, yet I never knew you.

There you see that this universal redemption cannot find foundation either in the intention of God the Father, or in the intention of God the Son (and as Christ) who wrought Redemption for sinners.

3. I shall now advance to a third Conclusion, that there was not a universal impetration of reconciliation, and remission of sins, and of eternal life by the death of Christ.

This is that thing upon which the Controversy about the universality of the death of Christ doth principally depend; concerning which the Arminians unanimously deliver themselves thus; *Christus ex patris & sua intentione omnibus & singulis hominibus indiscriminatus, cum pereuntibus quam servandis, impetravit Reconciliationem cum deo in Remissionem peccatorum & vitam aeternam*. Christ according to the intention of his Father and his own, did obtain for all men, and for every man, indifferently (as well for them that shall perish, as for them that shall be saved) Reconciliation with God, Remission of sins, and life eternal.

Before I present you some Arguments against this Opinion, I shall crave your favor that I may spread the whole sum and frame of it, as it is by the Arminians themselves set forth in their writings; they teach

I. That upon the fall of mankind, in Adam, there was a gracious affection in God, by which he was yet mercifully affected to love all and every man (alike) so as seriously to desire the salvation of all men, and of every particular man, *Ut nullus omnino homo sit, cujus salutem non velit*; so that there was not any one man, whose salvation God did not will.

II. That for the extending of this favor unto all and every man, Jesus Christ was sent into the world to die, that by his death, God's justice might be satisfied for all the sins of all men, and that thereupon God's might (without any prejudice to his justice) *Plenario voluntatis proposito velle salvare*, with a full purpose of will for salvation.

III. That Jesus Christ did come into the world, and by his death did satisfy the justice of God; and so opened a door of grace for a possible salvation for all and every sinner: Mercy now being set at liberty, which before was bowed up.

IV. That all and every sinner hath a liberty of freedom to enter into that door of grace, and besides that, there is so much sufficiency of help afforded unto them, that if their free-will be pleased to make use of it, they may accept of it if they will; and if they will not, it is their own fault.

V. That nevertheless you must distinguish of the death of Christ according to a twofold decree of God, as they say there is

One Decree which is according to his affection or will desiring to save all and in respect of this, the death of Christ was a universal impetration (i.e.) it did work so far in relation to God, that he might without any injury to himself, will a universal salvation to all men, and accordingly he did will and decree it, Christ having impetrated it.

Another Decree of God by which he intended the actual bestowing, giving, and communicating of this salvation universally purchased by the death of Christ (which they and we do call the Application of the death of Christ) and this they say is *Solis fidelibus*, only to Believers, who by faith do receive Christ.

So that if you demand of the Patrons of universal Redemption, Did God indeed desire and will the salvation of all lost sinners? They answer, he did: But did God seriously will this? Yes, he did: And was Christ sent for this end? He was: And did Christ by his death procure and obtain this for all? Yes he did: But did God ever decree, or will that all and every man should have benefit by this? No verily, but only Believers, only such as suffer themselves to believe, and repent; these actually are reconciled, pardoned, and saved.

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ did by his death obtain this for all; Universal Reconciliation, universal Remission, universal Salvation are purchased by the blood of Christ, although some only shall partake of it: All have a right in the salvation purchased, though only Believers have the benefit; nay, though no man should ever believe, yet there was a universal salvation purchased by Christ for all men.

Though that Assertion, that all Believers, and they only partake of actual Reconciliation, and Remission, and Salvation by Christ, be a truth, which we all agree in; yet that there is such a universal Reconciliation, Remission, and Salvation purchased by the death of Christ for all men whatsoever, is an opinion unto which we cannot subscribe, but must reject as opposite unto Scripture, and religious Reasons.

I shall let pass some Arguments which some make use of against this Opinion, verse 9.

1. Some were in Hell when Jesus Christ died; Did Christ obtain Reconciliation, and Remission of sins, and Eternal life for them? If not for them, how then for all and every man? But did God ever intend it for them, or accepted of the death of Christ for them? Those for whom Christ laid down his life, he saith of them



that they shall never perish, Joh. 10:15,28. Do not they perish who are in hell?

2. How comes it to pass that many miss of heaven, who yet never refused or rejected Christ? If Christ obtained salvation for all, and theirs it is if they refuse it not; how come they to miss of that obtained salvation? Miss they shall not (lay the Arminians) unless, and until they refuse; but refuse (say we) they cannot unless it be offered; and offered it is not but by the Gospel; and the Gospel offers it not where it comes not; but in all times and ages of men, it comes not to all and every man; yea, that there were any inhabitants in America, was for many Ages utterly unknown to the Christian world, &c.

3. There are some whom God never elected, but passed them by, he would not show mercy unto them; he intended to manifest his justice and wrath on those vessels of wrath; did Christ obtain for these also, Reconciliation, Remission, and eternal life! He knew that his Father would never have mercy on them, and his death was according to the Counsel of his Father; and did his Father Counsel and Decree and appoint him to purchase and procure mercy for those of whom he said, he would never show mercy to them? Why? This were strange indeed, that God should put the soul of Christ to grief, and make him to bear wrath and sorrow for them, unto whom he never intended mercy.

4. Should not all men in the world be born in a state of grace and favor? For Christ hath obtained Reconciliation for them all, and that Reconciliation is not forfeited until they reject it by unbelief, and that cannot be as soon as they be born? How then can we all be said by nature to be the children of wrath, Ephes. 2:3, seeing wrath is off and ceased when God is reconciled?

This Inference cannot possibly be avoided, unless we will fancy that the Reconciliation purchased by Christ, is kept by God (as it were) in Banco, as a Treasure which dischargeth nothing for a while, until hereafter it be brought forth to help a person upon occasion; so that the Reconciliation and Remission purchased by Christ, must be as a dead stock in heaven so long, until men come to years, and then God makes experiments whether sinners will make use of it or no, &c.

But to these I shall add other Arguments.

1. The Impetration of universal Reconciliation, either it was an actual Reconciliation and Remission, or only Potential, a Reconcilableness, or Remissableness. If it were an actual Reconciliation and Remission, then are God and all sinners enemies no longer, but friends; and then every sinner shall certainly be saved. And is a blessed man, for if we be reconciled by the death of Christ, much more shall we be saved by his life, Rom. 5:10. And Rom. 4. Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Verse 8. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin: But this I suppose none will presume to maintain, Ergo, no Actual Reconciliation and Remission for all. If the Reconciliation and Remission be only Potential, and not Actual; then;

1. Why doth the Scripture take no notice of this at all: But where it speaks of the death of Christ, and Reconciliation, and Remission thereby, it perpetually delivers the one and the other as Actual. Ephes. 2:13. Ye are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Verse 14. He is our peace. Ver. 15. Making peace. Ver. 16. Having slain the enmity thereby. Col. 1:20. Having made peace through the blood of his Cross. Ver. 21, you hath he reconciled. Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the

world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: was all this (here ascribed unto the death of Christ) only a power accruing unto God that he might (if he would) make an offer of a universal reconciliation, and Remission?

2. But again, Jesus Christ did make an actual offering of himself, and he did actually satisfy the Justice of God for all (according to the Opinion of the Arminians) Now if the Justice of God be actually satisfied, surely there is more than a mere power and liberty acquired that God may be reconciled to us if he will, and pardon us if he will, and save us if he will: Because the satisfaction of Christ can and doth Oblige God to this; God having Covenanted with him, if that he would lay down his life for sinners, that then his Righteousness should justify and reconcile them.

3. What we are to believe, that is true, but we are to believe that God is actually reconciled by the blood of Christ, and hath actually forgiven us?

2. This Grand universal Impetration, either God intends the real actual application of it, or he doth never intend to apply it to all.

It were most strange that the Son of God should come down from heaven, be made man, be made obedient to the death, even to the death of the Cross; yea and be made a curse for us, and by his blood purchase (as they say) Reconciliation, and Remission, and life Eternal for all and everyone, if God intended not actually to bestow these.

But I demand, Did he intend and will the actual collation of these purchased benefits on all and everyone; or did he not?

The Arminians to this, expressly answer two things.

1. Deum nec voluisse, nec noluisse; God did neither will and intend it; neither did he nill, or not intend it:

Why then there is a Christ given to death, given for a Sacrifice to be a Propitiation for sinners, to be a Redemption for all and every sinner, to save all, and yet after all this, God is not peremptorily resolved (either way) of the benefit of this to any one sinner whatsoever: And so the death of Christ may be in vain, in respect of benefit, to all the sinners in the world.

For although his death did satisfy God's Justice, and thereby God gained so much as that he might universally tender Redemption to all; yet if there were no actual purpose, or real intention in God to bestow this on any, who can say that he shall be the better for that which God really intends not to bestow on him?

2. Again, they say that though God did not peremptorily intend to confer and bestow this upon all, yet conditionally he did, if so be that all will believe on Christ: unto which I would reply two things:

First, God did know that all men would not believe on Christ; and therefore as to the prescience of God, this condition was not universal but particular; if God's intention to impart the benefits of the death of Christ had a respect unto, and foundation in a condition which he certainly foresaw to be particular only; Hence it will necessarily follow, That God never intended a Redemption and salvation for all: From the Argument either to God, or unto men, it shall bind the Adversary.

If to God in respect of his intention, then thus I frame it: God intended salvation by Christ, only for all who will believe in Christ;

but God did certainly know that all men would not believe in Christ. Ergo, he did not intend it for all.

If to men in respect of the event, then thus: Salvation is obtained for all who will believe on Christ; but all men will not believe in Christ. Ergo. Salvation is not obtained for all.

Secondly, I reply to that Assertion, viz. That God did intend to confer or apply all saving benefits purchased by Christ, upon the condition that all men would believe. Either God did really intend to give this condition to all (i.e.) to work so effectually upon all, that they might believe through his grace; or he did not so intend to work on them: If he did not intend effectually to give faith unto all men, then questionless he never did intend that all men either should or could partake of that universal redemption by Christ; for no man either doth, or can partake thereof without faith; and of that faith no man neither doth, or can partake thereof, unless God be pleased to give it unto him; Faith being the gift of God. If he did intend effectually to give faith unto all men, then all men have been, are, or shall be Believers; for what God will effectually give, of that shall we partake, &c.

**Object. God intends to give faith to all men; but it is in his own congruous way, unto which all men submit not.**

Sol. But this comes not home to the Argument; for I do not argue of the congruity and fitness of ways to work faith, and whether men may resist these ways or not; or whether God will give saith upon another condition, if they will have faith. This I insist upon, that if God intends effectually to give faith unto all, then all shall eventually have that faith: To give saith effectually is not a mere command to believe; nor is it to present unto sinner's media sufficientia only, but

it is by the Almighty operation of the Spirit of God to create and work in, or infuse the grace of faith into the heart of a sinner.

3. If there were such an universal Impetration of Reconciliation, and remission, and salvation for all and every man by the death of Christ; then the love of God, and the love of Christ are of equal respect to all alike: All are alike in the love and intention of God who gave Christ; and all are alike in the love and death of Christ; who upon one and the same account died alike for all, whether believers, or unbelievers, whether those that shall be saved, or those that shall be damned; there was no difference, and no inequality of love towards sinners; God did not look more on one than on another; neither did Christ regard one more than another in his death. But that any one speeds better than another, this depends on himself, because he will believe, the other will not, but all are alike objects of the same degree of love with God and Christ.

The Arminians blush not to say that thus it is: God's love in the giving of Christ, and Christ's love in giving himself (Antecedently) was alike to all, (no more to Peter than to Judas, and as much to Pharaoh as to Moses) though the consequent love indeed (after men do believe) is not alike: But for the Antecedent love, that was alike to all: and the death of Christ was the effect of that his great and equal love unto all Antecedently.

Sol. But this is a grand mistake and Error, and that I shall briefly demonstrate by Scripture and Reasons. The Antecedent love not alike to all, appears by these Scriptures.

1. Matth. 11:25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth; because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; verse 26. Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

The matter of which Christ there discourseth, was the Mystery of Redemption and Doctrine of salvation; this same, Christ saith that his Father did hide from the wise and prudent, and so he did, because it seemed good unto him so to do: And for this differential pleasure and work of God, Christ gives thanks unto his Father: Now if God did love all alike, so as to will all their salvation alike, why would he have hid the Doctrine and way of salvation from any? And had the love of Christ been alike to all in the desire and purpose of their salvation, would he have thanked and blessed his Father, for hiding and not revealing of that universal salvation?

Can any man reasonably make Christ thus to express himself? Father, thou didst seriously will the salvation of all alike, and so did I myself, and nothing is wanting on thy part, nor yet on mine, that all sinners might enjoy the same: Nevertheless I thank thee who didst thus love all alike, and intend the salvation of all alike, that thou hast hid the Doctrine and knowledge of this universal Salvation from the wise and prudent. Do you call this an equal love to all!

**Object. Nor will the corrupt gloss of Corvinus the Arminian help him at all, who would make Christ to give thanks to his Father, q.d. Those things which were hidden to the wise, he had revealed to babes.**

Sol. The Text voids that shuffle plainly; for it saith, because thou hast hid these things from the wise; not They had hid them from themselves, but Thou hast hid them; Not So it seemed good unto them; But it seemed good in thy sight:

II. I will give you another place against this equal love of God to all, which I believe is unanswerable; Rom. 9:11. The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of works, but of him that

calleth; verse 12, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. Verse 13. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Let Esau and Jacob be Examples or Types, it matters not much to the Point in hand; here it is said, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. Is this a love alike to both? Nor will that distinction of a consequent love of God, which they make to be after faith and repentance, and to be unlike to men; or of an Antecedent love of God which is before faith and repentance, and is alike to all; I say this distinction fails them here.

Sol. For the Apostle speaks of that Antecedent love, which yet is not alike to all (The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, yet Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.)

III. If the love of God and Christ were Antecedently alike to all men in this business of universal salvation; Then when Christ died for all sinners, he loved them all with such a love as greater could not be. Joh. 15:13. Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friend: If one be an enemy, you cannot show greater love than to lay down your life for him, or if he be a friend, greater love cannot be shown than this, to lay down your life for him.

Now did Christ love all men with so great a love, as greater cannot be shown to any? If so, why is it that the effects of this love never reach many men so greatly loved, and yet they reach others, even because they were so greatly loved? &c.

IV. This universal Impetration only by the death of Christ cannot be admitted for those absurd consequences which depend upon it, verse 9.



1. It lames Jesus Christ in his Princely Office, which did as necessarily take in the Intercession of Christ, as it did the Sacrifice and Oblation of Christ: for when he was Anointed and Consecrated to be a Priest, he was at the same time consecrated both to die, and offer, and purchase: And likewise to apply the offering of himself and the purchase unto those for whom he died; Oblation was not put on him, and application upon another, but both on himself; he was to die and purchase as a Redeemer, and he himself was to apply what he had purchased as an Intercessor; but by the Arminian Doctrine, these are severed, and application denied to his Intercession.

2. It frustrates the end of Christ's Impetration; for when Christ died and purchased, his end therein was application of the purchase: He did purchase a deliverance that sinners might be delivered, not that they might, or might not be delivered.

3. Nor can I yet see how this general empty Impetration can stand with the honor of God's Attributes: Not with his Omnipotency that he would have a benefit procured, which he is hindered from the applying of it by the perverseness of man's will: Nor with his Wisdom to intend that which he shall never accomplish or obtain: Nor with his Justice, to receive from the hands of Christ so full and absolute a satisfaction, and yet after that never to admit many men into grace or favor, nor to pardon them nor save them, though satisfaction were made by Christ for those very ends: Nor yet with the Love of Christ, who laid down his precious blood, and yet this should never take effect in many, for whose sake it was so largely and seriously shed: And that he should suffer the merit of his death, and the efficacy thereof to be so continually perverted by the free and proud will of sinners.

4. It doth absolutely overthrow the Doctrine of Election delivered in Scripture, and the limited subordination of redemption by Christ according to Election, and the certain communication of all grace and glory to such who are Elected and Redeemed.

5. So likewise doth it the Doctrine of the New Covenant of Grace which is particular.

6. And leaves God after the great love and cost in giving of Christ, yet to an uncertainty, what the issue and fruit of all this will be; perhaps men will accept of it, perhaps not; perhaps they that accept of it will persevere, perhaps not; perhaps I have lost all my love and charges, &c.

4. I should now discourse of a fourth Conclusion, viz. that as there never was, or shall be a universal application of the death of Christ; so neither God, nor Christ ever intended the same.

But here the Arminians will save us of this labor; for they confess the same; the application, fruit, or benefit of the death of Christ is only for believers: And for any other death of Christ which is without any fruit or benefit to us, let themselves (if they like it) take it, only give us that which is fruitful and saving.

3. There remains nothing more about this question, but the answering of some Scriptures, and some Arguments which the Arminians make use of to prove their universal effectual redemption, or that Christ died for all men, and every particular man, not only Sufficenter, but also Efficaciter.

1. Object. Their first Batalio of Scripture for their Opinion rests upon the word (the world) Joh. 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave

his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Joh. 6:51. The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. 1 Joh. 2:2. He is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world: to which they may add also, Joh. 1:29. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Joh. 12:47. I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

Before we give a particular answer to these Scriptures, it is necessary to premise a word or two.

1. The word [world] is diversely used in the Scripture, sometimes it signifies;
  1. The whole frame of Creation, Heaven and Earth, and all the Creatures in them.
  2. The promiscuous and universal multitude of mankind.
  3. Only the wicked and unbelieving part of the world; I pray not for the world, Joh. 17:9.
  4. Only the Elect and believers, Rom. 11:12. If the fall of them be the riches of the world. Verse 15. If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, &c.
2. That expression (all the world, and the whole world) doth not always import in Scripture, every man in the world, Luke 2:1. There went out a Decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. This cannot be meant of every particular man in the world, nor yet of many Nations of the world, for they were not all (singly) under the Roman power, Joh. 1:10. The world knew him not: this

cannot be understood of everyone in the world; for some in the world did know him, Joh. 12:19. Behold the world is gone after him! Is it meant that every man in the world did so? 1 Joh. 5:19. The whole world lieth in wickedness; can this be understood of every particular man in the world? Rev. 18:8. All the world wondered after the beast: Neither can this be expounded of every particular man in the world.

I purposely bring these places, because the Arminians impose on weak and ignorant men, as if by the name (world) is always meant all the men in the world, and every particular man in the world: you see that the Scriptures do not always so intend it, no not when they speak of all the world, and of the whole world.

But now let us look on the Scripture alleged distinctly.

**Object. John 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.**

Sol. 1. Are the Arminians in good earnest in bringing this place for God's intention of salvation for all by Christ?

1. Do they not affirm that God neither would, nor could, velle salutem hominum, before Christ had satisfied his Justice? And yet this place shows a special love and will in God of man's salvation before he gave Christ.

2. They deny the love of God in the Text, to be any act of his will at all, unless incomplicity; but here it is made the immediate and prime cause of the giving of his Son. So that according to their Opinion, they must expound the place thus; God so loved all mankind with such a love, whereby he neither would, nor could will the salvation of any man, (that he sent his Son to save all men, before he did intend to save any man) that whosoever believes should be

saved: This is the great love which they make in God to save all men by Christ.

2. Again, Seeing that word [world] is ambiguous, sometimes being taken for those men of whom Christ is the Head, 2 Cor. 5:19, sometimes for those men of whom Satan is the Prince, Joh. 12:31. (The Prince of this world) it had been fit for them to have made out unto us, that both of these worlds were so loved by God, that he gave his Son for the Salvation of them both.

Thirdly, the sense of the place stands evident of itself thus; God so loved the world, &c. (i.e.) he was so mercifully affected towards mankind in their lost condition, that he would not suffer all of them to perish, but sent his Son, that whosoever believes on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Whence it evidently appears, that God's intention in the sending of his Son, was for salvation, not of every particular man, but of everyone that believes.

And indeed there the restriction of God's purpose for salvation doth lie (In quisquis credit, whosoever believes) not that God would save every particular man in the world, but only everyone that should believe.

And questionless this was great love shewn to the world of man-kind universally lost, That Jesus Christ was sent for the recovery and salvation of every one of those in the world that should believe on him.

Nor will any Arminian dare to affirm more than this, unless he will maintain that there was yet a larger love in God, and a larger intention in him effectually to save all the world by Christ

distributively, and collectively, whether they believe, or do not believe: The Scripture plainly rejects this, and so do they themselves.

**Object. Again, they object that Scripture of John 6:51. The bread which I will give you is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.**

Sol. That Christ gave himself for the life of the world, is granted; and that he is the bread which giveth life to the world, verse 33, is also granted; but the Point to be proved is, that Christ did give himself effectually for the life of every man in the world. But this can never be made out any farther than for Believers in the world. Verse 35. I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. And verse 53. Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of his blood, ye have no life in you.

**Object. 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.**

Sol. 1. Here is the same term again; but the question is whether (world) in this place signifies any other but fideles in mundo; for the Apostle speaks of an actual Reconciliation, and of an actual forgiveness predicated of this world, which are proper to believers.

2. If you would have the word world, in this place to be understood of every particular man in the world; then it must follow that God is by the death of Christ actually reconciled to everyone, and everyone to God (which the Arminians themselves deny) and that sin is not, and shall not be imputed to any man whatsoever, which is a notorious falsehood.

**Object. But another place there is unto which they much trust upon, viz. 1 Joh. 2:2. He is the propitiation not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.**

Sol. But this place (which at first sight seems one of the strongest for them) will not help them at all; for

1. The Apostle speaks of a Propitiation conjoined with the intercession of Christ, verse 1. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Verse 2, and he is the propitiation, &c. Now the Arminians deny the Intercession of Christ to be for all the world; for so say they, there should be an actual application of the death of Christ unto all and every man, which may not be admitted.

2. Again, such a Propitiation as Christ is here said to be (for our sins) the same is here said to be for the sins (of the whole world) (otherwise the comfort here given were of small force, if Christ should be a propitiation for us; and for the world, in a different sense; for our sins effectually, but for the sins of the whole world ineffectually.)

But he is a Propitiation for our sins, (i.e.) who believe effectually, therefore he must also be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world also effectually: So that if by the whole world in this place, all and every man in the world be understood; Then Christ must be, and is an effectual Propitiation for the sins of everyone (i.e.) he hath so satisfied and pacified God, that he is no longer displeased with any one sinner; but this the Arminians will not maintain.

3. The scope and purpose of the Apostle in this place, is to comfort and support the hearts of believers in case of falling or sinning, that they should not despair, and for this he presents two Reasons:

1. One is, that Christ is our Intercessor, or Advocate with the Father.

2. The other is, that Christ is the Propitiation for the sins of all the faithful, whether Jews or Gentiles, by which he means here the whole world; not only for our sins who are Jews, but for the sins of the Gentiles: So that by the whole world, is meant all believers whether Jews or Gentiles (for his Epistle is Catholic and respects them both.)

Nor is it a universal expression when the Jews and the Gentiles are spoken of in way of distinction and opposition, then to call the Gentiles the world. See at your leisure, Rom. 11:12,15.

**Object. But the consolation given here is not so full and rising, unless by a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, he understood every man in the world!**

Sol 1. I answer; To me the Consolation riseth very full and high; for the case is of some particular Christians or Believers sinning's (if any man sin) in this case he supports them not to despair, but to hope for pardon and peace, and that from Christ intercession and Propitiation; he is the Advocate, and he is the Propitiation for their sins, and not only for their sins, but for the sins also of all Believers, that either do, or shall live in the whole world, whether Jews or Gentiles; all Believers shall find him so, Ergo, you shall.

2. Yet suppose, that by a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, were meant (as the Arminians contend for) for the sins of every man in the world: This (according to their sense) would not make the Consolation higher, but weaker: For as much as that Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, by the death of Christ (according to them) is of no special respect to any particular sinner living, nor of



any efficacy for any one more than for another, nor more for the living than for the damned; neither was there any different intention for the Collation and Application of it until men did believe: And what more high and special comfort can arise to a troubled soul from this, I am not able to conceive.

2. Object. Their next phalanx of Scriptures for Christ dying universally *pro omnibus & singulis*, is mustered up from the word (all) 1 Tim. 2:4, who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Verse 6. Who gave himself a Ransom for all; Chap. 4:10. Who is the Savior of all men, especially of all those that believe: Heb. 2:9. That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man, 2 Cor. 5:14,15, Tit. 2:11. Before I speak to these places, I would premise a few words.

1. As the word (many) in Scripture is sometimes used for (all) (as Dan. 12:2. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt) So the word (all) is sometimes put for many, as Rom. 5:18. So by the Righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all to justification of life. Ver. 19. So by the obedience of one, shall many be made Righteous. So that it is not safe nor true wheresoever we read the word all, there continually to expound it for every man distributively,

2. To die for all, and to be given for all, must in some places respect the sufficiency of the dignity in the death of Christ, but not always the efficacy of his death in the virtual extent of it, which none that I have read will maintain in this Point of Christ's dying for all.

Now let us look on the particular places mentioned for Christ dying for all, and every man.

1 Tim. 2:4. Who will have all men to be saved, &c.

By all men (in this place) the Apostle means not every man individually, but all sorts or kinds of men; for in the precedent verses, he exhorts that Prayer be made for all men, and amongst them, for Kings, and for all that are in Authority; and he subjoins this Reason, Ergo, God will have all men to be saved; he excludes no sort of men from salvation, but invites all sorts and kinds of them. And therefore seeing the Gospel is to be preached to all men, and there are some of all sorts that God will save to whom the Gospel is preached, therefore we should pray for all men: Neither is it unusual in Scripture to understand by all, not every particular, but all the sorts or kinds, Joel 2:28. I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh; by all flesh is not meant every man in the world, but all sorts of persons, your sons and your daughters, your old men, and your young men, as there he expounds it; and upon Jews and Gentiles, as Peter expounds it, Acts 2. So Luke 3:6. All flesh shall see the salvation of God: Not every particular man in the world, but all kind of Nations, and people, and Men.

Nay Vorstius himself confesseth that All in this place is as much, and the same with all sorts or kinds, so that by all sorts or kinds you do not restrain it only to the Elect.

Nor is this any new interpretation of this place. St. Austin delivered the same above a thousand years ago in his Euchiridion to Laurentius. *Vult omnes homines salvos fieri (i.e.) omne genus hominum per quascunque differentias distributum, Reges, Privatos, Nobiles, sublimes, doctos, humiles, indoctos, divites, paupers, Mares, Foeminas, & in Aetatibus omnibus, in professionibus omnibus, & si quid aliud differentiarum est in hominibus.*

Quos Deus vult servari, pro eorum salute Ecclesia debet precari, ut Deus omnes (i.e.) quosvis vult servari, sublato gentis, sexus, aetatis, ordinis atque dignitatis discrimine.

And in another place he expounds it thus; Deus vult omnes salvos fieri, ut intelligantur omnes Praedestinos, quia omne genus hominum in eis est. So the Apostle here doth not speak de singulis hominum personis sed de omnibus hominum ordinibus; non de singulis generum, sed de generibus singulorum.

Others do distinguish of the will of God: One is Voluntas as propositi, by which vult homines salvos facere; the other is, voluntas signi, by which vult homines salvos fieri: In this he puts men at what they should look at, viz salvation, and by what means they should compass that salvation, viz. by coming to the knowledge of the truth, &c.

**Object. 1 Tim. 2:6. Who gave himself a Ransom for all; Ergo, all men are redeemed by Christ.**

Sol. 1. Mean they Actually, so that God is now satisfied, and they are indeed freed and delivered by the death of Christ? What shameful daubing is this, to stickle so for all men's Redemption or Ransom by the death of Christ, when yet verily they deny any actual Redemption for any one by the death of Christ?

2. For all, a Ransom for all? For all for whom he is a Mediator? Verse 5. But a Mediator he is for all them who belong to the Covenant of grace. And that is not for all absolutely, and singularly, but for all Elect and Believers, who have God to be their God.

3. The same answer for all of all sorts, may be given to this as to the former; for his speech runs unto the same all, &c.

4. Yet if they would force to all singularly, then the Ransom is for all quatenus ad dignitatem & sufficientiam; not to all quatenus ad efficientiam.

**Object. Heb. 2:9. That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

Sol. Let the Apostle expound himself What he means there.

By every man, verse 10, he calls them many Sons (in bringing many sons to glory) ver. 11. Them that are sanctified, and made one with Christ (He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren) And ver. 13. The Children which God did give him, &c. So that here by every man, is not meant every particular individual man, whether believer or unbeliever; but every Son of God, everyone that is sanctified, all that are brethren with Christ, all the Children given by God unto him; for every one of these did Christ taste death; not one of them could have been saved but by his death; and what is this to every man whatsoever in the world? Are all and every man, sanctified, children, brethren, &c?

**Object. 1 Tim. 1:10. Who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe!**

Sol. 1. Speaks the Apostle here of Christ's dying for the salvation of all and every man? Of God's Spiritually saving of unbelievers, and of believers, that he will eternally save unbelievers as well as believers. If the Arminians will needs have this place so understood, how come they to admit and swallow down that word (especially, especially of them that believe) whereas they hold that God's will to save by the death of Christ is equal and alike to all? Either they must understand this place of God's Antecedent will of salvation; but then (especially)

stands in their way; or they must understand it of his Consequent will, and then (all) stands in their way; for God (as they teach) will not save any according, to his Consequent will but only Believers.

2. But the Apostle here speaks, not of salvation by the death of Christ, but of a saving or safety depending on the Providence of God, which respects all men in the world, but believers in a more special manner, who have the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, v. 8. And therefore the Apostle in his sufferings and labors excites himself to trust on God, to take care and provide for him, which he doth upon this ground, q. God is the Savior of all men, but especially of them that believe; q.d. If God's Providence will help all men, even the world, much more them that believe on him.

**Object. But that word Savior, and saving, must needs mean some higher matter than this of Providence.**

Sol. In this place it doth not, nor in many other places, Psal. 36:6. Hominem & Bestiam servas Jehovah: Matth. 8:25. Lord save us, we perish.

**Object. Rom. 14:15. Destroy not him by thy meat for whom Christ died. 1 Cor. 8:11. Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died.**

Sol. The Question in dispute is, whether Christ did by his death obtain for all and every man Reconciliation with God, Remission of sins, and Eternal life? Do these places come up to the proof thereof?

1. The Apostle speaks unto Christians in both these places; he writes unto believers, (are believers all and every man?) nay he writes to the believers of particular Churches in Rome, and in Corinth; are particular believers all and every man in the world?

2. To these he writes of a particular case, respecting their Christian liberty about the use of Herbs and Meats, so to moderate themselves as not to scandalize or offend their weak brethren, and to perplex and ensnare their consciences: that those Christians who were strong in faith (i.e.) were fully persuade and satisfied that all meats were lawful, should not so act their liberty thereupon as to give offense to their weak brethren (unto weak believers) who yet were not so clearly convinced of that liberty: He speaks of believers on both sides, strong and weak, and of none other but believers concerned in the present fear and scandal; and what is this to Christ dying for every man?

3. And why would he not have the strong believers (by the abuse of their liberty about meats, and drinks, and herbs) to offend the Consciences of their weak brethren? He gives the Reason (destroy not him by thy meat for whom Christ died; and shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died? The reason lies in the danger of that offense, q.d. thus to offend them was, as much as in them lay, to destroy them, and cause them to perish; For offense or scandal (of themselves, and in their own natural aptitude) do tend to the ruin and destruction of those to whom they are objected, and weak Christians are likewise apt to be shaken, and wounded, and waver by them. Assuredly this is and should be reason sufficient with any believers therefore not to give scandal in anything, much less in the use of meats and drinks, to other Believers who are weak; neither doth the Apostle say He is destroyed by thy meat for whom Christ died, but Destroy not him, &c. He speaks not of a work eventually done and effected, but of a work which he cautions them to beware or take heed of, as tending thereunto.

And so in the later place he doth not absolutely affirm that the weak brother doth perish, but interrogatively propounds, shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died? q.d. Should you, or any of you

be an occasion (as much as in you lies) of the ruining of any for whom Christ died? Therefore have a care, be wary that ye give not any offense unto them.

Fifthly, If the Apostle had said that any weak brother had indeed been destroyed, and had indeed perished, yet this would not prove that Christ died for all and every man: All that it could infer would be only this, that some Believers might be destroyed and perish for whom Christ died; which yet appertains to another controversy of falling from grace, and there neither will it serve the turn.

**Object. 2 Pet. 2:1. There were false Prophets also amongst the people, even as there shall be false Teachers among you, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**

Loe, say the Arminians, here are some which bring upon themselves swift destruction, and deny the Lord that bought them; and therefore as well they that perish, as they that shall be saved, are redeemed by Christ, &c.

Sol. For answer to this place divers things may be said.

1. Some do question whether it speaks of Jesus Christ at all, because the word here rendered (Lord) is not that word (Lord) by which Christ is usually set forth: there is a difference observed by learned men

1. Inter Δεσπότην, Herum, & Κύριον, Dominum; which we find in Jude, ver. 4, denying the Lord God Δεσπότην, and our Lord Κύριον: But I know not whether we may with safety rest on this curiosity.

2. I shall rather make use of that distinction of being bought by Christ; persons may be said to be bought by the Lord Christ

1. κατ' ἀλήθειαν, according to truth, so only the Church is bought or purchased by the blood and death of Christ. Acts 2:28. Feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.

2. κατὰ δόξαν, In respect of Opinion, and so those are said to be bought, who seem to be bought, who bear such expressions of Christians for a while, that both themselves and others (in a judgment of charity) look on them as bought and redeemed persons; although afterwards the contrary doth appear; as all those who have but a temporary faith, and make a temporary profession; these seem to us to be bought, and perhaps unto themselves, yet really they are not. And truly such kind of persons were these, who are said in this place to deny the Lord that bought them: they were so far wrought on, that they got the knowledge of the true way of righteousness: verse 12. And escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, ver. 20, and probably were numbered (in respect of profession) with the people of God: so that they seemed to be bought in respect of their temporary faith, profession, and conversation, yet really they were not so, for they turned Apostates, ver. 22, and damnable Heretics, ver. 1, denying the Lord (either in his Person, or in his Office) who bought them, as others and as themselves did think.

Thirdly, Others do yet suggest one more answer unto this place; who say that these Heretics (and so other wicked men) were bought by Christ, though not as to the effect and state of salvation (for so only the Elect and true Believers are bought by Christ as their Redeemer and Savior) yet in respect of some common fruits and benefits for those, upon that account, their service and fidelity are duly and



properly belonging unto Christ, and their sin is the greater for denying him who is their Lord also by a right of Redemption as to Common mercies: And some do conjecture, had it not been for the Promise of Christ as Redeemer, and God's looking on him as so, all the world had been presently destroyed upon the fall of Adam, but Christ interposing himself, he stayed that destruction, and at least procured the cause of all those outward blessings which ungodly men do enjoy in this life, for which reason he may be said to buy even the ungodly (in that he delivers them from present ruin) and their sin is therefore the greater to deny him; but I adhere to the second answer as most proper to the place.

But having now many other Scriptures alleged by them to the same purpose aforementioned, let us consider what Reasons and Arguments the Arminians produce to prove that Christ died for all and every man, and by his death purchased Reconciliation with God, Remission of sins, and eternal life for them.

I shall briefly mention four or five of the chiefest which they bring,

1. That which every man is bound to believe, is true; but every man is bound to believe that Christ died for him. Ergo, it is true that Christ died for every man.

Sol. To this Sophistical Argument, two answers are given by the Learned.

1. One unto the Major, or first Proposition (viz. That which every man is bound to believe, is true) a thing may be said to be true in a three-fold respect; Either quia promittitur, because it is promised; Or secondly, quia narratur, because it is related or declared; Or thirdly, quia praedicatur, because it is foretold; so that whatsoever a man is bound to believe, that same is true, either as promised, or as

declared or done, or as foretold; Not always true in one and the same respect, or in every respect; but either as promised, or declared or reported, or as foretold. To apply this to the Argument in hand, that Christ died effectually for every man; If it be a truth, then it must be so, because God hath promised it, or declared it, or foretold it; if it be a truth, because promised, then it is with condition of faith; for though the very promise be true in itself, yet it is not performed unto us, without believing; the same promise still requiring faith for the performance of it, and then this will not prove that it is true that Christ died for all and every man absolutely, but only for Believers, or for all men only under the condition of faith: If it be a truth because only declared, or foretold, then whether a man believes, or believes not, this is true that Christ died for him; the reason is, all things which are true by way of Narration or Prediction, they are true upon their own account, they are true before we believe them (our faith makes them not to be so) and if we believe them not, yet are they true; our unbelief cannot make the truth of God a lie: But I suppose that no Arminian will say that Christ died effectually for every man, whether he doth believe, or doth not believe.

A second answer shall be unto the Minor Proposition (But every man is bound to believe that Christ died for him) to this I would say three things.

First, It is a material disputable Point, Whether those to whom the Gospel is not revealed, are bound to believe that Christ died for them? Because the Precept of believing is a Gospel Precept only, and the punishment for unbelief is threatened, and inflicted in relation to the Gospel, for slighting and refusing that Christ who is revealed and offered by the Gospel unto sinners, who also are therein commanded to believe on Christ: and if this be so, then certainly every man is not bound to believe that Christ died for him.

Secondly, When the Gospel doth come, it doth not absolutely command that everyone should believe that Christ died for him indeed; it doth command everyone to believe on Christ (i.e.) to receive him, and trust on him alone for life. But it doth not command him to believe (without anymore ado, without any condition whatsoever) that Christ died for him (i.e.) hath by his death made his peace, procured his pardon and eternal life. For the Gospel doth not reveal or command any such thing: It doth reveal a Christ who died for sinners, and it doth offer this Christ to sinners; but with all it saith, Whosoever believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned. Doth the Gospel command every man absolutely to believe that Christ died for him (which takes in the Application of all the fruits and benefits of the death of Christ which a soul can enjoy) whether a man obey the voice of the Gospel or not, receive Christ or not! q.d. You are bound to believe that Christ died for you, though you never by faith close with the offer of Christ, though your heart never prize him, or never are brought in unto him! And though you still love your sins and persevere in them. Tell me in good sadness, did Jesus Christ ever sign such a Commission as this, Go preach the Gospel, and tell people that whether they receive me, or will not receive me; whether they become believers, or continue unbelievers; whether they repent, or continue impenitent; they are bound every man of them to believe that I died for them, and reconciled them, and have procured salvation for them! Certainly if every man were bound to believe this, he were bound to believe a falsehood; for verily Christ did not die for those who remain unbelievers and impenitent: and the Gospel is so far from promising life by the death of Christ to impenitent and unbelieving persons, that it threatens and seals death, and wrath, and condemnation on them: Joh. 8:24. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Joh. 3:36. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth

on him. Ver. 18. He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

3. The immediate Object of that faith which God at first requires, is not this Proposition, Christ died for me; But Christ who died: And the first command of Faith in the Gospel, is to accept Christ, and rest on Christ, and then follows a fiduciary persuasion that Christ died for me: And indeed no man can come to that degree of Faith to be persuaded or confident that Christ died for him, until he first by faith receive Christ offered unto him.

Unbelievers are damned for rejecting the grace of Christ offered unto them by the Gospel; shall they be so punished if that grace were never purchased for them, and never did belong unto them?

Sol. To this I answer.

First, That Christ with his grace of Redemption is (Indefinitely offered unto sinners by the Gospel) and that all who do by their infidelity refuse that grace, are deservedly damned, not because they reject the grace offered belonging to them as unbelievers and impenitent; but because they neglect and despise that condition upon which grace was offered unto them; Christ and his grace were offered unto them upon this condition, If they would believe and receive him and it; But they will not believe (You will not come unto me that you might have life, Joh. 5:40.) And though light be come into the world, yet they will not receive it.

Secondly, Unbelievers who do reject Christ with his grace offered unto them, do not reject him, and that grace, because they know that neither Christ nor his grace do belong to them; this neither is, nor can be the reason a priore, of their rejection, because no particular sinner (unto whom the Gospel comes) can know that Christ hath

simply excluded him, and tends no good to him: and he sees that to others in the same condition and depth of sin and unworthiness with himself, Christ and his grace offered by the Gospel are effectual. But therefore they do reject Christ, because they love him not, (they love darkness rather than light,) Joh. 3:19, and are led by their perverse will, so as utterly to refuse communion with Christ and subjection to him: for which they are deservedly punished.

Thirdly, they argue thus, That if Christ did not die for all and every man, Then every man must remain in a doubtful suspense, whether he be concerned to believe in Christ or not.

Sol. 1. And why so, I pray you? Is this to be set up as the only ground why we must believe in Christ, because Christ hath died for all and every man! When yet themselves do say, though Christ hath so died for all and every man, yet no man is the better for this until, and unless he believe. Or doth the Gospel when it calls upon sinners to believe on Christ, propound this as the inducement unto the soul, Christ died for all men, and for every man; therefore you should believe on Christ: and until you be sure that Christ did thus die and obtain Reconciliation for all and every man, and Remission of sins, and eternal life for all, you may not, and must not believe. When Peter called upon those Jews to believe, Acts 2, and Paul upon the Jailor (believe and you shall be saved, Chap. 16) did they usher this duty in with imposing this Precedent certainty to them, that they must subscribe first unto that Point, That Christ died for all and every man; therefore you should believe?

Secondly, But there is no cause of this suspense or doubting at all, whether a person should believe on Christ, though Christ did not die for all men; because the Gospel (without that error) affords Grounds

or Reasons enough for any man to (whom it is preached) to believe on Christ.

1. It reveals Christ as the Savior of sinners.
2. It offers this Savior freely unto sinners.
3. It commands him particularly to believe on Christ.
4. It promiseth him life upon believing. Is here now any reason to doubt whether I ought to believe?
5. It assures him that Christ will in no wise reject him.
6. But will accept, and that it is so far from being a sin in him to believe in Christ, that it is his great sin if he doth not believe on Christ who then graciously offers himself, and Commands him to believe, and assures him of Reconciliation and pardoning mercy and eternal life upon believing.

If Christ did not die for all and every man, then one of these Absurdities must necessarily follow, either that those for whom Christ died not, are free of Adams sins (as the Angels in Heaven are) and so have not need of Christ to be their Reconciliation, or else they are in the same condition with the Devils, and so must despair of all hope of Salvation.

Sol. I answer, neither so, nor so; neither the one nor the other absurdity will arise necessarily out of that Doctrine, that Christ died not for all, that some of Adams Posterity are no sinners, and so need no Reconciliation by Christ, or that else they must despair, being in the same condition with the Devils themselves.

1. For first, most certain it is, that in Adam all sinned, Rom. 5:12. And by reason of sin all do stand in need of Reconciliation by Christ; but hence it will not follow, because that all men (are sinners) and do stand in need of such a Reconciliation by Christ, therefore God must and doth give Christ as a Reconciliation for them all: No more then this will follow, because that so many Malefactors are in peril of their life, therefore the Prince against whom they have offended, must either pardon or offer pardon to every one of them; for though there be a common necessity of pardon as unto all of them, because of their guilt, yet the giving of pardon is an act of mere grace; and therefore the Prince offended may bestow it on some of them only, and not on all of them: Thus stands the case 'twixt God and us, we have all sinned against him, and therefore come short of the glory of God, and stand in need of mercy, and Reconciliation by Christ; and God saith, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; some of these sinners I will save by Christ, namely all them that believe, Joh. 3:36, others of these I will not save, namely those that believe not: though there be a need of Reconciliation in respect of all men, yet it is the pleasure of God not effectually to bestow salvation on them all: Nor is God (as to the event and issue of this) at all unjust, seeing that he leaves them only to wrath and condemnation, who do continue unbelieving and impenitent.

2. But secondly, Neither will that follow, that the condition of some men (i.e.) unbelievers, must be the same with that of the Devils (without any hope of salvation) if Christ not die for all. For

First, The Devils had no Mediator at all given unto them in respect of their kind, for one or other; but so mankind had, forasmuch as Christ took part of the nature of mankind, Heb. 2:14.

Secondly, The Devils (all of them) are in an estate of actual damnation, they are every one of them actually damned; but so is not every man, no nor yet everyone that believes not in Christ.

3. The Devils have their damnation so sealed upon them, that every one of them doth know there is no hope of salvation at all for them; but thus it is not with any particular unbeliever living; for though the unbelieving person doth deserve eternal damnation, yet he hath the means offered to escape that damnation; yea he doth know that if he continues unbelieving, he shall not escape the wrath of God; yet he doth not know whether God may not give him grace to change his unbelieving heart, after a long time of unbelief. Neither can we say of any unbeliever, nor can any unbeliever say of himself, God will never give him grace that he may be converted and believe; and therefore it is not true that the unbeliever is in the same hopeless condition with the Devils.

Thirdly, This Assertion that Christ did not effectually die for all men, is no more apt in the nature of it to cause any to despair than these expressions of Christ, Matth. 20:16. There are but few which are chosen: And Matth. 7:14. Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Would, or may you argue from these expressions of Christ, that these who do not belong to the number of those few, must now despair, and they are in the same condition with the Devils? Why then will you reason thus from Christ not dying for all and every man?

And yet fourthly, we may add this to all the rest, That those sinners who continue (who live and die) impenitent and unbelieving, these do (in the event) cut off themselves from all hope of salvation; As Paul spake of the Gentiles lying in their natural condition, That at the same time they were without Christ, and aliens from the Common-



wealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, Ephes. 2:12, that we may safely say of all obstinate, impenitent, and unbelieving persons (living and dying so) they are without Christ, and without hope, and shall go into that hell which is prepared for the Devil and his angels; in the event their condition will not be different.

Once more they argue thus, If Christ did not die for all and every man, Then no man can certainly conclude that Christ died for him, and that he shall be saved by Christ: For such a conclusion must be raised either upon some particular word (Christ died for thee) or upon some general word (Christ died for all) but you have no particular word that Christ died for you personally; And if you deny a general word, that he died for all; then you have no word certainly to conclude that Christ died for you; and so you are left without any certainty and comfort of salvation by Christ.

Sol. It is well that the Arminians are so tender for the certain knowledge of any man's salvation by Christ: they leave God to an uncertainty of any man's particular salvation, notwithstanding the death of Christ for all men, and yet they will say This death of Christ for all men, as a ground of certainty unto us: wherein yet they deal;

1. Very fraudulently with us; for though they say that Christ died for all, yet they expressly teach that the application of Christ's death for actual salvation, is only for them that believe.
2. Very falsely; for according to this Doctrine no man can ever be certain of his salvation, until the very last gasp of his perseverance in grace, and that many perish eternally for whom Christ died.

Secondly, but let us see whether according to their Doctrine of Christ's dying for all men, one may certainly conclude (to the satisfaction, and peace, and comfort of his conscience) that Christ died for him. Let the ground for certainty be drawn up thus; Christ died for all men; but I am a man; therefore certainly Christ died to save me: Or, Christ died to save all sinners; but I am a sinner; Ergo, Christ died to save me. I think any understanding Christian would find miserable ground of satisfaction and certainty from this in the time of a perplexed conscience. But we have another way, and far surer from the Scripture to conclude our certainty of Christ's dying for us, and to save us. Jesus Christ died for all Believers effectually to save them, (this the Scripture expressly affirms) but I do truly believe in Christ, and therefore I certainly conclude that Christ did die for me to save me. And thus I have gone through this great Controversy about the latitude of Christ's death, where I find thus much, that it is necessary for every man to get faith, who will indeed be the better for the death of Christ; it shall therefore be our wisdom to leave disputing, and humbly to beg of God to give us Faith, that so we may believe on Christ to the salvation of our souls.

#### SECT. IX.

2. Quest. I shall now proceed to a second Question, viz. Whether any man can attain to the knowledge or certainty of the particular intentions of Christ's death in the benefits of it unto himself? (i.e.) whether any man can certainly know that God intended his particular salvation in the giving of Christ, and that Christ died for him, and made peace for him, and purchased remission of his sins, and eternal salvation for his soul?

Sol. For the resolving of this Scruple, be pleased to consider a few places.

1. There is a difference 'twixt a general assent, and 'twixt a particular knowledge and Application: It is one thing to know and acknowledge this general Truth (that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that whosoever believes shall be saved, and that whosoever repents shall have his sins pardoned) and it is another thing by faith to know that Christ died for me, that his blood was shed for the remission of my sins, that I am reconciled by his death, and that I shall be saved by his life; to say of Christ, as Paul once did, he loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. 2:20.

The question is not propounded about that general knowledge and assent of faith, whether a person may certainly know that truth that Christ died for sinners, and will save all that believe; but about a particular knowledge of that truth, as in relation and application unto this or that person, &c.

2. There is a certainty as the Papists do distinguish, and with whom we principally contend in this Controversy, of hope which depends upon probable grounds; and there is a certainty of faith which depends upon sure and undeceiving grounds.

The question is not whether a person may attain only unto some good hope and probable conjecture that Christ died for him, that his sins are pardoned, that he shall be saved; in which conjecture he may yet be deceived; but whether he may attain unto a certainty of faith upon grounds proper to believers, and to them who shall be saved.

3. We must distinguish 'twixt seeming believers who rest in common Notions of Christ, and in a visible profession only: and 'twixt real and sound Believers, whose hearts and souls God hath touched, and persuaded, and drawn to Christ, and they are effectually brought into union and communion with Christ.

I speak not of the former, who yet are very apt to deceive themselves with an extreme (but ungrounded) confidence that Christ died for them; but only of real and sound believers who are indeed married unto Christ, and are branches of the Vine, and members of the Body.

So that now the sum of the Answer is this, That a truly believing person may know with a certainty of Faith, not only that Christ died for sinners, but also for him, and for his sins, and for his salvation; though he doth not as yet certainly know this, yet he may know this; though he doth not always, at all times (under temptations and falls, and conflicts, and desertions) know this, yet he may attain unto this certain knowledge, which I suppose will be made out by Scripture and good Arguments.

1 Joh. 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. Ver. 11. And this is the Record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: ver. 12. He that hath the Son, hath life: ver. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life. Rom. 4:23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: ver. 24. But for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead: ver. 25, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised for our justification. Gal. 2:20. Who loved me, and gave himself for me. 1 Joh. 2:1. We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, ver. 2. And he is the Propitiation for our sins. Ver. 12. Your sins are forgiven you for his Name sake. Rev. 1:5. Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. Cant. 6:3. I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine.

Besides these Scriptures, let us consider of some Arguments depending upon Scripture, which do prove that a person may certainly know that God intended Christ for him, and that Christ died for him, &c.

1. If a particular person may certainly know that he doth truly believe in Christ, then he may certainly know that Christ died to save him (for the Scripture saith, Joh. 3:16. Whosoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. And Joh. 10:27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and (ver. 28) I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.) But a particular person may certainly know that he doth truly believe in Christ; Ergo. Heb. 10:39. We are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. 2 Cor. 4:13. We having the same Spirit of Faith according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak. 2 Tim. 1:12. I know whom I have believed. Job 19:25. I know that my Redeemer liveth.

It is to me a strange thing that any should think it impossible for a man that hath faith, to know that he hath it; why should we think it impossible for Lazarus being raised to life, now to know that he hath life? Or for the blind to whom Christ gave sight, confidently to say as he in Joh. 9:25. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see. So for a man who was formerly dead in sins, but now is raised by the Faith of the operation of God; (Col. 2:12) to say with Paul, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Gal. 2:20, and who was formerly ignorant of the beauties of Christ, so that no comeliness appeared in him; but now his eyes are opened, and he looks on Christ as the chiefest of ten thousand, and as altogether lovely and desirable; May not this man say, I know I do believe; when the Apostle hath said unto you that believe he is precious? 1 Pet. 2:7.

Again, the Apostle saith in Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God: Can faith let in this peace into our hearts, and yet we be uncertain whether we have that faith? And the same Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 2:12. We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given us of God: Surely faith is one of the chiefest things that are freely given unto us of God: It is the gift of God, Ephes. 2:8. Phil. 1:29. &c.

2. The proper and real end of self-Examination, is (at least) a possibility of knowledge; Nay, the proper scope of it is certain knowledge: For because as we are doubtful, therefore we examine and try; so we therefore examine, try, and prove, that thereupon we may come to acknowledge a certainty. Nay saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13:5. Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith, prove your own selves; know you not your own selves that Christ is you, except you be reprobates?

**Object. The Apostle doth only put them upon a trial, whether Christ be in them yea or no.**

Sol. 'It is true, that is the work which he puts them upon. But;

1. I demand, Is that work feasible or not? Is it possible for them to come unto that knowledge of Christ's being in them (upon that trial) or is it not? If it be not possible, then he earnestly presseth them to a fruitless duty, and successless labor; If it be possible, that they might upon the trial come to know that Christ is in them, then the thing is granted.

2. I thus argue, They who may come (upon trial) to know that Christ is in them, may certainly know that Christ died for them, to save them: My reason is this, That Jesus Christ is in none but in them for whom he died, and whom he will save; Col. 1:27. Christ is in you the

hope of glory. 1 Joh. 5:12. He that hath the Son, hath life: and he that hath not the Son, hath not life. If therefore one may know that Christ is in him of a truth, then he may know that Christ died for him in particular for his salvation.

Thirdly, If Believers may attain to joy and rejoicing in the death of Christ, yea unto a triumphing in it, then they may certainly know that Christ died for them, and hath purchased Reconciliation, Remission, and salvation for them: The consequence I prove thus, There are three things necessarily concurring to cause Spiritual joy and rejoicing, viz. 1 A delightful rejoicing Object. 2. An application of that Object to the desire of the soul. 1. A knowledge of that application: and indeed without that knowledge that such an Object is ours, or is for us, there never will be actual rejoicing, but if it be impossible, then despair; and if it be doubtful, then fear, &c. But believers may attain to joy and rejoicing in Christ, Phil. 3:3, and that upon the account of his beneficial dying for them, Rom. 5:11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Atonement.

Fourthly, I will add but one other Argument, and that is this, We are bound to love Jesus Christ who died for us and abundantly to thank and bless God for our Redemption, and Reconciliation, and Remission, and Salvation by Christ; this I suppose no man will deny; but we can neither do the one nor the other, if we cannot attain unto a certainty that Christ died for us.

1. Love of Christ depends upon the knowledge of his love to us; It is not with this spiritual love, as it is with natural love, where you may love a person although you know not his love unto you; but our spiritual love necessarily ariseth from the application and knowledge of a precedent love unto us; we love him, q.d. because he loved us

first, 1 Joh. 4:19 you must be able to see and know the love of Christ to you, before you can be able to raise or return love to him; and therefore do we love Christ, because his love is manifested unto us. Now if this love of Christ to us (which he showed in dying for us; Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend, Joh. 15:13.) be perpetually hid from us, that we can never attain the certain knowledge thereof (but must only guess at it, perhaps Christ loved us to die for us, perhaps he did not) how can our hearts possibly be raised to a solid fixed intensive reciprocal love of him!

2. In like manner, how can our thankfulness be indeed rightly returned unto God for giving of Christ for us to reconcile and save us? For according to your knowledge in this case, will be your thankfulness; can you ever thank, and bless and praise God for Christ and his death, and the benefits thereof to you, whiles you know not that they belong to you? O Lord! I bless thee for that exceeding love of thine in giving Christ to redeem my soul, to make my peace, to discharge my sins, to save my soul, &c. But truly I know not whether this be so or no, I am utterly uncertain whether Christ died for me, or whether himself, or any benefit by him and his death, doth indeed concern me or belong unto me, &c.

## SECT. X.

3. Quest. Now follows the third and last Question to be spoken unto, how a person may certainly know that Jesus Christ did die effectually for him? Satisfied God's Justice for him? Purchased remission of sins for him? And eternal life for him?



Sol. This is a pertinent Question indeed, said a dying person (whom some of us knew in this place) But did Christ die for my sins? But did Christ die for my soul? But did he die for me? How shall I know that Christ died for me, for my sins, to save my soul? This is a question which many of us first or last will make question of; when trouble of conscience ariseth, or when death approacheth, O then how may I know that Christ is my Christ, and that he died for me! This is the highest of all questions, Did Christ die for me? And a most necessary question; what though Christ did die for others, and they partake of the benefits of his death, if he did not die for me, and if I be not saved by his death! And if the conscience can once upon sure grounds be satisfied in this question, so that a person knows that Christ died for him; now there is peace, and joy, and thanksgiving, and a lively hope of salvation: all is sure, if once we can get to be sure that Christ is ours, and did die for us.

For answer therefore unto the question propounded, be pleased to remember (in the general) that there are three sorts of persons in the world; namely

First, Some who (in the present estate under which they lie) cannot know that Christ died for them, and will save them; I say, in the present estate wherein they are; For though there may be a possibility of the change of that estate, and so a capacity may come in for that particular knowledge and certainty, yet as to their present estate (absolutely considered) there is an incapacity of immediate knowledge that Christ died for them. These persons are all unbelieving and impenitent persons who (as so, and remaining so) cannot know that Christ died to save them, because

1. The way to know that Christ died for us, must arise either from some word of promise, that a person in such a condition, having

interest in Christ, shall be saved by him; but there is no such promise to any unbelieving and impenitent person, as such a person; or from some words of Narration which declare and affirm that Christ and the benefits of his death do belong unto unbelieving and impenitent persons as so: But there is no such Narrative word which affirms it, that Christ belongs unto the unbeliever, and that he hath indeed obtained pardon of sins and life for him; or from faith wrought in the heart: But this is not in the unbelieving and impenitent person; if it were, then he were not unbelieving or from some internal testimony of the Spirit of Christ, witnessing and sealing the application of the death of Christ in the benefits of it unto the unbelieving and impenitent person: But such a testimony the Spirit of Christ never gives to any person remaining unbelieving and impenitent; his witnessing and sealing being only to the children of God. (Rom. 8:16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God) and follows on believing. Ephes. 1:13. In whom after ye believed ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. Ver. 14, who is the earnest of our inheritance.

So that there is no way for any unbeliever and impenitent person to know that Christ died for his sins, and to make his peace, and to save his soul; and unless his unbelief and impenitency be changed, he can never know it.

2. As the Gospel fixeth the death of Christ in the benefits of it only upon Believers; (he that believeth shall be saved, Mark 16:16) And whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16. So it threateneth unbelievers with the loss of all benefit by Christ. Mark 16:16. He that believeth, shall not be damned. And John 3:36. He that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

And therefore by the way let me hint unto you two things.

One is, that all such persons who do continue to slight and refuse Christ, and will go on in their sinful ways, they have certainly deceived themselves, and do still deceive themselves in their presumptuous confidence that Christ hath died for them, and shed his blood for the remission of their sins, and that they shall be saved as well as the best. These rude confidences are but lying vanities, and ungrounded presumptions, refuges and delusions of their own making; and who so trusts unto them, will in the end perish; for the Scripture is so far from offering Christ in the benefits of his death to unbelieving and impenitent persons continuing in that estate, that it assures them of the quite contrary, that they shall not see life, that they shall not be saved, that they shall die in their sins and perish.

A second is, that we would every one of us look seriously into our conditions, and if we do find them to be unbelieving and impenitent, then (as we love our lives, and tender our salvation by Christ) humbly and earnestly to importune the Lord to deliver our souls from unbelief and impenitency, they being the sins which else will hinder us not only of the benefits by the death of Christ, but also of Christ himself, without an interest in whom we cannot have any interest in the benefits purchased by his death.

Secondly, Some there are who (perhaps) are in Christ, and yet they do not know that they are in Christ, and Christ in the benefits of his death belongs unto them; at least they do not certainly know this; and the reason of that inevidency may be,

1. Their own negligence and carelessness; the Apostle saith, We must give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1:10. The assurance of our interest in Christ, and in the benefits of Christ, is a most sweet and refreshing knowledge; but

it cannot be so easily attained: A diligence on our part is required to attain the same; much searching and praying, and conference, and comparing of our hearts with the Word of precept, and with the Word of promise, are necessary for such an evidence; and our failing in these may be a reason why we fail in that.

2. The imbecility of faith, which is but newly formed, and hardly perceptible by reason of many clouds and doubts, and fears; weak faith cannot so easily manifest itself unto us, nor yet our title to Christ and interest in his purchase.

3. The power of temptations, and of melancholy, which do distract the soul, and disturb the apprehension, and the acts of it; and darken and mispersuade, and delude us, so that we cannot see ourselves aright, nor Christ aright, nor our grounds of Application, nor yet the testimonies or evidences of our union with Christ.

Thirdly, Some there are who lie in a trembling condition, and are not determinately resolved either way; they cannot peremptorily conclude Christ did not die for them, nor yet can they confidently affirm Christ did die for them; only this is to be found in them, that their hearts do mourn after Christ, and they do love him, and do exceedingly strive after the knowledge of his love, and the intentions of his death for their souls; the inevidence of it is their great perplexity, and the certainty of it is their great desire and pains: And now for a clear and distinct answer unto the question; One may certainly know that Christ died effectually to satisfy God's justice for him, to take away his sins, to make reconciliation for him, and to save him:

1. By the description of those for whom (without all question) Christ did intentionally and effectually die.

2. By the qualities of those persons who (in Scripture) have been able to say upon sure grounds that Christ died for them, and unto whom in particular the benefits of his death have been applied and appropriated.

3. By the interest in that condition of faith, upon which Christ becomes ours in his person and in his benefits.

4. By the combination of the benefits of the death of Christ, and the real participation of every one of them.

5. By the ends of the death of Christ, and the appearance of them upon his heart and life.

6. By the ground and order of that certainty of knowledge or persuasion which a person hath that Christ died for him.

7. By the concomitant presence of some choice affections in all who do attain unto that certain evidence that Christ died for them.

8. By the consequent effects and fruits which do flow from that sound knowledge of Christ in his death and benefits for us in particular.

1. One may certainly know that Christ effectually died for him, By the description of those for whom (without all question) Jesus Christ did intentionally and effectually die. If one can find himself within the number of them for whom Christ himself hath said he came to die, and came to save, and laid down his life, and saith he is the Savior of them, this man may be confidently persuaded and assured that

Christ died for him. Now you find some expressly described in Scripture for whom he (unquestionably) died, Matth. 1:21. He shall save his people from their sins. Joh. 10:15. I lay down my life for the sheep. Joh. 15:13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. If therefore any man can clear out unto himself that he is one of the people of Christ, or one of the sheep, or one of the friends of Christ, or one of the body of Christ, or one of the Church of Christ, he may thereupon certainly conclude that he is one for whom Christ died, and really intended to save by his death.

**Object. You will say Here lies all the difficulty, to evidence to ourselves that we are within the number of these.**

Sol. I confess it doth, yet this must be evidenced if you would certainly know that Christ effectually died for you; and upon diligent inquiry it may be evidenced; forasmuch as Christ's people and sheep, and friends, and body, and Church, have such signal characters and differences stamped upon them, by which they may be known to be his indeed; I will give some instances to help you in this. They are the people of Christ (his people) who are given unto him of the Father, and bought by him with a price, and rescued by his power unto himself, and brought into Covenant by him with the Father, and do stand in a near and choice relation unto himself as their Head and Lord of these people; it is said in Scripture, that they are

1. A willing people, in the day of his power, Psal. 110:3. (i.e.) when the Gospel is preached unto them, there goes with that Gospel such a power from Christ upon their hearts, that they are overcome and persuaded, and willingly leave their former station and relation to sin, and to the world, and to Satan, and as willingly become Christ's, hearkening unto his call, and falling into relation with him.

2. A peculiar people (Titus 2:14. That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people) His people are a peculiar people in a twofold respect. One, because they are purged from those sins and iniquities under which other people do lie, and with which they are defiled: Another, because they are beautified and adorned with those excellencies of grace which other people do want and attain not unto; and therefore in 1 Pet. 29. A holy Nation, and a peculiar people, are joined together.

These things being thus opened, it will not now be so difficult for any man's conscience to say, whether he be any one of the people of Christ yea or no; for two things will plainly testify it: One is the willingness of his heart to become Christ's; and the other is the choiceness or excellency of his nature; both these are in all the people of Christ, and in none but the people of Christ; and if you find these upon your hearts, then are you the people of Christ; and if you be his people, then assuredly he died to save you from your sins.

They are the sheep of Christ (his sheep for whom he did lay down his life) who do hear his voice and follow him; thus doth Christ himself describe his sheep, John 10:27. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. And Ver. 28. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish: Well then, hence a man may conclude both Negatively and Affirmatively:

I do not hear the voice of Christ, nor do I follow him; I disregard his voice, and disobey his voice; therefore as yet I am none of his sheep, and consequently I cannot assure myself that Christ did lay down his life for me.

And on the contrary, one can say I do hear the voice of Christ, and I do follow him. His voice saith Come unto me, Matth. 11:28, and I come unto him; his voice saith, Open the door, Revel. 3:20, and

receive me; and my heart is open unto him, and I do receive him; his voice saith, Be converted that your sins may be blotted out, Acts 2:19, and I do repent and am converted; his voice saith, Hearken unto me and your souls shall live, Isa. 55:2, and I do obey this voice of Christ, I hearken unto him and yield up myself to the service and obedience of his will. Why hence I can conclude, I am therefore one of the sheep of Christ; and being so. I am sure that Christ did lay down his life for me.

Again, Jesus Christ saith that he lays down his life for his friends: And in that very place he gives two Characters of such who are indeed his friends.

One on their parts: Joh. 15:14. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.

The other on his part: Ver. 15. I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. The meaning is, As betwixt friends there is a reciprocal love, so there is between Christ and his friends; Christ loves them, and they love Christ. That they love Christ as friends, (indeed) appears by their readiness to do whatsoever Christ shall be pleased to command; they are ready to take up his will, and are cheerfully at his command: That Christ loves them as his friends, appears by the manifestation and communicating unto them the secrets of his Father; he tells unto them the love and mind of his Father in the great concernments of salvation, which he doth not effectually make known to every man. So now this stands as a firm and immovable truth, that Christ did effectually lay down his life for his friends: And secondly, that they are the very friends of Christ, who (first) are at the command of Christ; And (secondly) unto whom Christ doth in a more special and familiar way make known the mind of his Father in the matters of



salvation. Therefore if you do experimentally find an heart readily and cheerfully affected to all the will and command of Christ, What wilt thou have me to do? His commands are not grievous, I delight to do thy will; then are you sure that you are one of the friends of Christ; and if so, then are you sure that Christ laid down his life for you. And if you do experimentally find such imparting's of Christ to you from the Father (which the men of the world know not) in the sense of his love, and taste of his mercy, and fruits of his grace, and efficacies of his Spirit, thence you may certainly conclude that you are his friends; (for Christ effectually makes these known only to his friends) and if you be his friends, then undoubtedly Christ died for you, he laid down his life to save you.

To this purpose might I go over the other instances of the body, and of the Church of Christ; but I have said enough unto this choice distinction.

2. Secondly, One may know that Christ died for him in particular, by the quality of those persons who in Scripture have been able to say upon sure grounds that Christ died for them, and redeemed them; and unto whom the benefits of his death have been applied in particular. It is a true rule, *Parium est par Ratio & par Affirmatio*; Put several men into the same and like condition, and into the same and like relation, and into the same and like capacity, then what interest and privileges one hath, the same interest and privileges the other hath; and upon what ground the one can plead and conclude, upon the same may the other plead and conclude. I shall make use of this to the present purpose: You read in Scripture of some who have been able to say Christ loved me, and gave himself for me; (Paul said so, Gal. 2:20.) And I know my Redeemer liveth; (Job said so, chap. 19:15) And this is my beloved, and this is my friend; and I am my

beloveds, and my beloved is mine; (the Church said so, Cant. 5:16, and Cant. 6:3.)

And of some to whom the benefits of the death of Christ have been particularly applied and attributed. Luke 7:48. He said unto her Thy sins are forgiven. Matth. 9:2. Jesus saith unto the sick of the Palsy, Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. 1 Joh. 2:12. I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Names sake. 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Revel. 5:8. Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Now consider what was the quality and disposition of these persons who were able confidently and upon sure grounds thus to speak, and of whom these things were thus affirmed; and if you find the same spiritual disposition in yourselves, you may then certainly conclude Christ gave himself for you, and he is your Redeemer, and your sins are forgiven you, &c.

**Quest. Why, what kind of persons were they?**

Sol. They were effectually called persons; as Paul, who saith in Gal. 1:15. That it pleased God to call him by his grace: And so were the Corinthians called to be Saints, 1 Cor. 1:2. And called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Ver. 9. And they were upright persons, fearing God, and eschewing evil; such a one was Job, chap. 1:8. And they were mourning and repenting persons; such an one was the woman, Luke 7:37,38. And longing after Christ; such an one was that person in Matth. 9:2. And united unto Christ by Faith and Love, filled with high thoughts, desires and delights; so was the Church mentioned in the Canticles, and the rest spoken of in the other places. Why then, if any man can say upon good grounds God hath called me by his grace unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus

Christ, he may certainly conclude, Christ died for me, and gave himself for me; I was thus and thus sinful; but God hath converted me: I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, &c. And if any man can say, My heart thirsts and longs for Christ, and my soul is matched with Christ, he is the beloved of my soul. Why, I say unto that man, Christ loved thee, and gave himself for thee. And if any man finds himself a mourning and repenting sinner, I can say to him, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. And if any man finds his heart upright with God and with Christ, that man may surely conclude with Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth.

3. Thirdly, One may know that Christ died for him in particular, by his interest in that condition of faith upon which Christ certainly becomes ours in his person and benefits. If any one of us do indeed believe on Christ, assuredly God the Father intended his salvation, in the giving of Christ; and Jesus Christ intended and wrought the remission of his sins, and the salvation of his soul by his death. Hearken what the Word of God speaketh in several places to this purpose: John 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. Acts 10:43. Whosoever believes on him, shall receive remission of sins. Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Mark 16:16. He that believeth, shall be saved. 1 Cor 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. In those places it is most evident that whosoever believes on Christ, he is certainly interested in Christ, and in all the benefits depending on Christ's death; he is delivered from perishing; he shall have everlasting life; he shall receive the remission of sins; his peace is made with God; Christ is wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and salvation unto him.

**Object. You will say this is true and unquestionable, that whosoever believes on Christ, he is certainly interested in the death of Christ, and in all the benefits of his death; but here lies the scruple, I doubt whether my faith be that very faith which doth indeed interest a person in Christ, whether it be faith unfeigned, 1 Tim. 1:5. And faith that is precious, 2 Pet. 1:1. And faith that is justifying, Rom. 5:1. And faith that is saving, Ephes. 2:8.**

Sol. I will not expatiate in the answer of this, because I have upon several occasions spoken already much of the nature and properties of true faith; what I would say to the present scruple (whether my faith be the very faith which doth interest me in Christ, and in the benefits of his death) is this. That faith is true, and truly interesting in Christ and in his benefits, which

First, is seated in a heart broken with the sense of sin, and deeply apprehensive of the need of a dying Christ; such was theirs in Acts 2:37. &c. and his in Acts 16:29,30,31.

Secondly, Is raised and created by the exceeding greatness of the power of God, and according to the working of his mighty power, Ephes. 1:10.

Thirdly, Is let in by the Ministry of the Gospel, and upon Gospel-offers, and calls, and promises, and assurances. Ephes. 1:13. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, Matth. 11:28, Joh. 6:36,37, Rev. 3:20.

Fourthly, Raiseth the heart to high and precious thoughts of Christ; (unto you that believe he is precious, 1 Pet. 2:7) all is nothing without Christ; And if I have but Christ, I have enough; he is life, and best of all.

Fifthly, Draws out earnest and insatiable desires, never resting without the enjoyment of Christ, and parting with all which stands in opposition to that enjoyment.

Sixthly, Makes the heart to receive Christ, Joh. 1:12, yea, gladly to receive Christ, Acts 2:41, yea, whole Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 16:30, there to dwell, Ephes. 3:17, and there to rule and reign.

Seventhly, And to depend on Christ, placing all our confidence on him, and in none, and on nothing but him: Phil. 3:3. We rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Ver. 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law; but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Eighthly, And to love Christ (faith which worketh by love, Gal. 5:6.) who showeth so much love, as to give himself to death to save me.

I will go no farther; Find me but such a faith as this, and I assure you, I assure you; nay, the Gospel of Christ assures you, that this is true faith; this is the Faith which makes Christ yours, in his Person, and in all the Benefits of his Death.

And one thing more observe by the way, that though this faith be but weak, though it be but as the smoking flax, though it be but as a grain of Mustardseed; though it be much assaulted with Satan's temptations, though it be oftentimes shaken with fears and doubting's: Yet if it be but of so much life and power to match thy heart to Christ, to bring it in to Christ, to set him up as thy Lord, and as thy Savior; and to roll, and rest, and cast thy soul and confidence on him, it is true Faith, and Christ is thine, and thou mayest safely conclude that Christ died for thee, and made peace for thee, &c.

Fourthly, One may know that Christ did effectually die for him by the Combination of the Benefits purchased by the death of Christ, and by the conjoined participation of them in respect of himself. Beloved, the benefits purchased by the death of Christ are many (as Remission of sins, and Reconciliation with God, and Eternal life, and Redemption, and Sanctification, &c.) And these purchased Benefits, they were all of them purchased at once and together, and all of them with respect to every Believer, and in time every one of them is applied to every Believer. Christ did not purchase Remission of sins for one believer only, and Reconciliation only for another believer, and Grace only for another, and Glory only for another; neither doth Christ apply these partly to one, and partly to another, but he purchased them for everyone that shall believe, and he applies them to everyone that doth believe. 1 Cor. 6:11. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord, and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. 1:30. Made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. 1 Joh. 5:6. This is he that came by Water and Blood, even Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, Unto which let me add the fifth character by which one may know that Christ died for him, viz. by the ends of the death of Christ in respect of us, and the appearance of them upon our hearts and lives. 2 Cor. 5:15. He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. Tit. 2:14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works: 1 Pet. 2:24, who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the Cross, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.

In these places you see five ends of the death of Christ for us:

1. That he might redeem us from all iniquity (i.e.) set us at liberty from bondage unto our sinful lusts, that henceforth we should not serve sin, Rom. 6:6.

2. That we should be dead to sin (i.e.) our hearts and affections should be mortified and crucified unto them; not love them, not desire them, not delight in them, not hearken to them, not be led by them anymore.

3. That henceforth we should not live unto ourselves (i.e.) intend and set up our own ends and interests, our own praise and glory, our own profit and benefit, our own pleasure and contentment's.

4. That we should be a peculiar people, be his, be for him unto himself, purified by his spirit, and joined by the same Spirit unto himself, and led and drawn forth in his strength unto all good works, affectionately and fervently.

5. That we should live unto him who died for us, and live unto righteousness, (i.e.) exalt the will, and ways, and honor of Christ count nothing too dear for him, spend, and be spent for him; take his directions, obey his commands, serve his ends, act entirely, and thoroughly, and willingly, and cheerfully, and fully, and constantly in all conditions, and in all trials for Christ's interest, and the magnifying of Christ. O Beloved, let us seriously try our interest in the death of Christ by these Ends of the death of Christ which are certainly accomplished (in due time) in all for whom Christ died.

There are two sorts of the virtues of the death of Christ.

1. Some are for us; he died for to satisfy for us, and to make peace for us, and to purchase Remission of sins for us, and to obtain salvation for us.

2. Some are in us, as to redeem us from all iniquity, to crucify our sins, to purify us unto himself a peculiar people, &c.

Christ died for our sins, and he died that we might die unto our sins (Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, Rom. 6:6. The blood of Christ was a pacifying blood, (having made peace through the blood of his Cross, Col. 1:20.) And the blood of Christ is a purifying blood, it purgeth the conscience from dead works to serve the living God, Heb. 9:14. He died as our Surety and Priest, and to this end also did Christ die and rise again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living, Rom. 14:9 Therefore if you be yet in your sins, if you be not dead unto them; if you love them, if you serve them, you cannot assure yourselves (as yet) that Christ died for you: But on the contrary, if you can truly say (as the Apostle, Rom. 6:17,18.) We were the servants of sin, but we are made free from sin, and are become the servants of righteousness; we are healed by the stripes of Christ, and we are made conformable unto his death, we find the similitude of his Death and Resurrection in us; we are not our own but Christ's; his we are, and none but his; our hearts are his, and our lives are his; why then be confident that Christ is yours, and his death is yours, and all the benefits of his death are yours.

Sixthly, One may know that Christ died for him, by the Grounds, and Causes, and Order of attaining unto that certainty of knowledge, and persuasion that Christ died for him.

For your help in this, take notice of three Particulars.

1. A right and undeceiving assurance that Christ died for us, hath two sure Grounds: One is, the Testimony of the Word; the other is, the Testimony of Conscience renewed. The Word saith, Whosoever believes, shall not perish, but have everlasting life: Renewed



conscience saith, but thou believest, yea thou believest aright; thy faith work by love; Ergo.

2. A right and undeceiving knowledge, it hath very choice causes; it ariseth from Faith, and it ariseth from the Spirit of Christ: no man can give himself this assurance or certain knowledge that Christ died for him: As no man can say that Christ is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; So no man can say Christ is my Lord, and my Savior, but by the Holy Ghost.

3. A right and undeceiving assurance that Christ died for me, is attained in an orderly way: It is not the first work to be found in us, but it follows many precedent works in the soul, as the sealing follows the writing; viz. it follows;

1. Deep sense of sin and misery.
2. A Spiritual Conviction of our own impotency, and insufficiency, and absolute need of Christ.
3. Earnest desires after Christ, and for faith to lay hold on Christ.
4. Many conflicts 'twixt weak faith, and doubting's and fears.
5. Peculiar supplications for the evidencing of the love of Christ, and for particular persuasions of our interest in him, and in the benefits of his death.
6. Attendance upon God in the Ordinances of Christ, &c.

Seventhly, You may know that Christ died for your sins, by the concomitant presence of some choice qualities in every person rightly assured of Christ's dying for him. v.g.

1. A tender mournfulness of heart. Zech. 12:10. They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn as a man mourns for his only child Never did the child mourn more, &c. There is a twofold mourning, and both necessary: one from sense of sin as grieving God; the other from the sense of love in pardoning sin.

2. An exceeding joy: Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the Atonement.

3. An inflamed love. Luke 7:47. Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much. (For) is not Causal but Illative, q.d. therefore she loved much. None so loved as this loving Christ.

4. A sweet Peace and Tranquility: Rom. 5:1. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; when we know that our peace is made by Christ, presently peace ariseth in the conscience, the storm is over, and we are at land: Now conscience excuses, comforts, supports, answers, &c. all is well, the Sword is sheathed.

8. Lastly, you may know that Christ died for you, by the fruits and effects which do flow from that certain knowledge, and that particular assurance. v.g.

1. Singular loathing's of sin: Rom. 6:1,2. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound! God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein!

2. Utmost service for Christ. 2 Cor. 5:14. The love of Christ constraineth us, acts us, fills us, carries us on as men possessed, or as a ship with the wind: Act. 21:13. I am ready not to be bound

only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.

3. Special delight in Christ, and in the word of Christ. 1 Pet. 2:3. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; as if he had said, the man that knows that the Lord is gracious, and gracious to him, and hath tasted of the sweetness of his love to his soul, must needs delight in, and long after the Word, as the Babe doth after the milk of the breast.

4. Yet more desires to partake of more from Christ: Phil. 3:10. That I may know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death. Verse 12. Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

5. Watchful fear, by no means to offend or displease Christ, so loving a Christ, so kind, so good a Christ; so unwilling, and so afraid is the assured person to sin against Christ anymore, that he could be content presently to die, and to be with Christ, where there is no more a possibility to offend him, &c.

6. Answerable returns unto Christ who suffered and died for me, v.g. He loved me, and I therefore love him; He abased himself for me, and I abase myself for him; He gave himself for me, and I give myself to him; He obeyed his Fathers will for me, and I obey his will; He suffered for me, and I am willing to suffer for him, in my name, in my body, in my life. He rose for me, and I live to him; He justified me, and I justify him; He pleads for me in Heaven, and I plead for him on Earth; He hath purchased glory for me, and I give glory to him, &c.

Thus have you heard the Decision of this great Practical Question how a person may know that Christ died for him. Now before I shut up this Discourse, I will propound and give answer unto some Cases of Conscience in relation to this Point in which I am discoursing.

1. How one may know that he is deluded in his Conscience that Christ died for him.
2. What one should do, who (as yet) cannot certainly affirm that Christ died for him?
3. Whether everyone for whom Christ effectually died, doth (sometime or other) in this life attain unto the certain evidence thereof?
4. Whether a person having attained to the certain knowledge of Christ's dying for him, may ever after that doubt and question the same again? And whether new doubting's overthrow a certainty of knowledge?
5. What advantage any Christian hath by the certain knowledge that Christ died for him as his Mediator?

Case 1. How one may know that he is deluded in his Confidence that Christ died for him?

There is (I confess) a twofold confidence about the Application of the Death of Christ; One arising from Faith and the Spirit of God, who beareth witness with our spirits that we are the Children of God; The other ariseth from presumption, and the spirit of Delusion, wherein a person dreams that he eats, but he is empty; and dreams that he possesseth, and he is poor; and dreams that Christ is his, and died

for his sins, and made his peace, but he is deceived, there is no such matter at all.

Now there are four things which do manifestly declare that the confidence which some men have that Christ died for them, is but a delusion.

1. When that confidence is contrary to the Word: Every true and sound persuasion of our interest in Christ, and in the benefits of his death, is conformable to the testimony of the Word; and every false persuasion or confidence is contrary to the Word; as it hath no word of God to bottom upon, so it hath the Word of God to unbottom and contradict it.

You are confident that Christ died to save you, and to purchase the pardon of sins, &c. And yet you remain an ignorant, and impenitent, a disobedient, and unbelieving sinner; you still love your sins, and will not forsake them; your heart is hardened in sin, and you mourn not for sin, you despise the Gospel of Christ, and truth of Christ, and calls of Christ, and paths of Christ, and subjection to Christ, and communion with Christ! And yet you are confident that Christ died effectually for your salvation! And what warrant have you thus to lay claim to him, and to his benefits? The Word saith, Whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16,36. And he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: And you believe not on him; where is now your confidence? The Word saith, be converted, and repent, that your sins may be blotted out, Acts 3:19. And Christ saith, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his Name, Luke 24:47. But you repent not, you do not, you will not forsake your sins. The Word saith, that Christ is the Author of salvation to all that obey him, Hebr. 5:9. But you will not obey him; he calls you off from your sins, and he

calls you off from the world, and he calls you to fellowship with himself, and he calls you unto holiness; but you will not obey him in any of these calls; therefore your confidence in the benefits of his death, is a mere presumption and delusion, it is not warranted by the Word; nay, the Word is expressly contrary unto it.

2. When that confidence is but natural, and easily believed: The right confidence that Christ died for us, it is supernatural and difficult; we cannot give it to ourselves, it is a persuasion given unto us, and it costs us many praying's, and many tears, and many bearings, and many waiting's upon God before we can attain unto it: But a deluding confidence that is natural and easy, the person never gets it by prayer; never wrestled with God for it, never attended the Word for it, never conflicted with doubts and fears, was never at any cost for it, but was confident all his days; no antecedent conflict, no present conflict; presumption is a work of our own, a mere fancy of our own, and a mere delusion of our own.

Thirdly, When that confidence is fruitless and loose, it produceth no love at all to Christ, nor fear to offend Christ, nor care to please Christ; nay, instead of these, there is a boldness to sin the more, and to continue impenitent, because Christ died for sinners, and his death is sufficient to expiate the greatest transgressions; whereas a right confidence of the benefits of the death of Christ makes men more holy and obedient. 1 John 2:3. We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Ver. 3. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.

Fourthly, When that confidence or assurance is easily swept away in time of trial, either by conscience or by afflictions, or by sickness or by the approaching's of death; His confidence shall be rooted out of

his Tabernacle, and shall bring him to the King of terrors, said Bildad in Job 18:14. A deluding confidence usually ends in a despairing diffidence; but so doth not a right and well-grounded confidence, it will hold out in all afflictions and trials whatsoever. Rom. 8:38,39. I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Yea, it will hold out in death itself, when all the hopes of the hypocrite shall perish. 2 Tim. 4:6. I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. Ver. 7. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Ver. 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.

From all this let us learn carefully to try our very confidences of our interest in Christ, and in the benefits of his death; remember but three things.

1. Your interest is never the more for all your confidence; confidence gives no propriety, though sometimes it follows it.
2. Your interest is the less if your confidence be false. A troubled and doubting Christian may be brought in to Christ, and partake of him, and of his benefits, when the bold, confident, presumptuous sinner keeps off, and hides himself, even because he is boisterously confident.
3. You will certainly be lost if you rest in this confident delusion; it is a broken bottom, and a dream which will destroy you.

Case 2. What a person should do who (as yet) cannot certainly affirm that Christ died for him, and that he hath any interest in the benefits

of his death?

Sol. This is the case of many troubled souls, and their exceeding burden and fear, unto whom I would commend, 1. A few Cautions. 2. A few Directions.

1. Cautions.

1. Do not cashier your title. Though (all this while) you cannot clear your interest, although you cannot conclude for it, yet do not conclude against it, nor yet despair; for

1. This dark condition is incident to most (if not all) weak believers, who are baptized in a cloud, though they drink of the rock; (i.e.) Christ indeed is theirs, although they do not see him to be theirs; and the blood of Christ was shed for them, although the assurance thereof be not shed abroad in their hearts; yea and pardon of their sins is sealed, although as yet it be not revealed to them; they do not find this in a sensible experience, but yet they may find all this in God's promise.

2. Thy estate may be sure, when as yet you are not assured. It may be day, though the Sun doth not gloriously appear; I confess that faith of evidence makes our condition joyful; but yet the faith of adherence can make it sure and blessed; for that is it which interests us into Christ, and Christ is he who interests us into pardon and freedom; you shall be saved because you are Christ's, not because you know that you are so.

3. Nay, great fear and troubles (because of unassurances) may and do usually end in sweetest and fullest assurance, especially when those fears and troubles raise many prayers, much tenderness in conscience, and serious diligence, and humble and upright walking.



Secondly, Though you have not your wages, yet do not give up your works; Do not say I will pray no more, and hear no more, and wait no longer; whatsoever you may imagine, yet I assure you of this, it is nothing else but proud unbelief, when God shall hear no longer from us, because it is long before we hear from God, and we therefore lessen duty, because God is pleased to with-hold comforts. This is, as if one should give over writing a Deed, because it is not sealed; write but to the bottom, and then the seal shall be annexed, Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1:10. So say I, Be diligent still in praying, and be diligent still in hearing, and be diligent still in holy and upright walking; though these be not assurances, yet these are the way unto assurance; if you cannot be joyful friends, yet be faithful servants; if you cannot rejoice to do his will, it will not be long ere you shall rejoice in knowing his love. Isaiah 64:5. Thou meetest him, and rejoicest, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways.

Thirdly, If you would have the light, do not then shut up the window, and draw the curtain; Do not hinder what you desire: You would be assured that Christ is yours, and died for you, then do you not hinder the dawning of this day-star in your own hearts. A person hinders his assurance many ways; viz.

1. By great transgressions; these are the thick and dark clouds which will make the Sun to set at Noon-day, and will not suffer it to rise until after great humiliations: David found it so, Psal. 51. Exod. 25:21. Thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the Ark, and in the Ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. Ver. 22. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two Cherubim which are upon the Ark of the testimony: And you shall never meet with the mercy-seat, if you slight the Ark of the testimony; you cannot venture on any sin

(be it never so secret) but you shall thereby dishonor your God, break your peace, lame your prayers, set back your confidence, and either strike off, or else delay your assurance.

2. By careless neglects; when a man will not take pains to recover lost assurance; it was the case of those in Cant. 5:3. I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on?

3. By cherishing unbelief and jealousies; in misinterpreting, and misapplying all that God speaks or does. If he threatens wrath, why I am the man! If mercy be at any time distinguished from any sorts of sinners, alas, then mercy belongs not to me! If the hypocrite be described, then I fear such a one am I! If the presumptuous person, then am not I he! If promises be unfolded, I fear they are not my portion! If the love of Christ, I doubt it as to me! If relations and titles to Christ, sure they are not in me in truth! If Arguments to satisfy and settle the heart, O but I may not join with them! When a troubled sinner is apt to join with all that will trouble, and to take part with all that will weaken his faith, and that will strengthen his unbelief, and his great work lies in excepting, and in questioning, and in disputing away his helps and encouragements to believe, this will hinder his assurance; that which hinders faith, will hinder assurance.

## 2. The Directions.

If you would come to this assurance that Christ died for you:

First, Be humbly mournful; Christ said to Mary when she was weeping, her sins are forgiven her, Luk. 7:47. Christ was sent to bind up the brokenhearted, and to give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, Isa. 61:1,3. A broken heart is near unto joy; Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be

comforted, Matth. 5:4. And so is the humble heart, which judgeth itself less than the least of mercies, and unworthy to be called a son, and trusts not to anything in itself, and is made up altogether of the grace of God in Christ; this heart is near to peace, and to the Spirit of consolation. Isa. 57:15. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Isa. 66:2. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word.

Secondly, Be earnest in prayer, Pray without ceasing, pray and faint not; pray to know the love of Christ, pray especially for the love of Christ, for the light of that Spirit, and for the testimony of that Spirit, because it is his work and office to seal and assure us; and pray for those assuring promises of pardon; Rev. 2:17, Isa. 60:16.

There are two choice works of the Spirit.

1. One is to draw and persuade the sinner to come to Christ, to believe on him, to receive him.
2. The other is to assure the believer of his relation to Christ, and of Christ's relation to him; that he is Christ's, and that Christ is his; that he loved him, and gave himself for him: O pray, and continue this prayer, that the Spirit of Christ may be given unto you, to open and reveal all that is given to you, &c.

Thirdly, Attend the Ordinances of Christ; the Word and Sacraments, and the communion of Saints.

The Word of the Gospel, it is the Word of peace as well as of grace; as it is the means of faith, so it is the means of assurance; it doth bring us to Christ, and it can (Ministerially) evidence our interest in the

things of Christ. 1 John 5:13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life. How many doubts do you (who are weak believers) find answered in the Ministry of the Gospel? How often hath your weak faith been raised by it, and your hearts encouraged to trust; and many times refreshed and revived with confidences and persuasions that indeed Christ is yours, and shed his blood for the remission of your sins?

And for the Sacrament, you know that it is the seal of righteousness which is by faith, Rom. 4:11. As a seal assures and confirms the matter contained and conveyed in a Deed, so doth the Sacrament confirm and assure weak believers of all the good of the Covenant, and of all the benefits purchased by the blood of Christ; that Ordinance is appointed only for believers; and it is appointed for this very end, to strengthen their faith, and to breed assurance in them of their union and communion with Christ.

And as for the communion of Saints, I would to God that we knew it more; the helps are very great therein; we may freely open our hearts, and the spiritual condition of them one to another; and meet with such experiences, and such directions, resolves and satisfactions, and such supports and encouragements, and comforts, and succors of prayers, as would much conduce towards our assurance, &c.

Fourthly, Look well to your faith; strengthen that, and manage that well, for that gets the first sight, and hath the first news of pardon and salvation; let me commend unto you three things about this.

1. Take some pains to clear it out that you have faith in truth; my reason for this advice is, first; If that were evidenced, you may then certainly conclude your particular interest. Secondly, till it

be evidenced, your doubts and fears about a personal application will be still in force; yea, if I were sure that I had faith in truth, then indeed I may conclude that Christ is mine, and died for me; but I am not sure of that.

2. Act your faith on Christ; glorify him so far, as to venture on him alone for your pardon, for your peace, for your salvation; you know what he is, and what he hath done and suffered; and you know that your hearts are given up unto him, and have chosen him to be your Lord Jesus Christ: well (now) rely on him as yours, and on his blood as shed for the remission of your sins. Trust him upon his Word which he hath spoken of all that believe on him, that they shall not perish, but have everlasting life; why, this is a faithful saying, I will cast myself upon him whom I have believed, I will trust that in his Name, and by his blood God hath forgiven my sins, and is reconciled to me, &c. You would not imagine how much this would conduce to assurance.

3. Live by faith; although you cannot read your pardon or peace in experience, yet you may read it in the promises; (he that believes shall be saved; whosoever believes on him, shall receive remission of sins, &c.) Now live awhile upon these promises, give glory to them; if you can live upon the truth of them, you shall ere long taste the goodness of them.

Fifthly, Patiently wait upon God; do not quarrel with him, nor limit him to this prayer, nor to this time; but keep on in his ways by upright walking, and humbly expect the answer and issue. Psal. 81:8. I will hearken (saith David) what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his Saints. Cant. 3:1. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. Ver. 2. I will rise and go about the City, in

the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth. Ver. 3. I said unto the watch-men, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? Ver. 4. It was but a little that I passed from him, but I found him whom my soul loveth.

Case 3. Whether everyone who is indeed redeemed by Christ, doth certainly know (some time or other) that Christ died for him in particular? Or whether everyone for whom Christ effectually died, doth (some time or other) attain unto a certain evidence thereof in this life?

Sol. This is a very nice question, and I would warily speak unto it; six things will be granted by us.

First, That every believing person may attain unto this certain evidence; there are causes and means sufficient to produce it; promises, faith, spirit, conscience, &c.

Secondly, That every believing person should attain it; it is pressed upon him in the Word, to strive to make it sure, and to come to the assurance of faith.

Thirdly, That God hath promised such a knowledge unto all that are his in Covenant. Hosea 2:23. I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy: and I will say unto them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say Thou art my God.

Fourthly, The Church of Christ, and Believers both in the Old and in the New Testament (generally) have obtained unto this evidence; Doubtless thou art our Father. Isa. 63:16. And O Lord thou art our Father; see we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Isa. 64:8,9. Abraham, Job, David, the Church in the Canticles, my beloved is mine, and I am his; Paul, and those Believers in Corinth, they were

sealed, and had given unto them the earnest of the spirit in their hearts: 2 Cor. 1:12. The believing Ephesians had the like. In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, Ephes 1:13, and of the Thessalonians, the Apostle saith, that the Gospel came not in word only, but also in power, and in the holy Ghost, and in much assurance, 1 Thes. 1:5.

Fifthly, There are many Believers among ourselves who can say, as Paul of Christ, he loved me, and gave himself for me.

Sixthly, There are many weak Believers who as yet cannot certainly say thus much, although they may safely say so much; for the weakest faith gives an interest in Christ, and therefore in his benefits.

Now for a direct answer to the case, I conceive that every true Believer effectually brought in by the Gospel to Christ, doth some time or other attain unto a certain evidence that Christ is his, and died for him; only let me distinguish concerning this Assertion, and then I will give you my reasons why I think so.

You must distinguish of Assurance or Evidence thus; it is either,

1. Real; which is so much light, as indeed declares the truth of interest or relation; it over-tops actual doubting's in their prevalency; it turns the scale; it makes a soul to know thy faith is right, and Christ belongs to thee, and died therefore for thee.

2. Gradual; which is like the Sun at Noon-day; there is such an illustrious evidence of our relation unto, and propriety in Christ, that there is not only no fear or doubts, but also an abundant assurance and satisfaction that Christ is ours. Now I dare not affirm this latter of everyone for whom Christ died; a triumphant assurance ordinarily

is the portion of those who have been extraordinarily humbled, and who are picked out for great services, or who are sufferers for Christ; yet the former (some time or other) is the portion of every Believer. Again, there is an assurance,

1. More fixed and permanent, which abides and dwells with the soul for a long space of time.

2. More quick and transient, which I would call a saluting assurance; Jesus Christ doth give an hint by the Spirit of his love, and of his relation sometimes in our mourning's, sometimes in our praying, sometimes in our meditations, sometimes in our hearings, Be of good comfort, Thy sins are forgiven thee. And this revives the soul, but it doth not last long upon the soul. Though every Believer (for whom Christ died) perhaps attains not unto the permanent assurance; yet, I humbly conceive, that some time or other he doth to the transient assurance. Once more, there is an assurance,

1. Mediate by way of Argument, which is a conclusion from unquestionable premises; as thus, He that believes, shall be saved; and he that repents, shall be pardoned. Now a person thoroughly searching and weighing his condition by the Word and conscience, finds full grounds that he believes, and that he repents; and therefore by an Argumentative faith and conscience concludes certainly that his sins are pardoned, and that his soul shall be saved.

2. Immediate, by way of Illumination, when the Spirit of Christ lets in such a brightness of light, that we do plainly see all his workmanship of faith and grace in our hearts, and all our titles and relations to Christ; all appears in that perfect evidence, as the several colors do when the perfect light attends them. I would be understood in the former sense, and not in the latter; so then this is the sum of my answer, that every true believer (some time or other of his life)



doth attain unto some real assurance, though perhaps but weak and transient, and argumentative, and late.

The reasons inducing me to this opinion, are these; viz.

First, Some assurance is necessary, though not to the absolute being of a Christian, yet unto his comfortable being, and unto the honor of the believing condition; the soul would faint and fail if it should walk under perpetual silence and darkness; but God will not suffer that; therefore some time or other he comforts the soul; and that comfort lies in this assurance of interest in Christ, and in the benefits of his death.

Secondly, The earnest groans of the Spirit, and requests causally made by it are not in vain; for he makes requests according to the will of God, Rom. 8:27, 1 Joh. 5:14, which request does certainly speed first or last; but every Believer earnestly prays for assurance; yea, Christ himself saith, John 16:23. Whatsoever you shall ask, the Father in my Name he will give it you: ver. 24. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full: Whence I infer, If the Father will give whatsoever we ask in the Name of Christ, then he will give us assurance. If we shall upon asking receive such an answer, that our joy shall be full, then (some time or other) we shall receive this assurance; for upon this depends our joy and fullness of joy.

Thirdly, Some time or other, in this life every believer attains unto true peace of conscience; for 1. That is one portion bought for us by the blood of Christ to be enjoyed in this life. 2. That is expressly and often promised unto the people of God, he will speak peace unto them, and will create the fruits of the lips, peace unto them. 3. Otherwise the renewed conscience would be of as little comfort as the evil conscience; but that peace of conscience flows from some evidence that God is satisfied and reconciled unto us in Christ, and

hath pardoned our sins, and will save us; for if these things be not done, and if we in some measure know them not to be done, conscience cannot speak peace unto us.

Fourthly, God will not be wanting to any of his people in any means which may serve to draw out their love and praises: That God who expects our praises, and delights in our love, certainly will present unto us the best means for our love and praises. Now of all means whatsoever, for the quickening and drawing forth of these, none is comparable unto the assurance or certain knowledge that Christ is ours, and God is reconciled unto us in Christ, and hath for his sake forgiven us our sins.

Fifthly, The sealing Ordinance of the Lord's Supper is purposely instituted for to bring the believer in Christ to an assurance of his interest in the benefits of the death of Christ; and shall this never take effect in the believer for whose sake it is instituted, and who is told in particular, This is my body which was broken for you? 1 Cor. 11:24, and given for you; Luke 22:19, and This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you, ver. 20.

Sixthly, Nay, it would be very strange that any Believer should be interested in such a choice love of God and Christ, and be brought into so near a union with Christ, as to be married unto him. Hosea 2:19, and yet Christ should never tell or assure him that he loves him; it is the nature of love to manifest itself; and also into so gracious a communion with the Father and the Son, as to have fellowship with them, 1 Joh. 1:3, every day to converse with them, and yet never know their love unto him. Moreover, that God the Father, and Christ his Son should come unto him, and make their abode with him, Joh. 14:23, and that Christ should promise, He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself unto

him, ver. 21, and yet that this believing person should never in all his life have any knowledge of this, especially Christ assuring, all that I have known of the Father, I have made known unto you! Joh. 15:15.

Seventhly, Let me add one thing more, that a Believer should have all the helps and causes apt and able to give him an assurance; (v.g.) all the promises, faith, a renewed conscience, and the very Spirit of Christ, and yet all these should lie dormant all his life long, and not give one word of assurance that he is Christ's, or that Christ is his, and that God is reconciled to him; surely this doth not seem to be probable, especially seeing the Believer is particularly concerned in all the transactions of Christ, and all those transactions have a peculiar respect unto him. Nor do I know any solid objection to the contrary; for though many believers yet complain, and yet doubt, and yet seek for this assurance: Yet some of these may have had assurance, and pursue only a higher degree; or if they never yet had, yet they shall at length find it; and their longing and seeking after it, are the means to attain to it.

Case 4. Whether the assurance or certain knowledge that Christ is ours, and died for our sins, and made our peace, and purchased our salvation, be a matter of any special advantage unto him that hath it?

Sol. I am willing to speak something to this case, because it may serve much to excite the hearts of believing persons to strive after this assurance, when they shall hear the singular advantages and benefits thereby.

There are nine admirable advantages and benefits by it.

First, This assurance silenceth all the trouble of the soul, all the doubts and fears, and terrors, and sad suspicions, and apprehensions in the soul; you are presently off the Sea, and off the Rack, when this

assurance comes; in the very nature of it, and in the inseparable effects of it, it is a present cure and discharge unto all the anxiety and perplexity of the soul. Fears and doubts, and troubles of mind, may consist with faith, but they cannot consist with assurance; if I be once assured that Christ is mine, that he died for me, that my sins are pardoned in his blood, my heart is presently at ease, my conscience ceaseth to accuse, God appears not as a Judge, but as a Father; all enmity is slain; what is there to fear or to trouble me? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. Rom. 8:33,34.

Secondly, This assurance, as it silenceth all troubles, so it supplies the heart with all comforts; David speaking of the light of God's countenance, saith, that it put exceeding gladness into his heart, Psal. 4:7, and made him to lie down in peace, ver. 8. Such comfortable operations come from this assurance of our interest in Christ, and in the benefits of his death; it makes us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious; and it produceth a peace that passeth all understanding!

And the reason of these comfortable effects, is this, because the certain knowledge of a man's happiness, and of his propriety in it, necessarily fills the soul with joy and peace. When the Israelites were drawing towards the red Sea, they looked back upon their enemies, and were sore afraid; but when they were past the red Sea, and looked back, and saw all their enemies drowned, they bowed, and blessed, and rejoiced; their sighs were turned into joys, and their fears into peace, and they rejoiced exceedingly. Before assurance we look on our sins, and fear; after assurance; when we see and know them to be drowned in the blood of Christ, now we rejoice: God is reconciled, sin is pardoned, my soul shall be saved; Doth not this,

will not this cause us to rejoice? We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement, Rom. 5:11.

Thirdly, This assurance doth quicken all our graces; it is their spring-time, they act highly upon it, as Solomon's garden of spices did when the South wind blew upon it, Cant. 4:16. There is not one grace in the soul but is revived and enlarged by it: Godly sorrow now fills the Pools with water; see Zach. 12:10. They shall mourn as a man mourneth for his only son, &c. love is enflamed by it; To whom much is forgiven, the same will love much, Luke 7:47. All the motions of love are in assurance, here is love and mercy, and kindness, and goodness, and bounty to me, and all known by me. And faith riseth by it in stronger confidence and dependence upon God, whom I now know to love me, to be mine, to be reconciled unto me, &c.

Fourthly, This assurance sets on all our duties and services with such life, with such affections, with such alacrity; oh how full is the soul with praising of God, admiring him in Christ, blessing him and his Christ! Bless, bless, bless the Lord O my soul, who forgiveth all thy iniquities, Psal. 103:1,2,3. O how quick is the heart become in prayer! It makes haste, it takes delight to draw near to God, it is enlarged in confidences and desires.

Fifthly, This assurance is a strong preservative against sin, and all temptations thereto: How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? O I have seen the face of God, the love of Christ, the sweetness of mercy! Should such a man as I flee! Said Nehemiah. So should such a man as I sin! Saith the assured Believer. Should I so requite the Lord? Should I make such a return unto my loving Christ, &c?

Sixthly, This assurance sweetens all our other blessings; it is the Sugar in the Wine; This land is mine, this house is mine, and this

husband, and this wife, and these riches, this plenty, &c. yea, and Christ is mine, and God is mine, and peace with God is mine, and forgiveness of sins, and salvation, and I know that they are mine! Although a man enjoys all these outward blessings, yet if his conscience tells him Thou hast no part in Christ, nor portion in his death, all thy sins are unpardoned, and God's justice is unsatisfied, &c. O what a sinking is this unto him under all his abundance! Or if a man be still doubtful whether he hath a part in Christ, this imbitters all his possessions, I know not what will become of me at the last.

Seventhly, This assurance sweetens all losses and crosses. Job. 9:2. O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me! Ver. 3, when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; here the light of God's favor made him walk even in darkness. Rom. 8:55. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or peril? Or sword? Ver. 37. Nay, in all these things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us. Rom. 5:3. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations, &c. 2 Cor. 4:17. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. 5:1. For we know that if the earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building with God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. What may not a man bear, and what loss is he at who knows Christ to be his, and a reconciled God to be his? &c.

Eighthly, This assurance will ease all our worldly burdens; it will take off our hearts, and it will take off our vexations, cares and thoughts; if we know that God gave Christ for us, we cannot but know that he will with him freely give us all things, Rom. 8:32. And besides that, the more assurance we have of our interest in Christ, &c. the more our hearts will mind Christ, and the benefits by Christ, and will be

the less after other things: I have a goodly heritage, thou art my portion, Psal. 16:5. I have enough, nay, let him take all, &c.

Ninthly, This assurance breeds confidence and comfort in death; Why are even good people sometimes afraid to die, but because they are not yet assured? They cannot say with Paul, Christ loved me, and gave himself for me: But if assurance be on their hearts, then death is welcome. Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, said Simeon, Luk. 2:29,30. And I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, said Paul: What is death to the assured Believer, but a short passage, a speedy in-let and conveyance unto that glorious and eternal blessedness which he knows that Christ hath purchased for him, and God reserves for him in heaven?

Case 5. Whether a person having attained a certain knowledge that Christ died for him, may ever after that doubt again, and question that point again.

Sol. I answer plainly he may; sensible assurance is very comfortable, but yet it is mutable; Paul's vision (in Acts 10:11) was drawn up into heaven again; yea, and his choice revelation was quickly attended with a violent temptation. 2 Cor. 12:7.

Reasons whereof may be these.

First, The Divine pleasure; the date of your comforts, and the Patent of them is, *ad placitum*: God gives you this assurance, that you may taste his kindness and goodness; and he takes it off again, that you may acknowledge his authority.

Secondly, The Divine wisdom; God would rather have us live by faith than sense; indeed the life of our assurance is more for our comfort, but the life of faith is more for his glory.

Thirdly, Our own foolishness; not improving aright such gracious manifestations, but abusing them to pride and high-mindedness, and sometimes blurring the fair copy of our evidence with foul transgressions.

Fourthly, Subtilty and prevalency of temptations; which we did not so watch and fear, because of our assurance, as if that were security enough, &c.

**Object. But what comfort and support, if this assurance may fail?**

Sol. Much for all that; for

1. Though assurance fails, yet faith (by which we are saved) fails not.
2. Though assurance fails, yet the interest and estate assured shall never fail. Christ is still thine, and the reconciled God is still thine, and reconciliation and remission; the estate is sure, though particular and contingent effects be not so.
3. The Spirit hath more work then only to comfort; if he still strengthen thee and supply thee, that is comfort to thee.
4. Though assurance go away, yet it may return again; it is as possible to receive it, as to lose it.
5. In your new fear remember your old assurance; I tell thee that assurance once had upon good grounds, may serve to support, though against many doubts in after-times.





# **PART. II:**

## **THE GIFTS OF THE COVENANT.**

### **CHAP. I.**

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. - Ezek. 36:25.

I have heretofore opened unto you divers things about the Covenant of Grace; viz. the Nature and Adjuncts of it; the difference 'twixt it, and the Covenant of Works; the condition, and the Mediator of the Covenant.

I now proceed to handle one thing more concerning the Covenant, and that is the gifts of the Covenant; the gifts which God doth promise to bestow upon those people which are in Covenant with him.

This verse which I have read unto you, and the subsequent verses do report unto us divers of those gifts which may be considered

First, As to their order; and thus you have the promise, first, of spiritual gifts or blessings, from ver. 25, to ver. 28, and then you have the promise of temporal mercies, from ver. 28, to ver. 37.

Secondly, As to their kinds; the spiritual gifts or blessings (for I shall insist awhile only upon them) do respect

1. Our Justification, expressed in ver. 25. (Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, &c.)

2. Our Sanctification.

First, in the habitual part of it, (in ver. 26, a new heart, &c.)

Secondly, in the actual part of it; (in ver. 27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, &c.)

The Text (which respects our Justification) contains in it a promise.

1. Of the pardon of sins; (I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean.)

2. Of the pardon of the greatest sins; (from your filthiness, and from your Idols will I cleanse you.)

3. Of the pardon of all their sins; (from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.)

Before I handle the particular points, I would touch upon some things in the general; viz.

1. That God doth promise unto his people (yea unto his people in Covenant with him) spiritual gifts or blessings as well as temporal.

2. That the first promises are the best, or of the best things; first the spiritual, and then the temporal blessings.

3. That whatsoever blessings which may or do concern the people of God in Covenant, God himself doth undertake to give them unto his people.

4. That those gifts which God doth promise to give unto his people in Covenant, he gives them not for any worthiness in them, but upon the account of his own graciousness.

## SECT. I.

Doct. 1. That God doth expressly promise to give unto all his people in Covenant with him, spiritual blessings as well as temporal. I hardly know any one place of Scripture where the Covenant of grace is insisted upon, but there you shall find express promises of someone spiritual blessing or other. Jer. 31:33. This shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Ver. 34. And they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. Jerem. 32:39. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever for the good of them, and their children after them. Ver. 40. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Ezek. 11:19. I will give them one heart, and I will put a New Spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh. Ver. 20. That they may walk in my Statutes, and keep my Ordinances, and do them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Hosea 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me forever, and I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. Ver. 20. I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. Hebr. 8:10. This is the Covenant that I will make with the

house of Israel, I will put my Laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, &c.

**Quest But why is God pleased to promise to give unto his people in Covenant, spiritual blessings as well as temporal?**

Sol. The Reasons are these:

First, Because his people have souls as well as bodies; and their souls do stand in as much need of spiritual blessings, as their bodies do of temporal blessings: Every man's soul (since the fall of Adam) is in a fourfold miserable necessity, which cannot be relieved but by spiritual blessings.

1. In an estate of spiritual death, out of which it cannot be relieved but by the donation of spiritual life; a quickening by the Spirit of Christ, is necessary for a soul dead in trespasses and sins.
2. In an estate of spiritual enmity; and that enmity cannot be slain but by the death of Christ; nor any atonement, peace or reconciliation enjoyed but by his blood.
3. In an estate of offense and guilt, which expose the soul unto wrath and punishment, by reason of which the soul needs exceeding riches of grace and mercy to forgive and acquit the sinner.
4. In an estate of pollution and bondage, being held under the power of sinful lusts, in which regard the soul needs the Lord Jesus to be redemption and liberty unto it, and the soul can never be freed nor free, but by Christ and his Spirit. John 8:36.

If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. Rom. 8:2. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death. If a man had all the blessings of the world, (riches, honor, friends, health, pleasures, &c.) they could be of no help or relief unto his soul at all; notwithstanding all these, the soul still remains sinful and miserable; Give the soul Christ, and grace, and mercy, or else you give it nothing; it must perish forever without them: And therefore doth God give unto his people spiritual blessings, because the soul needs them, and they are suitable to the spiritual necessities of the soul.

Secondly, His people are people of another life, they have the promise of eternal life. 1 John 2:25. This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. Titus 1:2. In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began. 2 Cor. 5:1. We know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But what of this, will you say? Why, hence it follows that therefore God will give unto them spiritual blessings; and why spiritual blessings? Because spiritual blessings are necessary for them in relation unto that eternal life. Acts 4:12. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other Name given under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved. Loe here is a necessity of Jesus Christ for our salvation. John 3:36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: Loe here is a necessity of faith for salvation. Matth. 5:8. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God. Hebr. 12:13. Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Joh. 3:3. Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; Loe here is a necessity of holiness and regeneration for salvation, and they are congruous, and fitting us for salvation or eternal life. Colos. 1:12.

Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. It is meet to enjoy grace, before we come to enjoy glory; it is meet to have a conformity to Christ on his Cross, before we come to have a conformity to Christ in his Crown, &c.

Thirdly, His people are designed and set apart for special duties and services, the which they can never perform without spiritual gifts and blessings!

They are to glorify their God. Isa. 43:6. Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Ver. 7. Even everyone that is called by my Name, for I have created him for my glory. Ver. 21. This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.

They are to deny themselves, and to take up the Cross of Christ, and to follow him; they are to crucify the lusts with the affections thereof; they are to suffer losses and reproaches, and persecutions, and perhaps death itself; they are to fight the good fight of faith, to resist temptation, to quench the fiery darts of Satan, to overcome the world; they are to live by faith, against hope to believe in hope, to walk in all well-pleasing before the Lord.

They are to have daily communion with God, and their hearts are to be set on him, and on things above: Can any of these duties and services be performed by them without spiritual strength? Or can they partake of spiritual strength, unless and until God doth give unto them spiritual gifts or graces.

Fourthly, All the people in Covenant with God, they have his image restored unto them, they behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18.

They are made partakers of the Divine nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. They are in Christ, and new creatures, 2 Cor. 5:17. They are a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, 1 Pet. 2:9. A peculiar treasure unto him, Exod. 19:5. A people from whom he will withhold no good thing, Psal. 84:11. Therefore unquestionably he will bestow upon them spiritual gifts and blessings, and doth so, or else none of these things could be affirmed of them.

Fifthly, God will do more for his people in Covenant, then he will for any out of Covenant; (else what is the advantage of being in Covenant? Or where is the strength of Argument to persuade any man to disannul all other inconsistent Covenants, and to submit unto the Covenant of God, if he cannot better himself by being in this Covenant?) Now God doth give other things (temporal things, the things of, and for this life) many times to wicked men, to men out of Covenant; Thou fillest their bellies with thy hid treasure. And if his children (if the people of his Covenant who stand in near relation unto him) should not have spiritual blessings and mercies given unto them, if they should have (after all) but a common portion, gain little more then what the worst of men (wicked men his enemies) have; what advantage should they have? Yea, thus it should be all one with them, who love and fear God, and with them that hate him, and fear him not.

Sixthly, Whatsoever Jesus Christ hath purchased for the people of God's Covenant, that will God give unto them; (the purchases of Christ, and the promises, and performances of God's Covenant are parallel) but Jesus Christ hath by his death purchased all spiritual blessings; you cannot think of any one of them which Christ hath not purchased; they partake of Christ, and with and by him partake of all spiritual blessings, 1 Cor. 1:30. Ephes. 1:3. Blessed be the God and



Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ.

Seventhly, His people are to differ from all other people in the world, in their present disposition and frame of heart; as Joshua and Caleb had another spirit different from them who brought a false report upon the Land of Canaan; but unless the Lord did give unto his people spiritual blessings, there would be no intrinsical difference (as to the frame of heart) 'twixt his people who are in Covenant, and other people who are not in Covenant; for without the reception or participation of these blessings, their hearts would still remain wicked and unconverted; and they would lie in the same state of condemnation with others; for only spiritual blessings do make the difference. Now this would be exceedingly absurd that the people of God in Covenant with him, should remain in the same state of wickedness and curse, as people out of Covenant; this would be

1. A dishonor to God, that he should be a God in Covenant with ungodly and wicked persons, and so continuing.
2. A dishonor to his Covenant, which is a Covenant of love and mercy, and peace, and life, that God should in a singular manner love the wicked, and assure mercy to them, and make peace with them, and give assurance of life and blessedness unto them.

Are spiritual blessings promised expressly by God unto all his people in Covenant with him? Why, this is wonderful comfort and encouragement unto any of the people of God, being sensible of their spiritual wants, and oftentimes fearing, and doubting, and questioning spiritual helps and supplies. O say we, if they were lesser matters, and ordinary mercies, then we should not fear to go to God, and rely on him, and expect from him; but our greatest wants are of the

greatest mercies, a Christ, forgiveness, holiness, heaven itself; and what shall we do in this case?

But I beseech you hearken, and consider four things.

First, Spiritual blessings are promised as well as temporal; that God who promiseth health, doth likewise promise grace; that God who promiseth food convenient, doth likewise promise Christ; and that God who promiseth deliverance from trouble, doth likewise promise deliverance from hell and wrath; and that God who promiseth outward peace, doth likewise promise forgiveness of sins, and peace in conscience; and that God who promiseth to subdue enemies, doth likewise promise to subdue iniquities; and that God who promiseth to give earth, doth likewise promise to give heaven. Is it nothing unto you that the great blessings which your souls do need, are laid up, and are to be found in God's promises? If you had more faith, those spiritual blessings which you find in God's promises, you might quickly feel in your own hearts.

Secondly, All spiritual blessings are promised; there is not any one spiritual blessing which any of the people of God do need, or may need, but God hath promised the same. Consider spiritual blessings as in the end and means, and causes, God hath promised all of them: He hath promised glory, and he hath promised grace, and he hath promised himself, the cause of all: He hath promised all that belongs to faith, to Christ, to Justification; and he hath promised all that belongs to Conversion, to Sanctification, to Obedience, and to Comfort, and to Rest.

Thirdly, God himself hath promised them; If Men or Angels had promised them, it were nothing; for none of them are able to give any one spiritual blessing; the collating of the least drop of grace and mercy, and inward peace is above the power of any creature; but this

is the comfort, that God himself hath promised to give all spiritual blessings unto his people, I say God himself.

1. Who is able to perform and make good whatsoever he hath promised; Is anything too hard for him? Is not his power more then commensurate with his Word? Is he not sufficient to do what he speaks? He is mercifulness itself, and holiness itself, and life itself, and blessedness itself; is not the God of all grace able to give you grace? Is not the God of all power able to subdue your iniquities? Is not the God of all mercy able to forgive? Is not the God of all comfortable to comfort you? Is not the God of peace able to speak peace?

2. Who is willing to do good in his promises: I beseech you, what are God's promises, but the expressions of his gracious will concerning us, in all the good which he purposeth to confer upon us? I will bless, I will heal, I will show mercy, I will save, I will pardon, I will give grace and glory, I will hear and help, I will do you good, these are the very ingredients of his promises; the promises are nothing else but the good will and purpose of God transcribed and copied out for us.

3. Who is faithful, Hebr. 11:11. Sarah judged him faithful who had promised; and what is it for God to be faithful in his promises, but in his own good time to do what he speaks, and to give what he promiseth to give! Faithful is he who hath called you, who will also do it; saith the Apostle, 1 Thes. 5:24. Mark to do what he promiseth; this was to be faithful.

4. God hath promised all of them to all his people in Covenant; to all that are brought into Christ, to all who have chosen him for their God, and give up their hearts and lives unto him; to all who can call him Father, and are become his children; as the blessings promised are distributed into greater and lesser, some are spiritual, some are

corporal; so the heirs of blessings, some of them are stronger, some are weaker; but this makes no difference as to the claim and title; the weakest Believer in Christ, the weakest child of God is an heir of all the spiritual blessings which God hath promised.

Hath God promised all spiritual blessings as well as temporal unto all his people in Covenant? Then you who are the people of God, Mark what concerns you under the sense of any spiritual wants; Do not complain any longer; and do not charge God foolishly; and do not give up your conditions as desperate; do not say there is no help nor hope; and do not hearken to what Satan saith, nor to what your perplexed hearts do say; but regard and mark what God saith in his promises: He saith that he will give grace and glory, and he will give all the matters of Justification, and of Sanctification; and therefore do you take that course for the enjoyment of them which God directs you unto, and likewise encourages you unto.

**Quest. What course is that?**

Sol. It is this.

First, You must humbly pray unto him to give unto you all those spiritual blessings which you do need, and which he hath promised.

**Object. Pray unto him will you say? If he hath promised to give them, what need we to pray for them?**

Sol. Yes, promises on God's part, and prayers on our part are not contradistinct, but subordinate: therefore remember

1. Though God promiseth to give all these spiritual blessings, yet he expressly calls for prayer from us unto himself, to bestow them on us. Ezek. 36:37. Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet be inquired of by

the house of Israel to do it for them. Jer. 29:11. I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Ver. 12. Then shall you call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. Ver. 13. And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your hearts.

2. As he calls for prayer, so he adds a new engagement of promise to give (even spiritual blessings) upon prayer. Luke 11:13. Your heavenly Father will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.

Secondly, You must act faith; you must believe on his Word, and trust on him as a faithful God to perform, &c. Psal. 62:8. Trust in him at all times ye people, pour out your hearts before him, God is a refuge for us, Selah. Isa. 26:4. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isa. 57:2. I will cry unto God, most High, unto God which performs all things for me. Hebr. 11:6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Jam. 1:6. But let him ask in faith. O Sirs, this is one of the greatest reasons, why notwithstanding your many tears and prayers, you have so small portion in spiritual blessings, because you do not trust on God for them; you do not believe that he will deal with you according to his Word; you do not give him the glory of an all-sufficient and faithful God; still you are questioning him, and reasoning against him, But will he make good his Word of promise? And can he do this or that? The Lord humble our hearts for this; we think not of it as a sin, or else but a small sin; but indeed it is an exceedingly provoking sin and an eternal dishonor to the God of truth and mercy, thus by our unbelief to charge a lie, or a doubtfulness upon him.

**Object. But have we not reason to doubt what he will do, when we are so unworthy?**

Sol. No, our unworthiness is no sufficient reason to question the goodness and faithfulness of God's promise, because

1. He never indents with us upon terms of our worthiness.
2. He professeth that he doth us good, not for our sakes, but for his own sake.

Thirdly, If need be, you must wait upon God for the performance of those spiritual blessings promised unto you. Isa. 36:18. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you, for the Lord is a God of judgment, (he knows what, and when is best) blessed are all they that wait for him.

Three things remember to enable you to wait, &c.

1. Any spiritual blessing is worth a waiting; for the least of them being of more worth, and more consequence to the soul than a whole world.
2. God will oft times try your hearts, whether indeed you would be thus blessed, or can be satisfied and give over without enjoyment.
3. The promise of them is very sure; God who cannot lie hath promised, Tit. 1:2. He will not fail you in these spiritual blessings, though many times he doth deny you some temporal desires.

Are spiritual blessings and mercies promised by God to all that are in Covenant with him? In what a case then are all obstinate and perverse sinners? Who will hold fast their sins, and walk in their own ways, and hate to be reformed, and will not be brought into the bond of the Covenant with God; if there were no other misery for them but this, that they shall not partake of spiritual, blessings, this were misery sufficient. You read of those (in Luke. 14) who excused themselves, and refused to come to the Supper prepared, Christ saith of them, (ver. 24.) None of those men shall taste of my Supper; truly this was judgment and punishment enough, never to partake of any benefit or good by Christ. In like manner this is punishment enough for all those who refuse to enter into Covenant with God, that they shall never partake of any spiritual blessing and mercy which God hath promised: There is the forgiveness of sins promised, but their sins shall never be forgiven; and there is renewing grace promised, but their hearts shall never be renewed and sanctified; and there is eternal glory promised, but their souls shall never be saved. They shall be left unto their own sinful guilt, and unto their own sinful corruptions and unto their own sinful deserts, and all the wrath of God threatened against them shall fall upon them. Therefore I beseech you who hear of Christ, and who hear of the Covenant of Grace, take heed to yourselves that you resist not the grace which is offered unto you in Christ, and the terms of reconciliation propounded unto you, lest you cast yourselves out of the Covenant, and from all spiritual blessings which God hath therein promised; lest you never have grace and never have mercy, and never have blessedness.

Lastly, since spiritual blessings are promised by God unto all in Covenant with God, let the consideration of this mollify our hearts, and bow them into acceptance of God to be our God, and to resign up ourselves to be his people in Covenant, and to walk with him, and

before him in all uprightness; why so? Because now the promises of spiritual blessings are to you, and by this you become heirs of all those blessings. O that we did know what the love of God was! And what the enjoyment of Christ was! And what the forgiveness of sins was! And what the excellency of grace was! And what the eternity of glory was! How miserable we are, and must continue so forever without them; and how happy we shall continue forever with them; then our hearts would be persuaded to disannul our Covenant with sins, and condescend to become the people of God, &c.

## SECT. II.

Doct. 2. That in the Covenant spiritual blessings are first promised, and after them temporal blessings; God promiseth both of them unto his people, but first the spiritual. Ezek. 36:25. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean. Ver. 26. A new heart also will I give you, &c. And then follow the promises of temporal blessings, in ver. 28. And ye shall dwell in the Land which I gave unto your fathers. Ver. 29. And I will call for the corn, and will increase it. Ver. 30. And I will multiply the fruit of the Tree, and the increase of the Field. Psal. 84:11. The Lord will give grace and glory, (there are spirituals) no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly; (here are temporals) Hosea 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me forever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. Ver. 20. I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord; (here are the spiritual blessings) Ver. 21. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth. Ver. 22. And the earth shall hear the corn, and



the wine, and the oil, and they shall both hear Jezreel; (here are the temporal blessings.)

**Quest. Why is God thus pleased to order his promise for blessings? As first the spiritual, and then the temporal.**

Sol. Reasons thereof may be these.

1. He suiteth his blessings with the desires and necessities of his Saints; they need these most, and shall have them first.

2. Hereby is some advantage given unto faith; first, to believe spirituals, and then to believe temporals; for if God will give the greater, will he deny the less? Rom. 8:32. Faith to believe them as the choicest blessings; for not only spiritual blessings are promised, but also that they are the first in promise; and thence faith concludes, the first appearing of God's love and gracious will and purpose towards us, are the choice blessings; should we question the donation of them, when we find them to be the first of the Legacies sealed with the blood of Christ?

3. Hereby the Lord sets out both the goodness and greatness of his love.

1. The goodness of his love in securing of our souls, and regarding of them; for only spiritual blessings do serve them; q.d. the first thing that I will do for you is this, that I will take care to save your poor souls; I will bestow such things on them as shall forever make them happy.

2. The greatness of his love; for God to give us ordinary things, this comes from his love; but for God to give us the spiritual blessings, this comes from his great love. Eph. 2:4. But God who

is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, Ver. 5, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved. Titus 3:4. After that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards man appeared. Ver. 5, according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing and regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Rom. 5:8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that whiles we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

4. Spiritual blessings are far before and above temporal blessings; therefore no marvel that God makes promise first of them; they are before and above them; the shekel of the Sanctuary was double to the ordinary shekel; they are the best;

1. In nature; they are the pearl of great price, the one thing necessary; (as the Sun amongst the Stars) the better part; we set such a value upon our natural life, that all the world is inferior unto it; (all that a man hath will he give for his life) yet one spiritual blessing surmounts it. Psal. 63:3. Thy favor is better than life. It is a good speech of Gregory Nazianzen, *Aequius est ut vincat quod melius est*; which is the greater or better, the gold, or the Altar that sanctifies the gold?

2. In influence and virtue; Can earthly things alter the frame of the heart? Or deliver from death? Or avail in the day of wrath? Or make our peace with God? Or relieve a distressed conscience? Or put you in possession of Christ? Or give you hope of heaven? Or help your soul at all? But spiritual blessings can do all these; renewing grace doth change the heart; Jesus Christ delivers from death and wrath; his blood pacifies; God's assurance of forgiveness quiets the conscience, rejoiceth the

heart; all these will give you more than hope of heave for your souls at last.

3. In consequence; no earthly blessings are of that consequence unto us as heavenly blessings are; they are but the meat which perisheth; we shall perish if we have only the things which perish; mortal treasures are not of an immortal consequence; things of this life are but for this life; life will quickly have an end, and then all these things will be at an end; but spiritual blessings are of an immortal, and of an eternal consequence; no good like unto that, which is either eternal blessedness, or for eternal blessedness: As Gregory Nazianzen spake, Μία ζωή προς τήν ζωήν βλέπειν; Una vita est ad vitam respicere; spiritual blessings are life, and they are for life, they are the meat which endures forever; the good part which shall never be taken away, they make for your eternity.

4. In their necessity; Is not the life more than meat? And the body than raiment? Saith Christ. Matth. 6:25. So say I, is not heaven more than earth? And spiritual blessings more necessary than temporal? You may live awhile without spiritual blessings; but can you live forever without them? You may be merry with temporal blessings, but can you be happy without them? What Bernard spake of Christ, Where can it be well without him? And where can it be ill with him? That may be said of spiritual blessings, they are so necessary, and so immediate unto your souls condition, that your souls are, and must be miserable without them, and cannot but be blessed in the enjoyment of them.

5. God doth promise the spiritual blessings first, that he might learn us what to seek first, and upon what to set our hearts most.

Matth. 6:33. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof. Col. 3:2. Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth.

Doth God first promise spiritual blessings in the Covenant? Then they are much to be blamed,

1. Who look not after spiritual blessings at all, but altogether and only after temporal blessings. Psal. 4:6. There be many will say, Who will show us any good? Phil. 2:21. All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. If we did take strict survey of the minding's and studies, and desires, and labors of the sons of men, we should find them all like so many heavy bodies, inclining and moving downward to the center of earthly things. One is for earthly pleasure, another for earthly profits, another for earthly vanities! One cries out for health, another for strength, another for friends, another for preferment, another for quiet, another for riches; God is not in all their thoughts, said David: Spiritual blessings are not in their minds and hearts say I. Surely these men do not believe a future blessedness, or do not know the present necessities of their souls; or do not understand the worth and preciousness of spiritual blessings. It is a great judgment and curse upon men, when they make their sins their delight, and the world to be their portion.

Secondly, Who look not after them first of all: You have some men who;

1. Intend after that they have compassed such a measure of temporal blessings (as they imagine will serve for them and their children) then to mind Spiritual blessings for their souls.

But two things befall these men.

1. Either they die in the time of their Earthly projects and designs:

2. Or their hearts grow full with new desires of a further measure of those earthly getting's. They are justly left by God to an endless covetousness, and are not renewed by his grace to any heavenly-mindedness all their days.

2. Who think only of Spiritual blessings, when they must part with all their temporal blessings, and that is when they come to die; O then a Christ, and then peace with God and then mercies to pardon their sins, and then grace to believe and repent; and thus they put off looking after Spiritual blessings, until they have no time to get them; or else God will not give these Spiritual blessings in the time which they now do set, because they slighted and neglected them in the time when God was pleased to offer them.

Now what shall I say to these men? Is it probable or possible to awaken them to receive instruction! I will make bold to tell you three things.

1. As yet they are not in Covenant with God: For everyone actually and sincerely Covenanting with God, his heart is set on God as his first and as his best, and his full, and his only portion: Thou art my portion O Lord. Psal. 119:57. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73:25, &c.

2. They are persons of vain and foolish hearts; what a vanity and folly it is to pitch on vain things on Earth, when God offers first the great things of Heaven! 2 Cor. 4:18. Suppose a goodly Inheritance (worth 1000. l. per annum) were offered, and a few Counters were also offered, or only 10. l. per annum for life,

were he not a vain and foolish man, who would fix his choice on the last offer? So when God offers all Spiritual blessings first, and next the temporal, which are only for term of life; then like the Prodigal for the present time to have a little Earthly portion in our hands, &c. or like Esau to prefer a Messe of Pottage before the birth-right, how vain is this!

3. If you do not infallibly undo your souls, yet you do extremely hazard them, you do expose them to a most dangerous contingency: For suppose you do intend hereafter to mind and get Spiritual blessings, yet what if God should cut you off in the midst of your days! What if in the depth of your labor for Earth, he should command you to return to the Earth, and perhaps suddenly and in a moment, what now would become of your poor souls! Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee; then whose shall all these things be? Luke 12:20. And what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he shall lose his soul! Matth. 16:26.

Doth God in his Covenant first promise unto us the Spiritual blessings? Then let us all be persuaded, first to mind them, and first to get them. Arguments to induce you to hearken unto this advice, are these.

First, These are Covenant-testimonies; indeed this shows that God is your God, and you are his, and that he loves you.

Secondly, Spiritual blessings, these are portions indeed for Christians, and they are the best portions.

1. Portions indeed; you have nothing of your own but sin and vanity.

Yea 2ly. These are portions for Christians, as Themistocles said, Give those bracelets to slaves; or as Basil (when he was offered temporary glory, and wealth, &c) answered, Give me glory which abides forever; and give me riches which will endure forever. Matth. 6:31,32. Take no thought what ye shall eat; for after all these things do the Gentiles seek. Earthly things are a common stock, only Spiritual blessings are the Children's inheritance: As God spake of the Levites, that they shall have no inheritance among their brethren, I will be their portion, said the Lord; so may we say of temporal and Spiritual blessings, God will not have his people to sit down with so low and poor a portion as temporal things, but their portion shall be himself, his Christ, his Spirit, his Grace, his Peace, his Joy, his Glory, his Blessedness.

3. And those are the best portions: These do make up our estate indeed: now you may sit down and rejoice, for you have possession good enough, and safe enough: and a better possession than God himself, and all Spiritual blessings no soul is capable of.

Thirdly, They are possible: I beseech you observe with me a few things.

1. Nothing is impossible which lies in God's promise, because God who promiseth, is able also to perform, and give whatsoever he is pleased to promise; and the donation or accomplishment depends not on us, but on God alone, on his power and fidelity.

2. None ever cordially sought them, but did enjoy them, If ye seek for them as silver, and hid treasures, you shall have them, Prov. 23:4,5. You shall seek me, and find me when you shall search for me with all your heart, Jer. 29:13. Nay I dare to say, did you seek, and pray for these Spiritual blessings, as you do for temporal blessings, with the same thought, and earnestness, and

diligence, and importunity, and constancy, you might long since have possessed them, both plentifully and comfortably.

Fourthly, They are more certain (upon right seeking) than the temporal blessings; you may observe concerning these two sorts of blessings;

1. That God never gives all the particulars of temporal blessings to any one man, but distributes them by parcels, some to one, and some to another; but he gives every Spiritual blessing (for the substance) unto everyone in Covenant.

2. That God doth put some Provisoos and Exceptions, and Reserves upon temporal blessings (so far as consistent with the Cross, and as is fitting and behooving in such a condition and relation, &c.) but for Spiritual blessings (which substantially concern his people) he is peremptory, he will give them, he will not deny them, although for a while he may delay them; as in the point of Revocation, he oft times takes off these outward blessings, and yet still continues the Spiritual, he will never recall them, his loving-kindness shall continue still with them: so in point of Donation, though he many times denies particular outward things, yet he will not deny the Spiritual: The Father will not deny food to the Child, though he doth deny an apple.

Fifthly, If you could but get the Spiritual blessings, they would soon hasten in and speed you with such temporal blessings which you need: Temporal, they often go alone, they bring not the Spiritual; but the Spiritual brings in the temporal. Matth. 6:33. Seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you; (*tanquam Appendices Cumulo*) you should have the spiritual blessings which you first of all desire; and the



temporal which you least of all desire; you shall have them in the purchase, and over and above the bargain.

Sixthly, And you shall have them with more comfort, peace, and blessing; for Spiritual blessings do draw off that curse with which our sins have involved our temporal blessings; and besides they give them a sweeter relish, because we now possess them with the favor and love of God in Christ.

Doth God in his Covenant promise first (unto his people) all spiritual blessings? Then you who are his people may hence learn.

First, To bless your God, who in the first place blesseth you with all Spiritual blessings; your estate differs from that of other men, in two particulars.

1. In the Entrance, that at the first you possess the choicest mercies.

2. In the End, that at the last you shall possess the highest glory. Psal. 103:1. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy Name. Ver. 2. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Ver. 3. Who forgave thee all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases. Thus David for forgiveness and health; much more then should the people of God bless him, who at the very first blesseth them with all Spiritual blessings; with his favor, with his Christ, with Righteousness, with Holiness, with Forgiveness, with Peace, &c.

Secondly, To be contented, although perhaps you have a lesser portion in temporal blessings: Am I not better to thee than ten sons, said Elkanah to Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:8. So, why do you yet complain and take on? Are not Spiritual blessings better than all temporal

blessings? I beseech you by what interest do you judge men happy? By temporal or by spiritual? If by temporal, why did you so much desire Spiritual? If by Spiritual, why then are you not contented who have already all Spiritual blessings for your portion? Especially considering that for asking the daughters of Zelophehad had the nether spring as well as the upper; and you but for asking shall have enough for Earth as well as for Heaven.

I now proceed to a third General Observation, viz.

### SECT. III.

3. Doct. That whatsoever the blessings are which may, or do concern the people of God in Covenant, God himself doth undertake to give them unto his people: Consider the Covenant Donatives mentioned in this Chapter, and elsewhere; you shall expressly find, that none but God himself undertakes the Donation of them. I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and I will give them a new heart; and I will put my Spirit within you, and I will call for the corn, &c. v. 25,26,29,30. So Ezek. 11:19. I will give you one heart. Jer. 31:33. I will put my Law in their inward parts. 32:40. I will put my fear in their hearts. Deut. 30:6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. Hos. 14:4. I will heal their back-sliding's, I will love them freely. Zac. 12:10. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication, &c.

Here only two Questions for the illustration of this Point.

1. Why God himself undertakes to give the Covenant-blessings unto his people?
2. After what manner he undertakes to bestow them upon his people?

**Quest. 1. Why God himself undertakes the Donative of all the blessings in the Covenant unto his people?**

Sol. Reasons thereof are,

First, No creature whatsoever can give them; therefore it belongs to God alone: Two things (at the least) are required for the giving of blessings.

1. One is Authority; there must be a right in them as ours; for what hath any one to do to give that which is none of his?
2. The other is Sufficiency, or ability to pass them over unto another, and to make the blessings to be his: Now no creature hath Authority to give any blessings; why so! Because God only is the Lord of all blessings whatsoever, they are his, and of right belong unto him only: Consider, all sorts of blessings they are his, he is the Lord of them. Spiritual blessings are his, mercy is his, he is the God of mercy; and grace is his, he is the God of all grace; and comfort is his, he is the God of all consolation; and peace is his; he is the very God of peace; and love is his, God is love; the Spirit is his, and Christ is his Anointed; and glory is his, he is the God of glory. And so for temporal blessings, though they be ours many times for possession and use, yet they are his for Right and Donation. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, saith David, Psal. 24:1. Thine (O Lord) is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty; for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is thine, 1

Chro. 29:11. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all, ver. 12. And no Creature hath Sufficiency or Ability to convey or pass over blessings; for Spiritual blessings, can any man give them unto himself, or unto another? Can any man give faith unto himself? It is the work of God, saith Christ; it is the gift of God, saith Paul: Can any man give Repentance unto himself, no, it was God that gave repentance unto the Gentiles; and the Church prayed, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned: Can any man make his own heart holy? No, it is God himself which sanctifies us: can any man forgive his own sins? No, who can forgive sins but God only? And for temporal blessings, can we give rain, or plenty, or safety, or health, or life, or ease; or quietness? Can we make the Clouds to drop down, or the sword to be at rest, or the sick to be at rest? No Creature can do anything of itself; and therefore God himself undertakes to give all the blessings in the Covenant unto his people; otherwise they could never have them.

Secondly, God will have the glory of whatsoever blessing we do receive from him: He allows unto us the benefit of them, and the comfort of them; but he reserves all the glory of them unto himself alone: Thine is the glory, saith Christ; Matth. 6:13.

Now upon a double account doth the glory of all appertain to God, viz.

1. In that he is the End of all his works, and gifts, and blessings; all that God manifests about the salvation of sinners, is to the praise and glory of his grace, Eph. 1:6. He himself is the ultimate End of all his works, and of himself.

2. In that he is the Efficient Cause of all good and blessings; the Apostle joins these two together, in Rom. 11:16. For of him, and

through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen. Mark the place, let glory be given to God forever, and unto him alone; why so! Because, 1. All things are of him, and through him, he is the Efficient Cause; 2ly. All things are to him, he is the Final Cause for which they are: You have another place to this purpose, in 1 Cor. 1:30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. Ver. 31. That according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. If any man could be of himself, the cause unto himself of any good, then he might glory in himself, and bless himself and say, This hath mine own hand wrought for me, I gave life unto myself, and grace to my heart, and peace to mine own conscience, and I wrought mine own Redemption. No, saith the Apostle, you can do nothing, it is of God that ye are in Christ, and it is of God that Christ is made unto you wisdom, &c. therefore you may not glory in yourselves, but only in the Lord. If I be made high only by the favor of another, and if I be made rich only by the bounty of another, should I give the glory of these unto myself? Well then, God hath a right unto all glory, therefore he himself will give all grace.

Thirdly, God himself undertakes to give unto his people all Covenant-blessings, because the hearts of his people should be fixed and fastened on him alone: There are two things which God cannot endure, especially in his own people.

1. One is a distrust of himself; Why sayest thou O Jacob, and speakest O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God! Isa. 40:27.

2. The other is, a trusting upon the creature; and now What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the water of Siber! Or

what hast thou to do with the way of Assyria, to drink the water of the River! Jer. 2:18. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord, Jer. 17:5. No, but this is it that the Lord doth require of his people; viz. to take off their hearts (their hopes and expectations, and dependencies) from all other besides himself, and to settle and fix them only upon himself. Isa. 45:22. Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be saved; for I am God, and there is none else. Psal. 62:8. Trust in him at all times ye people, pour out the heart before him; God is a refuge, Selah. In the Covenant God engageth his heart to us; and one reason thereof, is, to engage our hearts to him; in the Covenant he engageth his power and goodness, and all-sufficiency, and fidelity unto us; and this he doth to engage our love to him, our fear to him, our hope and confidence unto him; this is enough, God himself undertakes for all.

Fourthly, That faith might have a sure foundation; this I take for unquestionable;

1. True faith cannot be raised but by a Divine power.
2. True faith cannot rest upon any mutable or insufficient power; you may as soon fix an Anchor in the Air, as to make faith fasten upon impotent and weak causes; if we do certainly know that such an Object or Agent cannot help, or will not help, that it fails in sufficiency of power, or kindness of will, or steadfastness of being faith cannot draw out the heart to trust and say, Here you are sure to find mercy, and sure to find love, and sure to find help, and sure still to find supply; faith must have a sure Anchor to trust unto, or else it can never quiet the heart; and else it can never persuade the heart to rest, or to

expect, or wait; but now because God himself undertakes to give unto his people all good which concerns them, faith hath foundation sure enough to build upon; for there cannot be greater security than God himself, binding and engaging himself unto us. God is an all-sufficient goodness, wisdom, kindness, omnipotency, immutability, faithfulness, and all this is in a way of Covenant unto you; faith cannot desire stronger, or greater, or surer grounds to draw out the heart to trust, than these; these are sufficient to answer all fears and doubts, and temptations, and contrary suggestions whatsoever.

Fifthly, lastly, To whom ought we to pray for all the good which we do need? Even to God alone; he calls upon us to call only upon him; Call upon me, and ask of me; and I will be inquired of to do this for them; and pour out your heart before him: Certainly then God himself doth undertake to give all, if he alone will be sought unto for all; if there were anything which he could not do, or would not do, or that others also besides himself were to do for us, then he would not have restrained our prayers to himself alone; but because he doth bound and confine all our prayers at all times unto himself alone, therefore unquestionably it is he himself alone who undertakes to give all the blessings of the Covenant unto us. Psal. 57:2. I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me. Ver. 3. He shall send from heaven and save me, &c. God shall send forth his mercy and truth.

And thus you see the reasons why God himself undertakes to give all blessings to his people.

**Quest. 2. Now follows the second question; viz. After what manner God undertakes to give all the blessings of the Covenant unto his people?**

Sol. For answer unto this question, remember these conclusions.

1. That God undertakes in his Covenant to give unto his people all the good which they do or shall need; not all good simply, not all good whatsoever that can be desired, but all good which is proper for them, and needful for them; so far as the Covenant goes or extends to any person, so far doth God's undertaking to give extend: Now his Covenant is for all that is good for you, No good thing will he withhold, Psal. 84:11. If you have not so large an estate in temporals as another, yet God is faithful in his Covenant, because still what he sees to be good for you, that he gives you; and in temporals you are not to be the Judge, but God himself, who best knows your wants, and the conveniency of your supplies; the child must not be the Judge, but the father.

2. That whatsoever good is needful, that God doth undertake to give you assuredly; for you have his bond of promise, and his oath likewise; he doth so undertake to give it, that you shall not miss of it, but shall certainly enjoy it; not only the substantially spiritual blessings, (which make up the esse of an heavenly condition) but also those spiritual blessings circumstantially considered in the comfortable part of it, (as spiritual joy and peace, and assurance) when your souls come into such an exigence that these are necessary for you, you shall not miss of them; when your child is weak and sinking, the father will give him the cordial; as when he is hungry, he will give him the food; Nay, not only spiritual blessings, but temporals also; there is a certainty of them, when there is a necessity of them: When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them, Isa. 41:17.



3. That when it is affirmed that God undertakes to give all blessings unto his people in Covenant, this must be understood in his own time; there are our times, and God's times; God's time is called the time appointed, Habak. 2:3, and the acceptable time, 2 Cor. 6:2, and the time of the promise, Acts 7:17. Now though God will give all necessary good unto his people, yet he will do this, not at our time, but at his own time; for 1. He is a gracious debtor and donor; he doth voluntarily, and upon the score of his own grace undertake our mercies: And therefore hath a liberty to set what date of time for payment or collation, seems best unto himself: And secondly, He is a most wise God, unto whom the peculiar seasons of communicating any mercies are best known; therefore although you do not presently enjoy the mercies which he doth promise, and you do ask, you should neither grow hereupon distrustful in questioning him, nor impatient in waiting upon him, nor negligent in seeking of him; for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not, as the Apostle speaks in another case; and he is the God of judgment, able to discern our need of mercies, and the best time of bestowing of them.

4. That God will give all those blessings which himself undertakes, in that order which is proper for the reception of them. There are (you know) spiritual blessings and temporal blessings; now God's order in the collation of these, is to give the spiritual first, and then the temporal; first, to bestow that which secures the soul, and then that which concerns the body; therefore he would have us first to seek the Kingdom of God.

Again, spiritual blessings, some of them are of a vital consequence, which make the soul alive, and the condition of it truly good; all these God gives together at one time; he gives faith and Christ, and Justification, and Sanctification all at once; as soon as the person believes he is united to Christ, and hereupon justified and sanctified.

And others of them are of a comfortable consequence, as assurance, joy, peace, &c. God doth not give these blessings first of all; but after he hath given the former. Ephes. 1:13. In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise; (mark, the sealing follows the believing) 1 Pet. 1:8. In whom believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; (here rejoicing follows believing) Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God; (peace with God follows justification) and therefore is it a preposterous course for any troubled souls, to press God, or to expect from God the comforts and joys, and assurances promised, before they have faith, and are in Christ; for though God doth promise these things, yet he promises to give them in an orderly way; the graces first, and then the comforts of grace; faith and union with Christ first, and then the joys and peace depending upon that union.

5. When God undertakes to give all blessings unto his people in Covenant, this must be understood according to the proportion and measure which he knows best for us in our places and conditions.

There is a measure of apprehension of Christ, and of our justification by Christ, and of our salvation by Christ; God gives a greater and clearer, and more fixed measure of the apprehension or reflexive knowledge of these to some of his people than he doth to others of them. And there is a measure of holiness; some have higher, and some have weaker degrees of grace; now in God's undertaking to give all spiritual blessings, you must not think that God intends to give every measure or degree of grace at once, nor yet the like degree of grace unto everyone, nor yet the like measure of comfortable evidences, or apprehensions of interest in Christ, and remission, and salvation by him; no, but God will give all Covenant-blessings unto all his people in such a proportion and measure, in this life, as may

conduce most to his glory, and may most fit them in their private and public conditions for his better service.

Strive to believe and acknowledge this truth, that God himself doth undertake to give all the blessings of the Covenant which do concern his people.

**Object. Why will you say, no man doubts it or scruples it, but it belongs to God, and to him alone to give all, &c.**

Sol. I wish that same were true; but if indeed this were so, then,

1. Why do not we in all our wants and necessities make our prime applications unto God? Why do we think least of him, and last of him? We run to this creature, and to that creature; set up one friend, and look upon another; try all the powers and abilities here below, as if God were least of all concerned in the donation of our mercies and blessings; if we did indeed believe that God himself undertakes all blessings for us, then our first addresses would be unto him, our first work and our great work would be with himself alone to do us good.

2. Why do our hearts go and come, rise and fall, according to the presence and absence of visible means and helps? In the prevalence of them our hearts are raised up with hopes, and in the absence of them they are distracted, and cast down with fears: Would it be thus with us, if we did indeed believe that God himself undertook to give us all our blessings? Certainly we place our hopes and expectations below and besides God himself, when inferior causes have such a command, and such an influence upon our hearts. If we did believe that God himself, that he alone were sufficient and faithful, it would be all one to us, whether the creatures smile or frown; incline toward us, or fall from us.

3. Why do we (not only for temporal supplies, but also for spiritual mercies) undertake for ourselves, and as it were discharge God from undertaking for us? How often do we undertake the spiritual charge of our hearts? And to make our own hearts to repent, and to believe, and to subdue our own sins, and to do such and such commands of God by our own free-will, and by our own strength; if we did believe that God himself undertakes for all these, and that it belongs unto him alone to give them would we presume upon ourselves thus? Would we take his work out of his hands?

4. Why dare we not in our exigency commit all unto him, and quietly rest on him, but when our helps and hopes are reduced only unto him, so that unless he himself appears, we can cast Anchor nowhere else? And although in such cases he doth plainly appear in his Covenant, graciously undertaking, and faithfully promising to help and bless us; yet this is nothing to us; it doth no way affect or support us; assuredly, either we do not know this God aright, or else we do not believe that he himself doth undertake for us; or else that he will perform and make good what himself hath undertaken. Beloved! Consider what I say; this is a very great sin, thus to fall short in the belief and acknowledgement of this truth; for

1. You deny God to be God in the Covenant; you do (as it were) shut him out from being a party there, and concerned there; though indeed he be the confederating party, and we are the confederated party, yet you include him, and deny him to be so, when that you believe not that it belongs to him to be the suscipient party, and yourselves to be the recipient party only; for I beseech you what will you make of God's covenanting with you, more than a cypher, if you do not grant and acknowledge him (therein) as engaging himself to give us all the good which

we do need? What other work is there which can or doth concern him!

2. And you do hereby deny all homage unto him; for how can you pray unto him for any one good that you want, or trust on him for any one mercy, if you do not acknowledge this truth, that he himself undertakes to give all blessings and mercies unto you? And where will you put your mite of thankfulness for all your receipts of blessings? If God himself did not undertake to give you the blessings, what ground have you to undertake to give him the praise of them? Therefore earnestly strive by faith to assent unto this truth which I have delivered; it is of more consequence than you are aware of; it is that which gives life unto you in all your dealings with God, and which may support and encourage you against all the temptations of Satan, and fears of your own spirits; God himself is your God, and God himself (for whom nothing is too hard, and who is faithful in Covenant) he it is who undertakes to find out, and give out unto you every mercy (for soul and body) which you do or shall need.

Do not only believe this truth, but also make use of it; (i.e.) in the sense of all your wants, whether spiritual or temporal, Go unto God with boldness unto his Throne of grace, that ye may find grace and mercy to help in time of need: Remember that of the Apostle in Phil. 4:6. Be careful in nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, (with thanksgiving) let your request be made known to God.

Do not vainly perplex yourselves, O it is impossible ever to get this sinful heart changed, and this hard heart broken, and those sins pardoned; but consider seriously,

1. What is that which you find promised in the Covenant: Do you not expressly find the renewing of the heart promised there? And the taking away of the hard heart promised there? And the forgiveness of all sins promised there?

2. Who is it that undertakes to give these things promised? Is it not God himself who can do it, because he is Almighty; and will do it, because he is faithful? It is not what strength and power you have for these things, but what the sufficiency and fidelity of God is who undertakes to give them.

**Object. But he expects great matters from us, before he will give them unto us?**

Sol. 1. I will tell you what he expects from you; he expects three things from you. 1. That you acknowledge your own unworthiness, and his graciousness. 2. That you come and pray unto him, and entreat him to do these things for you. 3. That you trust upon him as able and willing to help you according to his Word.

2. And this which he expects from you, (if he hitherto hath not given, them unto you, yet) he promiseth to give them unto you; for praying, Zach. 12:10. I will pour upon them the Spirit of supplication; for trusting, Zephaniah 3:12. I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord.

**Object. But we must bring something or other, and undertake something, else God will not do all for us.**

Sol. 1. What would ye bring to a Covenant of Grace? Or what should you bring but your hearts to receive what is promised in the Covenant of Grace to be given?

2. All the finding and giving work belongs to God; that is it which himself undertakes, forgiveness, righteousness, holiness, love, joy and peace; and these himself undertakes to give unto us. The fountain is full, and runs freely, take your care only for a Vessel to receive, and take in the waters which flow out of it.

Doth God himself undertake to give all the blessings of the Covenant to his people? What a comfort is this unto all his people! This God himself is your God, and your Father, and he loves you above all the people in the world, and binds himself by promise and oath unto you, that in blessing he will bless you. If you were to make your choice of one to undertake your good, in whose hands you would have your all to lie, you would pitch on one, 1. Who loves you as a friend, as a father, and as a near relation. 2. Who is sufficient and able. 3. Who is mindful and faithful. 4. Who is knowing and wise. 5. Who is like to live long:

Now

First, Doth not God love his people? I have loved thee with an everlasting love, Jer. 31:3. I am a Father to Israel, and Israel is my first born, Ver. 9. Is Ephraim my dear son? I remember him still; my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy on him, Ver. 20. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, Isa. 49:15.

Secondly, Is he not able to do you good? He is the All-sufficient and Almighty God, nothing is too hard for him; he is able to do above all that we are able to ask or think, and can do whatsoever he pleaseth in heaven and in earth; is it not he who stretcheth out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? Abraham was fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able to perform, Rom. 4:21.

Thirdly, He knows all your distresses and wants; your groans are not hid from him, and all your tears are in his bottle, he is mindful of his people; (Psal. 115:12. The Lord hath been mindful of us, he will bless us:) he is mindful of his Covenant. Psal. 111:5. He hath given meat to them that fear him, he will be mindful of his Covenant. Psal. 105:8. He hath remembered his Covenant forever.

Fourthly, He is the faithful God; Deut. 7:9. Know that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God which keepeth Covenant, and mercy with them that love him, and keep his Covenant to thousands of generations. Heb. 10:23. He is faithful that promised.

Fifthly, He is the wise God: God only wise, Rom. 16:27. Wise in heart, Job 9:4. And therefore will proportion and season out proper and peculiar mercies unto his servants.

Sixthly, He is the unchangeable God; there is not so much as the shadow of Change in him, Jam. 1:17. The living God, Jer. 10:10. The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King, Dan. 12:7, liveth forever.

Tenthly, If I do understand this Assertion aright, it may suffice to take off all your fears; and to draw on all your hearts to come unto your God with confidence, who himself undertakes to give unto you all the good of his Covenant: Can more be desired, or can anything else conduce further or better to your salvation!

**Object. We confess that here is enough in respect of God, but that which makes us to fear, is something in respect of ourselves, our unworthiness against which God may take exception, and for which he may deny to give unto us the good things which he hath promised.**



Sol. This is the greatest doubt which still sticks with us, and it is the strongest exception of our unbelieving hearts; and unto which I shall endeavor to give a full resolution, in the last General Proposition which now comes to be handled, viz.

#### SECT. IV.

Doct. 4. That all these blessings which God doth promise to give unto his people in Covenant, he will, and doth give them, not for any worthiness in them, but only upon the account of his own graciousness. In this Chapter you have God undertaking all sorts of mercies for his people; and it is observable that both Antecedently and Consequently, he disclaims all worthiness of them, on his people's part. Ezek. 36:22. Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes; O house of Israel, but for mine holy Name sake. Ver. 32. Not for your sakes do I this saith the Lord God, be it known unto you. Deut. 7:7. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the fewest of all people) ver. 8, but because the Lord loved you; and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt. Consider all the blessings of the Covenant, for soul or body, for this life, or for the next, life Spiritual or temporal; the reason of them lies not in our worthiness, but only, and altogether in God's graciousness; not in the receivers, but only in the giver: See it in these particulars.

First, That God loves us, and makes a Covenant with us, this comes to pass not for our worthiness, but from his own graciousness. Ezek. 16:6. When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own

blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. ver. 8. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was a time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness, yea I swore unto thee, and entered into a Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.

Secondly, That God gives his Son Jesus Christ, this respects no worthiness in us, but his own graciousness. Rom. 6:5. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Ver. 8. God commendeth his love towards us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Joh. 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.

Thirdly, That any man is effectually called unto Christ, this doth not arise from any dignity in us, but only from God's graciousness, 2 Tim. 1:9, who hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Fourthly, That any man is Sanctified, and renewed by the Spirit of Grace, this comes not from the account of anything in us, but only from the account of God's graciousness. Tit. 3:5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Fifthly, That any man is Justified, there is no reason for this in our works, but in his grace. Rom. 3:23. For all men have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Ver. 24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Isa. 43:25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake.

Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

Sixthly, That any man is Saved, and comes to the enjoyment of eternal life, this depends not upon our worthiness, but on God's graciousness. Ephes. 2:5. By grace ye are saved. Ver. 8. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Ver. 9. Not of works, least any man should boast. Rom. 6:23. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Seventhly, Nay all our temporal blessings do flow, not from our worthiness, but from his graciousness. Rom. 8:32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also freely give us all things? 2 Sam. 7:21. For thy Word sake, and according to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things to make thy servant know them.

For the further discussing of this Point, I will show unto you

1. That God doth not enjoin on his people, nor expect from them any worthiness as a reason of his blessings.
2. Why all his blessings are given unto us, upon the account of his own graciousness.

First, That God doth not enjoin on his people, nor doth he expect from them any worthiness as a reason of any of his blessings. Indeed he doth command his people to seek unto him, and to trust upon him for all that good which he promiseth to give unto them: But for any personal worthiness as a reason of his goodness and bounty unto us, this he neither requires, nor expects: For

First, A personal worthiness of the blessings of the Covenant is impossible on our part; we are in an absolute incapacity of meriting any good from the hands of God. Dan. 9:7. O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face, as at this day; O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, &c. Isa. 64:6. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness's are as filthy rags. Consider either our best doings, or our greatest sufferings, no merit or worthiness is to be found in either of them. For our doings, when we have done all that we can, Christ saith that we must say (and confess) that we are but unprofitable servants. Luke 17:10. For our sufferings, the Apostle saith (Rom. 8:18) I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the which glory shall be revealed in us.

But let me now punctually demonstrate this Assertion, that there can be no worthiness or meriting, from us for any good thing.

1. No gift of God can really merit for us any good from God; but all the good that we have is the gift of God. Ergo.

The first Proposition is clear, because in receiving what is only given, an Obligation rests only upon us, but none upon the giver, and therefore we merit nothing, no more than a beggar can merit from us by receiving an alms from us.

The second Proposition is as clear, That all the good we have, or can do, is from God; Every good and perfect gift comes from him, Jam. 1:17. What hast thou that thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. 4:7. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. 3:5. By the grace of God I am what I am, 1 Cor. 15:10. It is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. 2:13. Unto you it is given to believe, Phil. 2:29. If God will give them repentance, 2 Tim. 2:25.

2. No debt which we owe to God, hath merit or worthiness in it; (Doth any man merit ought at any hand by paying unto me, what he owes unto me?) But all the good we have, or can do, is a debt which we owe to God: Ergo, cannot merit anything from him: Doth not our believing fall under a Divine Precept? This is his Commandment, that we believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, 1 Joh. 3:23. Doth not our repenting fall also under a Divine Precept? But now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, Act. 17:30. Doth not praying likewise fall under a Divine Precept! Call upon me, Psal. 50. Pray without ceasing, 1 Thes. 5:17. Do we anything but what we ought to do when we believe, or repent, or pray, or walk in newness of obedience! And if no more be done by us, than what ought to be done by us, where is our merit or worthiness?

3. If we fall short in the best and most that we do, then we cannot merit by anything that we do: but we do fall short in the best and most that we do (the line which we write, may be written fairer, the good that we do, may, and should be done better: Domine (said one) lava lachrymas me as: yea so short, that we need mercy for our best performances, and Christ's Mediation and Intercession for them: Aaron was to bear the iniquities of the holy Offerings, Exod. 28:38. And the prayers of the Saints were to go up with the Incense of the Altar, Rev. 8:3, Neh. 13:22. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy!

Secondly, A personal worthiness for any good from God, is inconsistent with a Covenant of Grace, and likewise with the Office of Christ, the only Mediator of that Covenant: It is inconsistent with the Covenant of Grace; for according to that Covenant, all is given, and all is freely given (in that we are freely loved, and freely justified, and freely blessed, and saved) yea the worthiness of our works and the riches of God's grace, do one destroy and remove the other: Rom.

11:16. If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work.

And with the Mediatorship of Christ, who alone is the merit and purchase of all grace and glory, of all blessings and blessedness: Hath Christ merited all, or hath he not? If his All-sufficiency hath not, can our insufficiency do anything? Or where do you find any one word in Scripture, that Jesus Christ hath left anything for us to merit? Or that any of our works gain so much of his Prerogative as to merit by his merits? The merits of Christ do make our good works accepted with God; but they do not make our works to merit; for he himself had not merited, had he not been both God and Man.

Thirdly, There is in us an indignity or unworthiness of any mercy, and God would have us to acknowledge so in our Requests for, and Receipts of his blessings.

First, An unworthiness of any mercy: Gen. 32:10. I am not worthy of the least of all these mercies, and all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant. Luke 15:19. I am no more worthy to be called thy Son.

Secondly, And God will have us to acknowledge ourselves unworthy. Deut. 26:3. Thou shalt go unto the Priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the Country which the Lord sware unto our Fathers for to give us. Ver. 4. And the Priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the Altar of the Lord thy God. Ver. 5. And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my Father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a Nation, great, mighty, and populous, &c. Deut.

8:10. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Ver. 17. Beware least thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. Deut. 9:4. Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my Righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: Ver. 5. Not for thy Righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, &c. Ver. 6. Understand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked people.

Thirdly, And rejects us pleading of our own worthiness; looks on it as pride and vain-glory, as the Pharisee who insisted on his own worthiness; And thus you see that our worthiness is not admitted as any Reason or Cause of Divine blessings; whence it must necessarily follow, that God then gives them unto us upon the sole account of his own graciousness.

**Quest. 2. And what the Reasons thereof are, is the second particular to be spoken unto, viz. Why all blessings are given unto us upon the account of God's graciousness.**

Sol. The Reasons briefly are these.

First, This way of giving suits best with a Covenant of grace; In which the reasons of our mercies, as well as the mercies themselves are to be found; nay the reasons of our mercies do most of all illustrate this Covenant of grace, and do principally constitute it; for (with reverence be it spoken) this Covenant would lose the nature of being a Covenant of grace, if the mercies or blessings promised were not given unto us upon the reason or account of God's graciousness alone: Gratia est nullo modo quae non est gratuita omni modo.

Secondly, This way of giving suites best with God who is the Donor or Giver of all: It doth suit best

1. With his will and pleasure, Who in this Covenant will appear and be known to be the Lord, the Lord merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, Exod. 34:6.
2. With his glory and praise, which questionably devolves on himself alone; seeing all our blessings come only out of his Treasury, and from no reason or merit of ours, but only from his own graciousness, free gifts redound unto the praise of the giver only.

Thirdly, This way of gracious giving suites best with us the receivers of blessings from God: For consider us either,

1. As mere sinners: We have no hope or plea from anything in ourselves; we are a company of lost people, who have undone ourselves, and are both insufficient to help ourselves, and also unworthy that God should help us
2. As made believers; Faith can find no ground to plead with God, to challenge him, to rely on him, to expect anything from him, but his promise to give, and to give graciously: A believer neither may, nor can rest on any work or worth of his own (all is but dross and dung) he trades only with a gracious God in Christ.
3. As Petitioners; thus also it suites best with us: God's graciousness is the best ground for us to ask upon; O save me for thy mercies sake, Psal. 6:4. Answer me in thy truth the surest ground to speed: Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of



need, Heb. 4:16. The most fixed and invariable ground: God is forever the Lord merciful and gracious: you will quickly find a want of worthiness in yourselves, but you shall never find a want of goodness and graciousness in God.

Are all the blessings which are in the Covenant, given by God unto his people, not upon the account or reason of their worthiness, but of God's graciousness? Then behold a three-fold error worthy to be censured and shunned.

First, Of the Papists, who boast so impudently of their meritorious good works, *merita de Congruo*, before men are in the state of grace and *merita de condigno*, being in the state of grace, They can take up all sorts of merits for soul and body, nay heaven itself, and eternal glory upon the account of their own merits. Hear what Bellarmine saith, *opera nostra proprie merentur faelicitatem de congruo*: Hear what Vashquiz saith, *opera nostra non habent dignitatem a persona Christi, sed a persona a qua procedunt*. Hear the Anathema of the Council of Trent against all who deny that the works of justified persons do *vere mereri vitam Aeternam*: but against this we may oppose the Scripture; Not by the works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, saith Paul Tit. 3:5. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified, saith David, Psal. 143:2. How holy a man was Job? And how abundant in good works, see Chap. 31:16,17, and yet saith Job, Chap. 9:15. Though I were righteous, I would not answer him, but I would make my supplication to my Judge! And ver. 20. If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Paul, how strict was he! And as touching the righteousness which is in the Law, how blameless! And yet he will be found in Christ, Not having his own Righteousness

which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3:9.

Secondly, Of the ordinary sort of Protestants, who set out something of their own as reasons why God should bless them, and save them; they mean nobody any harm, and they serve God devoutly, and keep their Church, and pay everyone their due, and say their Prayers, and their Belief, and their Ten Commandments, and cry God mercy when they sin, and will not all this deserve heaven, and a few blessings on earth!

Thirdly, But most of all to be blamed (and that with pity) are poor broken-hearted sinners, who discern so much sinfulness and unworthiness in themselves, and yet are so difficult to place their hopes in the graciousness of God and are harking extremely after something of worth in themselves, something in themselves for which God would hear and help them, if once they could reach unto it. It is a great work to break a hard heart. It is a greater work to make a broken heart to look up and trust for mercy. It is the greatest work to make such an heart to believe for itself, that all mercies and blessings are to be had upon the sole account of God's graciousness: Whether this may arise from our exceeding Guilt which fills us with exceeding's of slavish fear, or from the pride of our hearts which would be something; or from the greatness of God's kindness which is so unusual with man; or from the particular genius of unbelief which is gone, and hath nothing to say more when once we come to acknowledge God's graciousness for the sole reason of all our blessings and possessions; or from all these conjunctively, I will not now dispute; but sure I am that the broken-hearted sinner is hardly brought off from boasting on himself, and is hardly brought on to commit or venture all his hopes and confidences on the graciousness of God, as the entire cause why God should pardon, accept, bless,

and save him: And this is a principal cause why his soul dwells so long with fears, and tears, and sadnesses.

Doth God dispense all the blessings of the Covenant unto his people, not upon the account of their worthiness, but only of his own graciousness? Then under the sense of all our want, yea and of all our unworthiness, let's go to God and pray to him, and trust upon him to do us good for his own Name sake. Here is water, said the Eunuch to Philip, what doth hinder me to be baptized? So say I, God promiseth to give all blessings unto his people, and he promiseth to give them graciously; now what should hinder you from going to God, and beseeching, and trusting of him to perform his good Word unto you? You are grieved for your sins, what should hinder you to believe the free forgiveness of them? You would fain have your hearts sanctified; what should hinder you from going to God, and trusting on him freely to make them holy? You would have Christ, and why do you not go to God freely to give you Christ? What can you say or object when God promiseth to give you all, and to give you all upon gracious terms? How would you have God to frame and form his Covenant better, or otherwise to encourage your hearts to come unto him and rely upon him? And you be wholly beholding to God, or would you not? Are you contented that God should have all the glory of mercies, or are you not? Is it any disadvantage to the working of your faith, that God will pass by all your sins and unworthiness, and will love you freely, and justify you freely, and save you freely? Is there any more reason to distrust God, when he saith he will do you good for his own sake, then when he saith, I will be merciful to your transgressions, and will freely bless you! Had you rather be under a Covenant of works than of grace? Would it please you better to come by your mercies upon harder terms? You find that you have nothing of worthiness, and yet you are not content to receive all from God's graciousness; why do you pray that God would do you good for his

own sake, and yet you will not believe that that is reason enough to prevail and enjoy!

I will say no more but this;

1. The blessings of the Covenant are worth our enjoying.
2. God doth promise to give them.
3. His own graciousness is the price or reason of it.
4. Upon better or other terms it is impossible to attain them.
5. It is for want of faith that we do not justify this unspeakable loving-kindness of God towards us; O beg for faith to believe a God Covenanting to give all good; and all good, though not for our sake, yet for his own Name sake.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. - Ezek. 36:25.

Having finished those four general Conclusions, I shall now handle the Gifts of the Covenant in particular, mentioned in this verse, and in the subsequent verses: In this verse there is promised unto the people of God the Remission of their sins; concerning which you may observe

1. The Efficient (I will, &c.)
2. The Matter (clean water)
3. The Form or Manner (I will sprinkle upon you)
4. The Power and Efficacy (And ye shall be clean)

5. The Quantity or Extent (from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.)

From these parts, there are these four Points which do offer themselves to our consideration.

1. That forgiveness of sins is promised, and one of the first mercies promised by himself unto all his people in Covenant with him.

2. God's promise of forgiveness of sins doth extend to all the sins of all his people.

3. Though the sins of people have been exceeding great, yet when they become God's people in Covenant, even those sins also are forgiven.

4. The blood of Christ is the cause, and the only cause for which many and great sins are pardoned.

5. That God will make unto the Conscience of his people a particular application of forgiveness by the blood of Christ.

## CHAP. II.

That forgiveness of sins is promised (and it is one of the first promised mercies) by God himself unto all his people in covenant with him. (I will sprinkle, &c.) This is a very comprehensive Assertion, consisting of many Particular Branches: For the opening of it I shall show unto you,

1. What forgiveness of sins is; wherein it doth consist.
2. That God himself doth make promise of it unto his people.
3. That it is promised unto all and every one of his people.
4. That it is one of the first mercies promised by God unto his people.

### SECT. I.

**Quest. 1. What is forgiveness of sins? And wherein doth it consist?**

Sol. It is a gracious act or work of God for Christ's sake, discharging and absolving believing and repenting persons, from the guilt and punishment of their sins, so that God is no longer displeased with them: nor will he ever remember them anymore, nor call them to an account, and condemn them for their sins, but will look on them, and will deal with them as if they had never offended him.

Here we must pause awhile, and consider six things.

First, That forgiveness of sins is a gracious act of God; there be some acts of God which have a special reference unto his power, as the Creation of the world, and the resurrection of the dead. There be other acts of God which have a special reference unto his Justice; as the condemnation and destruction of unbelieving and impenitent sinners. And there are some acts of God which have a special reference unto his mere goodness, and graciousness, there being no Reason or Cause of them on our parts; such an act is his Remission or forgiveness of our sins. Isa. 43:25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my Name sake. Eph. 1:7. The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Psal. 51:1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Rom. 3:25. Being justified freely by his grace.

Not that Repentance is not required in the sinner who is to be pardoned: For the Scripture speaks expressly of a turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that we may receive forgiveness of sins, Acts 26:18. Not that Believing is not required in the sinner to be forgiven; for the Apostle Peter saith also expressly, Whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins, Acts 10:43, but because these are not Reasons or meritorious causes for whose sake God doth forgive any man his sins; they declare the effect who are pardoned, not the cause why they are pardoned.

Secondly, The forgiveness of sins hath foundation in Christ (and in him only) as the meritorious cause thereof. Hebr. 9:22. Without shedding of blood is no remission. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. Ephes. 1:7. In his blood we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. 1 Joh. 2:12. I

write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Names sake.

Forgiveness of sins hath a double respect:

One unto ourselves; so it comes unto us freely from the grace of God as a free gift.

Another unto Christ; so it comes by way of purchase and merit; it doth cost us nothing; but it did cost Jesus Christ his precious blood to obtain the remission of our sins, and to make peace for us.

Now Christ comes in as the cause of forgiveness, upon a twofold account.

One in respect of God, whose justice must be satisfied, that so his mercy (if I may so phrase it) may be set at liberty to flow out unto sinners.

Another in respect of us, that we may come with the more boldness and confidence to obtain forgiving mercy in the name of Christ, it being the very mercy which he by his blood purchased for us at the hands of God.

Thirdly, Forgiveness of sins is limited to repenting and believing persons; these and these only are the subjects of that precious mercy unto whom it doth belong

There are three sorts of creatures and persons in the world:

1. Some of whom you read, that they shall never be forgiven; the Devils shall never have their sins forgiven, but are held and reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day, Jude, ver. 6. And they who sin the sin against the Holy Ghost,



shall never be forgiven. Matth. 12:31. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. Ver. 32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

2. Some to whom forgiveness is conditionally offered, but they do refuse it upon that condition; such are all impenitent and unbelieving persons, who living under the Gospel, are called upon to leave their sins, and are assured if they do so, that they shall find mercy to pardon their sins; but for lying vanities they forsake their mercies; and because they love their sins, therefore they do lose the forgiveness of their sins.

3. Some who penitentially come off from their sins, and believingly come unto Christ; they put off their sins by repentance, and put on Christ by faith; these are they who find mercy, to whom it may be said, Be of good comfort, your sins are forgiven. Prov. 28:13. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy. Acts 13:39. By him all that believe are justified; but as for the impenitent, they treasure up wrath unto themselves, Rom. 2:5. The unbelievers, they are condemned already, John 3:18, and the wrath of God abideth on them, Ver. 36.

Fourthly, Forgiveness of sins consisteth in the discharging or absolving of a person from his sins in respect of guilt and punishment.

It is the discharging, absolving, remitting, freeing, dismissing, sparing of a sinner; the phrases in Scripture (for the forgiving of sins) are very significant, both in the Old Testament, and in the New. In

the Old Testament there are words used for the forgiveness of sins, which import what I affirm.

1. Salach, as Exod. 34:9. Pardon our iniquities and our sins; the word there is Salach, which signifies parcere, remittere, ignoscere, condonare, propitium esse.

2. Kasah, which signifies to hide, to spare, to forgive; as Psal. 32:1. Blessed is he whose transgressions is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

3. Habar, to pass by an offense; as Micah 7:18. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquities, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage?

4. Hekebir, which signifies to cause to pass. 2 Sam. 12:13. The Lord hath put away thy sin; (hath caused it to pass) The same word is used in Zach. 3:4. I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.

5. Machah, which signifies to wipe or blot out of remembrance the sins of men. Psal. 51:9. Blot out all mine iniquities.

6. Hesir, which signifies to remove. Isa. 27:9. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away sin; (to remove sin.)

7. Lochashab, not to impute; as Psal. 32:2. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.

In the New Testament there are also several words used for the forgiving of sins, which import discharge or absolution.

First, ἀφίημι, which signifies as much as to dismiss or send away, to let alone, because when God forgives a sinner, he lets his sin alone, and meddles no more with it; but commonly this word is used for the absolving of those who are accused as guilty; and in Scripture it is used for loosing out of bonds for debts.

2. Χαρίζομαι, Colos. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses, which word denotes both the fountain of forgiveness, namely, the grace of God, and the acceptableness of it to the party forgiven, it being graciously welcome as glad tidings unto him.

3. Μὴ λογίζομαι, Rom. 4:8. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. 2 Cor. 5:19. Not imputing their trespasses unto them, which imports that the Lord (when he forgives sins) will not put them upon the score or account, by all which it appears that forgiveness of sins is an absolving or discharging of the sinner from his sins.

Now there are three things considerable in our sins; there is

1. Macula, the stain or pollution of it; for sin doth pollute and defile the soul, therefore it is frequently styled a pollution, a defilement, uncleanness, filthiness, a plague, a leprosy, &c.

2. Reatus, the guilt by it; for as soon as any man doth sin, there is a guilt upon him, by which he is bound over to the wrath and curse of God; and this guilt or obligation is inseparable from sin; the sin doth deserve no less than everlasting condemnation.

3. Pana, the punishment of it, which consists in the inflicting of all the curses that sin doth deserve, and which God hath threatened for transgressing his holy and righteous will.

**Quest. The question is, unto which of these forgiveness of sins doth extend? Of from which of these the sinner is discharged upon forgiveness?**

Sol. I answer:

1. Forgiveness of sins doth not respect the stain or pollution of sin, it doth not remove that; it is an idle opinion of the Papists and others, that remission of sins consists in the extinction of sins, or utter abolition of them; for

First, This is to confound Justification with Sanctification; it being proper to Sanctification to remove and take away the stain and pollution of sin in the soul; that is the Fullers soap and refining fire.

Secondly, The utter deletion of sin is not granted in this life; (for during this life, sin remaineth in the best of men. Rom. 7:17,20, and 1 John 1:8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;) but in this life we have the remission of our sins; Ergo.

Thirdly, Remission of sin maketh (formally) no change in the person forgiven; for it is a work without him; indeed there is a relative change upon forgiveness; (the person forgiven is in a state of life, and not of death) but there is no inherent change of qualities in the person by it; (no more than there is in a Malefactor pardoned, or a Debtor forgiven; both of them may be diseased notwithstanding their pardon) but this could not be, if remission of sin consisted in the extinction or deletion of the stain of sin. It is true, that when God forgives the sin, he doth likewise change the heart of the sinner; nevertheless the forgiving of sin is one thing, and the giving of a new heart is another thing, &c.

Fourthly, If remission of sin consist in the outward deletion of sin, Then the troubled conscience could never come to rest and peace in the assurance of pardon of sin; why? Because in this life the person shall never find in himself such an utter deletion of sin, and consequently no remission of sins; and if no remission of sin, then no rest, nor peace; because from the knowledge and assurance of that doth the rest and peace of conscience come and flow.

2. Forgiveness of sins hath a peculiar respect to the guilt of sin, and removal of that; when the Lord forgives a man, he doth discharge him of that obligation by which he was bound over to wrath and condemnation. Rom. 8:1. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Ver. 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Ver. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. Beloved, the Lord is a holy and just God, and he reveals his wrath from heaven against all unrighteousness, and there is a curse threatened to every transgression of the Law; and when any man sinneth, he is obnoxious unto the curse, and God may inflict the same upon him; but when God forgives sins, he therein doth interpose (as it were) between the sin and the curse, and between the obligation and the condemnation, q.d. by reason of your sinning you are now fallen into my hands of justice, and for your sinning I may according to my righteous Law condemn and curse you forever; (for by your sinning you are worthy of death, Rom. 1:32) but such is my mercy to you in Christ, that for his sake I will spare you; and that curse and condemnation which you have deserved, it shall never light upon you; I will deliver and free your souls from going down into the pit.

**Object. But may some say, Is not guilt inseparable from sin? Can sin be without guilt? And can guilt be without the desert of wrath and condemnation?**

Sol. I answer, there is a twofold guilt; there is reatus simplex, and reatus efficax; absolute guilt hath in it a worthiness or desert of condemnation, and this can never be separated from sin; (for though sin be pardoned, and condemnation removed from the sinner, yet his sin is worthy of condemnation) but when God pardons sin, he doth it not by making the sin not to be worthy of condemnation; but this is it which God doth, he doth remove that condemnation that it shall never effectually or actually fall upon the sinner, although he for his sinning be worthy thereof; e.g. When a thief or murderer is pardoned amongst us, this pardon doth not make the theft or murder no sin, or in themselves not worthy of death by the Law; but it relieves the pardoned persons thus far, that the death deserved by these sins is taken off, and shall never be inflicted on the offenders.

3. Forgiveness of sin takes off all punishments properly so called; for sin, there belongs unto us temporal punishment, and eternal punishment; you do not consider what a depth of merit there is in sin, what plagues and curses it can pull down in this life, and what an hell hereafter; but when God forgives sins, you are then released, and forever acquitted from any after-reckonings with the justice of God; Divine justice hath no more to say or do against you; for remissa culpa, remittitur poena; if the fault be forgiven then also is the punishment forgiven; nay, let me speak with an humble reverence, God cannot in his justice punish when he hath pardoned. Why will you say?

First, He forgives upon a satisfaction made to his justice already by Christ, so that he cannot in justice punish us again for satisfaction.

Secondly, When he forgives, he releases the guilt and the fault, and the sin in now (by this act of his merciful grace) as if it had never been committed; so that the proper cause and reason of punishing

being utterly removed, there can no punishment issue out from Divine justice against you.

**Object. But will some say, are not justified and pardoned persons many times punished in this life? Was not David punished for his sin? Were not the Corinthians punished for their unworthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?**

Sol. I answer, that word Punishment may be taken, either

1. Largely, for any affliction or chastisement which doth befall us from God as a Father; in this sense I grant punishment incident to justified or pardoned persons; for Hebr. 12:6. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. And, Ver. 7. If you endure chastisement, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?

2. Strictly, for those miserable evils issuing out from the Court of justice, and falling upon us from God as a wrathful Judge, and as yet unsatisfied and unreconciled; these kinds of punishing are wholly and utterly removed from justified or pardoned persons by the blood of Christ, and God's gracious forgiveness.

5. A fifth thing considered in the description of forgiveness of sins, is this, that forgiveness of sins is (if I may so express it) God's act of oblivion; and as it were, an eternal cancelling of all our sinful bonds and debts, so that there is now a full end of all controversies between God and us.

Object. We many times are possessed with fears, like Josephs Brethren, that notwithstanding the peace and assurance which he gave them of passing by their injurious dealing with him, yet at length they feared that he would remember them, and be avenged of

them; such thoughts have we of God also; sometimes we do perceive his great love and rich mercy towards us in the forgiveness of our sins; yet at other times we have fears lest God will call us unto account for all our sinful offenses, and question us, and judge us, as if the granting of pardoning mercy might be revoked and called back by the Writ of Error, and the old suit be prosecuted again by Divine justice, which seemeth to be taken off and silenced by Divine mercy.

Sol. But Beloved, there is no such matter, and no such dealing of God with us; the sinner may provocare, he may appeal from the Court of justice, unto the Throne of God's mercy; and of this he may rest assured, that the definitive sentence in the Court of mercy about the forgiveness of sins, is like the Laws of the Medes and Persians, which stood fast forever, and remains unchangeable: And as Isaac spake of his blessing of Jacob, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed; that may we affirm of God's forgiving any sinner, he hath forgiven him, and he shall forever continue forgiven; and the Scriptures give full testimony unto this which I now deliver unto you. Jer. 50:20. The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be sound; for I will pardon them whom I reserve. Ezek. 18:22. All his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; q.d. I will never speak of them anymore. Jer. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

And besides these places, there are three other which (though metaphorically, yet) do notably express the eternal passing over sin in God's forgiveness of it, viz. Isa. 43:25. I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake. Here our sins are compared to debts written in a book; and God's forgiving of them is compared to the blotting of them out of the book; if a debt-book be crossed, this would much satisfy us; (for that supposeth a discharge) but if the



debt be blotted out, now it can never be read against us anymore, it is utterly defaced, and nothing of a debt can be made to appear. Micah 7:19. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea: If a man be cast upon the Sea, or into the Sea, yet he may recover again; but if he be cast into the depths of the Sea, into the very profundum of it, he is drowned and gone; the meaning of the place is, that when God forgives the sins of his people, they shall never rise up and appear before him again; you have a phrase (for the effect of this) concerning Babylon, Rev. 18:21. A mighty Angel took up a stone, and cast it into the Sea, saying, thus with violence shall that great City Babylon be thrown down, and shall never be found no more at all. And in this respect often God is said to cast our sins into the depths of the Sea; his meaning is, they shall be like men that lie drowned and buried in the bottom of the Sea; and Ephes. 2:16. Having slain the enmity thereby; the enmity here (principally meant) is sin, but this by the blood of Christ is slain: Mark, he doth not say it is imprisoned, nor it is wounded, but it is slain, killed out, right; thus when God in the blood of Christ forgives our sins, they are (as it were) slain, they die, and cease to be, and can never raise a quarrel or variance more between God and us.

6. What shall I say more, when God forgives any man his sins, all displeasure ceaseth; the forgiven party is now looked upon, and received with that love and favor, as if he had never offended God, and as if God had never been offended by him.

**Object. You will say this is incredible?**

Sol. It is a very truth, and worthy to be believed and received with all thankful acceptation. Hosea 14:4. I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him; in ver. 2. Israel prays for the forgiveness of sin; (take away iniquity, and receive us graciously) this

petition God heard and granted; and now observe in what a posture God appears toward them, not of displeasure or anger, (mine anger is turned away from him) but of kindness and favor, and tender love; (I will love him freely) Isa. 54:8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. Ver. 9. For this is as the water of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. Luk 15:21. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Ver. 22. But the Father said unto his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. Ver. 23. And bring hither the fatted Calf, and kill, and let us eat, and be merry. Here the sins of the Prodigal are pardoned, and his father receives him with such expressions of love and bounty, and familiarity, as if he had never sinned against him: Hence it is that you read of such sweet, kind, tender, loving, comforting expressions of God towards those whose sins he hath pardoned. Jer. 31:16. Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears. Ver. 20. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? Matth. 9:2. Son, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

Thus you see what forgiveness of sins is which God promiseth unto his people in Covenant; and before I proceed any further, I judge it convenient to remove some scruples which may arise upon this description of the forgiveness of sins now delivered unto you.

Four Queries.

1. If our sins be thus removed, covered, blotted out, and made to pass away in forgiveness of them, whether then that assertion be

not true, God sees not sin in the justified?

2. If God upon the forgiveness of sins be not longer displeased, and will proceed against them no more; how is it that we read of his anger and displeasure with his people, and sharp correcting of them?

3. If sins be thus blotted out, and the parties forgiven be received into special love and favor with God, whether then have pardoned persons any reason to mourn for their sins, and repent of them?

4. Whether persons justified may charge sin on themselves?

**Quest. 1. Whether the removing and covering, and blotting out of sins in forgiveness, doth not strongly hold out that assertion, that God sees no sin at all in persons justified?**

Sol. For answer unto this Query, I shall lay down these conclusions, viz.

First, That sin doth remain even in justified and forgiven persons; and four things do infallibly demonstrate it so to be.

1. By Scripture. 1 Joh. 1:8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 Kings 8:46. There is no man that sinneth not. Eccles. 7:20. There is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not. Prov. 20:19. Who can say I have made my heart pure, I am clean from sin? James 3:2. In many things we offend all.

2. By the spiritual conflict 'twixt grace and sin in justified persons. Rom. 7:23. I see another Law in my members, warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin

which is in my members. Ver. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Gal. 5:17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. There is three-fold state of man: 1. Corrupted, wherein is nothing but sin; and yet all is quiet. 2. Glorified, wherein is nothing but holiness, as in heaven. 3. Regenerate, where there is flesh and spirit, sin and grace.

3. By the duties incumbent on justified persons, as;

1. Prayer to be kept from sin. Psal. 19:13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me. Psal. 119:113. Order my steps in thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me; and prayer for the pardon of sins committed. Psal. 25:11. For thy Name sake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great, &c. Ver. 18. Forgive all my sins.

2. Further mortifying of sin. Colos. 3:4. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear in glory; but in the meantime, Ver. 5. Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, &c. 2 Cor. 7:1. Having therefore these promises, Dearly Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

4. By the examples of the best men, sinning Noah, Lot, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Jehoshaphat, Peter, and all these when they were in a justified condition.

5. Experience; What one child of God hath there been, or is there in the world, who doth not find much sin dwelling in him, although he be delivered from the condemnation of sin! Rom. 8:11, and from the

dominion of sin. Rom. 6:14. Yet he is not perfectly in this life delivered from the inhabitation of sin, and motions, and conflicts, and actions of sin. If any of us (who indeed are in Christ, and justified by him) have ever surveyed the clearest and fairest day of our life, (when our hearts have been most enlarged, and our feet most upheld) we shall with all our good find a great mixture of evil, so that we daily see as much cause to mourn for our own filthiness, as to bless God for his goodness.

2. As sin doth still remain in persons justified, so God doth see that remaining sin in them; he that made the eye, shall not he see? All things are naked and open before him; God's seeing is diversely taken in Scripture.

First, Sometimes for his approving: Gen. 1:31. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good. Jonah. 3:10. And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way: He saw this with an eye of approbation. Now in this sense God doth not see sin in any man, neither good nor bad, neither justified nor unjustified; for he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, Hab. 1:13, and cannot look upon iniquity (i.e.) with approbation or liking.

Secondly, For his wrathful observing and intention to condemn and destroy: Jer. 7:11. Is this house which is called by my Name, become a Den of Robbers in your eyes! Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord, ver. 12. But go now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my Name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. Hos. 6:10. I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel, there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled, &c. Gen. 6. God saw the wickedness of man that it was great upon the earth. If you understand God's seeing of sin for such an apprehension of sin, as for it in wrath to judge and condemn, and

eternally to destroy the sinner, in this sense God doth not see sin in any that he pardons or justifies.

Thirdly, Sometimes for his knowing and taking notice of a thing, and that with dislike; although not so far as finally to condemn: Now in this sense God doth see the sins of justified persons: The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good, Prov. 15:3. Job. 10:14. If I sin, thou markest me. Psal. 90:8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy Countenance. Psal. 51:4. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. 2 Sam. 12:9. Why hast thou (said Nathan to David) despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do this evil in his sight? This was that which did so aggravate David's sin, and so much break David's heart.

**Object. But these are places for Believers in the Old Testament, whereas they who deny God's seeing of sin, mean it of Believers under the New Testament.**

Sol. The Believers under the Old Testament were justified by Christ; their sins were laid upon Christ, and taken away by Christ as well as believers under the New Testament.

2. Why do they bring most of their proofs for this Opinion out of the Old Testament? As, God seeth no iniquity in Jacob; And, thou art all fair my love; and they shall be as white as snow; and blotted out, &c.

3. But see for the New Testament, Luke 15:21, where you have the confession of a penitent child; I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, or in thy sight. Rev. 2:4. I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Thirdly, As God sees the sins in justified persons, so likewise is he offended with those sins: But of this I shall speak more fully in answer to the next Question.

Fourthly, God's covering or hiding of sin in Justification, is not Exclusive of, or inconsistent with God's seeing of sin in his people, being rightly understood; for there is a twofold covering of sin.

1. From condemnation; Thus when God forgives sins, he covers sins so that they shall never appear and rise up to condemn the person.

2. From apprehension and dislike: Thus though the person be forgiven and justified, yet if he fall into sin, God sees it and dislikes it, yea hates it, though for Christ's sake he doth forgive the Person.

**Object. But how can this be, that God should see any sin in believers, who have the Righteousness of Jesus Christ which is perfect and without all sin!**

Sol. I answer,

First, If the Righteousness of Christ were inherently and subjectively in us, as it is in Christ; then indeed no sin were to be seen in us: But that Righteousness is ours only Relatively and not formally, it is imputed only to us, and notwithstanding that imputation there is sin in us.

Secondly, It is one thing to be considered in ourselves, and another as clothed with Christ's Righteousness: In the former respect our sins appear, and in the latter respect they are covered.

**Quest. 2. How can it be affirmed that by forgiveness of sins, any person is discharged and freed, so that God remains no more offended, and displeased, and will not proceed against him, seeing that we read of his displeasure, and anger, and proceedings against his people for sinning against him?**

Sol. For answer unto this, I shall briefly show you three things.

1. That God is displeased with the sins of his own people.
2. That his anger for their sinning's hath broken out very sharply upon them.
3. Notwithstanding all this, they have a singular discharge from special wrath, and God's judicial proceeding against them, which is all that is required in forgiveness of their sins.

First, God is displeased with the sins of his own people: See this in David, 2 Sam. 11:27. But, the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. In Solomon, 1 King 11:9. The Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice. Ver. 10. And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods, but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. In Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. 19:2. Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord.

Secondly, His anger hath broken out very sharply upon them because of their sinning's. Deut. 3:25. O Lord God, (said Moses) I pray thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, &c. Ver. 26. But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not



hear me, &c. 2 Sam. 12:9. Wherefore hast thou despised the Covenant of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, &c. Ver. 10. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house. Ver. 11. I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, &c. 1 Sam. 2:22. For Eli's remissness towards his wicked children, how heavy was the hand of God upon him, in his sons and family! 1 Pet 4:17. Judgment must begin at the house of God. 1 Cor. 11:30. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. Nay his anger hath gone higher than external losses; it hath come upon them also in a Spiritual way (which is of all other the most heavy) and that both Privatively in taking away the sense of his favor, and joy of his spirit; and Positively in breaking of his bones, as you read in David, Psal. 51.

Thirdly, But notwithstanding all this, God's judicial wrath or displeasure is removed, All hostile anger ceaseth upon Remission of sins, no displeasure of God (as hating) remains, and no fruit of displeasure which is a part of the curse, either doth or shall befall them; Christ hath removed that; although a Pathetical anger be on them; yet no Judicial anger is towards them: Though corrections befall them, yet destruction shall not: though sharp affliction, yet no malediction; and under all their corrections (which still God sanctifies unto them for their good, Isa. 27:9, by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin: And which is a testimony of his Fatherly love) they still remain sons of mercy, and heirs of glory. Psal. 89:31. If his children break my Statutes, and keep not my Commands; Ver. 32, then I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Ver. 33. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

**Quest. 3. If God doth graciously forgive our sins, whether now there be any reason for us to repent of them?**

Sol. This is I confess an excellent Query; how our duty to repent doth consist with God's free grace in forgiving; concerning which, give me favor to say a few things.

First, Nothing that we do (no mourning for sin, no repenting for sin) doth, or can untie the bond of sin, release, and acquit, and discharge, or absolve from guilt: Although God doth not discharge us from repenting, yet our repenting doth not discharge us from our guilt and condemnation; that is the work of God's grace in Christ, if any press repentance upon that ground, as if forgiveness of sin were the natural effect of repentance, that had a merit to deliver us from condemnation, he errs exceedingly, because

1. Forgiveness of sins is an act only of God, repealing the sentence of condemnation against us; it is only the Creditors act to discharge the debt.
2. There is not any sufficient causality in our work of repentance, for such an effect as forgiveness of sin, For
  1. Our repentance is imperfect, and stands in need of the blood of Christ. *Bonum meum neque pure bonum est, neque meum est.*
  2. Suppose it were perfect, yet that could not take away the guilt of sin committed, because sin is an infinite offense and dishonor to God; and our repentance can never bear that proportion in satisfying, which sin hath in offending: It must be clearly acknowledged, that to set up repentance as a cause meriting

forgiveness of sins, cannot consist with God's free forgiveness of them.

Secondly, Although forgiveness of sin be not the effect of man's repentance, (for then we should forgive ourselves.) Yet repentance is required to the obtaining of forgiveness: Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, &c. and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Ezek. 18:21. If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, &c. Ver. 22, all his transgressions which he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him. Luke 24:47. That repentance and remission of sins should be purchased in his Name. Acts 3:19. Repent ye and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.

Thirdly, Although repentance be not a cause of forgiveness, yet it is the means which God hath ordained for us to enjoy the forgiveness of sin, of the which his grace only is the efficient cause, and the blood of Christ only is the meritorious cause: Though God doth freely forgive, yet he enjoins repentance on us; for besides the many reasons on our part, there is reason for this, in respect of God's own grace, which did it express itself in a free forgiveness of wicked and impenitent persons, it would be exceedingly undervalued and despised as an unjust act, and besides that, it would be improved to all licentiousness and profaneness?

Fourthly, Whether justified persons may charge themselves with sin, seeing God hath graciously discharged them of sin?

Sol. I will speak something unto this Case also, wherein I shall show unto you two things.

First, How far the children of God have charged sin upon themselves: we read in Scripture that they have charged themselves

1. With the matter of sin; that they have been guilty of Original sin: Psal. 51:5. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me. Rom. 7:20. Sin that dwelleth in me. And with Actual sin; as David, I have sinned: 2 Sam. 12:13. I have sinned against thee, said Job, Chap. 7:20, and so David, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c.

2. With the manner of sinning, as to the Circumstances of it, against mercies, warnings, judgments on others, Dan. 9. Neh. 9.

3. With the merit of sin; that if the Lord should deal with them according to their sins, there were no abiding: If thou Lord shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand! Psal. 130:3, Psal. 143:2. Enter not into judgment, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. Job. 9:2. How should a man be just with God? Ver. 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. Dan. 9:8. O Lord, to us belongs confusion of face.

4. So far forth as to acknowledge no hope nor help of discharge, but in Jesus Christ, and in God's free grace. O save me for thy mercies sake.

5. So far forth as to quicken all penitential works; they have remembered their sins: Lam. 3:20. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me: They have considered their sins: Psal. 119:59. I considered my ways, and turned my feet to thy testimonies. Mark 14:72. Peter thought on the words of Christ, and went out and wept bitterly. They have mourned for their sins: Zach. 12:10. They shall look upon him, &c. and

shall mourn: we read of David's tears, and Peters tears, and Mary Magdalens tears, &c. They have reformed their sins: Hose. 14:8. What have I anymore to do with Idols! They have been earnest with God for the pardon and for the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins: Psal. 51:1, &c. and Dan. 9. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive! And Hos. 14:2. Take away my iniquity.

Secondly, How far forth they may not charge sin upon themselves: I answer briefly, they may not charge sin on themselves,

First, As to conclude that God will damn them for their sins. For there is no condemnation to them, &c. Rom. 8:1. And he that believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16. Though they must acknowledge that by reason of sin they are worthy of condemnation, yet they are to believe that Christ hath died for them, and they shall not be condemned.

Secondly, As to undertake any self-satisfaction to God for their sins; you read of their confessions and tears, and prayers, but not of their satisfaction; All our righteousness's are as filthy rags. Isa. 64:6. Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousands of Rivers of Oil? &c. Mich. 6:6,7. If I justify myself, mine own mouth will condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse, Job 9:20.

Thirdly, As to disannul their relation to God of Sonship, &c. Isa. 64:8. But now O Lord thou art our Father! Ver. 9. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever: behold, see we beseech thee, we are all thy people!

Having thus opened and cleared the nature of the forgiveness of sins, I proceed to the other part of the description of it.

## SECT. II.

The second thing in the Proposition of forgiveness of sins is this, viz. That God himself undertakes this work, and he undertakes it by promise.

First, God undertakes to forgive sins. Luk. 5:21. Who can forgive sins but God alone? Isa. 43:25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake. Exo. 34:6. The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Ver. 7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sin. Dan. 9:9. To thee, O Lord God, belongeth mercy, and forgiveness.

Forgiveness of sin is indeed one of his Royal Prerogatives; therefore you find his people making their addresses unto him for forgiveness of their sins: Exod. 32:32. Oh this people have sinned a great sin; yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin, &c. Psal. 25:18. Forgive all my sins. Dan. 9:19. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive. Hose. 14:2. Take away all iniquity. Act. 8:22. Pray God if perhaps the thoughts of thine heart may be forgiven thee. There is a forgiveness

1. By way of charity, wherein we forgive the offense and trespass against us: If thy brother repent, forgive him, Luke 17:3. And forgive one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Eph. 4:32.

2. By way of Ministry; thus the Apostles, as Christ delivers it in Joh. 20:23. Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted.

3. By way of immediate and absolute authority; thus it belongs to God, and to him alone; God in Scripture is styled a Judge: Shall not

the Judge of all the earth do right? Gen. 18:25. And to the Supreme Judge it belongs to condemn or to acquit. A Creditor; there was a certain Creditor which had two debtors, Luk. 7:41, who can forgive the debt but the Creditor? A Lawgiver: There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy, Jam. 4:12, who can forgive the transgressions of the Law but the Lawgiver? Now God himself undertakes to forgive sins, and none but he must do so.

First, Because all sins are offenses against him, and deviations from his righteous will, and injuries to his glory; even those sins which are wrongs unto men, are injuries also unto God; for his Will is slighted, and his Law is violated in them; therefore the remission of them is proper to him.

Secondly, Because unto whom the power of death and condemnation authoritatively belongs, unto him also the power of life and absolution doth belong; but the power of condemnation belongs only to God. Ergo. These are acts seated in the same power.

Thirdly, Because the forgiveness of sin takes off the infinite desert of sin, reaching even unto eternity of punishment (eternal punishment is deserved by sin) and who can relieve us from that but God alone?

Fourthly, Because our consciences might have a resting place; which they could never have, if God himself did not forgive sins. What if all the men in the world did forgive you, if God did not clear you, but still held you guilty! What though all the lower Courts absolve a Malefactor, as long as the Supreme Court condemns him! What though the Malefactor forgive himself, if the Judge do not forgive him? But here lies the comfort, that God himself who is the Supreme Judge, who hath the Sovereign Power to save or to destroy, to remit or bind, to acquit or to condemn, whose sentence none can reverse; if

he will pardon our offenses and sins against him; now there is peace with him, and peace in our own Consciences.

Secondly, As forgiveness of sins solely appertains to God, so God undertakes the same by way of promise, which shows that he is willing to forgive sins, and that he engageth himself to forgive sins, and that he will certainly forgive sins. Jer. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more. Pro. 28:13. Whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy. 2 Chro. 7:14. If my people shall turn from their wicked ways, then will I forgive their sins. Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon. 1 Joh. 1:9. If we confess our sins; he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

**Quest. Now if any should demand why God contents not himself with a Declaration only that he is a God who forgives sin; but also he makes a promise that he will forgive sins.**

Sol. I suppose these Reasons may be given of it.

First. Because this is a greater relief to the troubled conscience: A promise of forgiveness is a more hopeful foundation to work upon, than a mere Declaration that God hath power to forgive, and it serves to answer our fears and doubts more fully. You would not imagine how powerful and dreadful the guilt of sin is, and how strongly working when a conscience is awakened, and wounded with the sense of it! How great is the apprehension of God's wrath! How amazing is the curse threatened! How hard is it to look toward the Mercy seat through all the threatening's, and through all the terrors! How difficult is it to settle it with any apprehensions of mercy! And therefore the Lord is pleased, not only to declare that he is a God



forgiving sins, but also he makes promise that he will forgive sins for Christ's sake; this is apt to preserve troubled sinners from despair, and to breed some hopes in them, that perhaps they may find mercy; for who can tell but that a merciful God, and a God who promiseth mercy to poor sinners, may at length show mercy to them, and forgive their sins!

Secondly, Because this is a stronger Obligation and Argument to prevail with sinners to repent of their sins, and to turn unto the Lord. Beloved, I beseech you mark what I say:

1. The greater inevidence and improbability there is of forgiveness of sins, the more indisposition and averseness there is unto repentance: If a person apprehends mercy as impossible, he then looks upon repentance as unuseful; either he grows despairing, or desperate; For saith he, to what end should I repent, and come into God who (I am sure) will show me no mercy?

2. Again, the greater hopes that a sensible sinner hath of mercy, the more easily and kindly is his heart wrought upon to Repent, to come off from his sins to God. Hos. 14:2. When taking away of sin is hinted, then ver. 3. Ashur shall not save us, neither will we say to the works of our hands Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy; so Jer. 3:12. Return thou backsliding Israel, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord. Ver. 22. Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings; behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Mark, how this insinuation of mercy bowed in their hearts. Psal. 103:4. There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared.

Now when a sinner sees forgiveness of sins in a promise, this appears with more evidence of hope for him; I may yet have mercy, so great is God's goodness, and why should I stand out any longer? And why

should I for lying vanities forsake my own mercies? I will home to my Fathers house, for there is bread enough, and to spare, &c.

Thirdly, Because this is the surest ground for faith; you know this is the great scruple, But may I find mercy? And what ground have I to expect mercy? Suppose I do repent, what assurance have I that God will forgive my sins? Why, having God's promise for the forgiveness of your sins, in this case you may be confident that if you come to him, and rely upon him, he will unquestionably be as good as his word, he will show mercy to you. Jer. 31:18. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself. Ver. 20. I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Ezek. 18:21. If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, &c. he shall surely live, and not die. Ver. 22. All his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him.

### SECT. III.

3. I now come to the third part of the Proposition of forgiveness of sins; viz. That God promiseth the same unto all his people, all his people in Covenant. Psal. 85:2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people. Isa. 33:34. The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity. Micah 7:18. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?

Of the people of God some are sooner in Covenant, and some are later in Covenant; for some are called at one hour, and some at another hour; as Paul spake of Andronicus and Junia, Rom. 16:7, who were in Christ before me; that may we say of people, some are in Covenant before others; but as soon as any of them are brought into

Covenant, they are pardoned immediately, their sins are forgiven unto them.

Again, of the people of God some have been greater sinners, and some have been lesser sinners; but as soon as they have been made the people of God's Covenant, their sins have been forgiven; Mary Magdalene had her sins forgiven, and Paul had his sins forgiven, &c.

Again, of the people of God some are weaker, and some are stronger, and both of them have their sins forgiven. Acts 10:43. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 1 Joh. 2:12. I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Names sake.

Once more, of the people of God, some have clear and fuller apprehensions of pardoning mercy, others have more dark and doubtful disputes about it; the strong believer who hath assurance, and the weak believer who is troubled with doubts, both of them are forgiven; all of them may say with Paul, Rom. 8:33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Ver. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. And there are four Arguments which demonstrate this truth unto us.

First, All who are in Christ, have their sins forgiven them; but all the people who are in Covenant with God are in Christ; (my reason for that is this, because only in and by Christ God becomes our God, there our relation riseth) Ergo. For the first Proposition, that is a clear truth; viz. That all who are in Christ have their sins forgiven them; for Christ himself saith, This is my blood which is shed for many, for remission of sins, Matth. 26:28, and Matth. 1:21. He shall save his people from their sins; and the Apostle saith, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1. And he hath delivered us from wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1:10. And that we joy

in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement, Rom. 5:11.

Now mark, if Christ saves his people from their sins, and if he shed his blood for the remission of their sins; if by Christ they are freed from condemnation, and from wrath, and God is reconciled unto them, and through him they have good reason to joy in God, then unquestionably all who are in Christ have their sins forgiven them; (for else how could they joy in God? &c.) this is one Argument to demonstrate that God forgives all his people in Covenant

Secondly, All penitent and believing persons have the forgiveness of sins; but all the people whom God brings into Covenant with himself, are penitent and believing persons: Ergo. The first of these Propositions is so clear and open in many places of Scripture, that it is needless to quote any place; you may at leisure peruse all those promises of forgiveness unto repenting and believing persons mentioned before. And the second Proposition is as clear; for repentance and faith are Covenant gifts, and given unto such whom God owns for his people, and to none but such; for God owns none for his people (in a Covenant way) who are impenitent and unbelieving.

Thirdly, There are no enemies in the Covenant of Grace; none who hate God, and none whom God hates; none who set themselves against him, and none against whom he sets himself; but the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of life, and of love, and of peace, Deut. 30:6, Hos. 14:4, Cant. 2:3, Isa. 62:4, 2 Cor. 6:18, Rom. 5:1, Ezek. 16:61. All in this Covenant love God, and God loves them; they delight in God, and God delights in them; they walk with God, and God is said to dwell in them, and to walk in them, they have peace with God, and God is at peace with them; he is their Father, and they

are his sons and daughters; if this be so, (and so it is, if we do believe the Scriptures which say so expressly) then assuredly all who are in Covenant, have their sins pardoned; for such mutual love, and such mutual delight, and such mutual dwelling, and such mutual peace, and such mutual relation, there cannot possibly be, unless sins were forgiven, and all enmity slain.

Fourthly, There is no damnation that ever was yet to be found in the Covenant of Grace; salvation you find there, but damnation was never read of there: He that believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:15,16, there is damnation for refusing, not for entering; sinners, who before they were in Covenant, were obnoxious to damnation for their sins; are now delivered from it, by coming into the Covenant; never was, or shall any person be damned who is in Covenant, and hath God for his God; for they are blessed who have the Lord to be their God: But if their sins were not forgiven, they were not blessed; for blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, Rom 4:7. Neither should they be saved, but must perish forever, and die in their sins.

And thus you see this part of the Proposition of forgiveness of sins cleared also; viz. That it is promised to all the people of God in Covenant.

#### SECT. IV.

4. Now follows the fourth and the last part of the Proposition, namely, That forgiveness of sins is one of the mercies first promised by God unto his people; as here in this place, it hath the heart-guard of the Covenant gifts, it takes the right hand, and the first place of the spiritual mercies promised. In this Scripture there is mention of

three spiritual gifts, which are like David's three Worthies; but this of Justification (this of remission of sins) is the first of them. Beloved, you must distinguish between the Covenant itself, and the gifts thereof; the Covenant itself lies in this; I will be your God, and you shall be my people; this closure, and this relation makes the Covenant; and when we are thus closed with God in Covenant, then come out the gifts of the Covenant which God deals and gives forth unto his people, and amongst these, first we have a promise mentioned to forgive sins.

Some may think the reason of this priority to be this, because Justification goes before Sanctification. I confess that these are distinct works; but yet I doubt whether there be a priority of time between them, so that a person is first justified, and after that he is sanctified: For (under favor) it cannot well be made out that there falls any space or pause of time between those; and my reason is this, because

1. When a man is once in Christ, Christ is at the same time made of God unto him Sanctification as well as righteousness; therefore the same Apostle saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17.
2. It cannot well be admitted that there should be a true union with Christ consisting with a partial communion in benefits absolutely necessary to constitute a Christian; and such a one is Sanctification.
3. There is such an immediate influence of life and grace upon believing, as raiseth a consimilitude and conformity.

But to omit all needless disputes, I humbly conceive that there may be three reasons why forgiveness of sins is one of the first mercies

mentioned in the promise.

First, Because it is one of the mercies which doth most of all set forth and illustrate the glory of God; the greatest appearing of God in his glory in his love, and in his grace, and in his mercy to forgive sins. Exod. 34:6. The Lord proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, Ver. 7. Forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sins. In this Proclamation, the Lord opens and shows his glory unto Moses, and one of the first sights of that is this, that he is the Lord God merciful and gracious, and that appears by this, that he forgives iniquity, transgressions and sins; and indeed this is the glory of his Throne, that it is a Throne of grace, where sinners may find mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, Hebr. 4:16. Hence is it that his grace and mercy is so often called his glory. Ephes. 3:6 According to the riches of his glory; (i.e.) of his grace and mercy; see Rom 9:23. That he might make known the riches of his glory on the Vessels of mercy; see 2 Cor. 3:18. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord; (i.e.) the glory of his mercy, and love in Christ Jesus; therefore the Prophet saith, Micah 7:18. Who is a (strong) God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage! As if God's forgiving of sins were one of the greatest demonstrations of his Deity. Though his Godhead doth appear in other of his Attributes, and in other of his Works, (Rom. 1:20) yet it doth most clearly, and most comfortably appear in this merciful Attribute, and work of forgiveness of sins; his wisdom and his justice, and his power have put forth themselves (as it were) in a way of subserviency to the glory of his mercy; he found out by his wisdom a way to satisfy his justice by Christ, that so he might bring glory to his mercy in the forgiveness of our sins.

Secondly, Because it is a mercy transcendently excellent, a mercy which excels most of the mercies which we do receive; there are,

1. The mercies of men; they do sometimes pardon offenses committed against them; but God's forgiving mercies far exceed this; e.g.

First. When man hath forgiven you, yet God may call you to an account, and question, and condemn you.

Secondly, Mans forgiveness may acquit you from some temporal punishment due unto you by some human Laws by you transgressed; but God's forgiveness reacheth to the discharge of you not only from temporal but also from eternal punishment.

Thirdly, The mercy of man in forgiveness looks only at outward offenses, but it meddles not with inward sinning's (with those of the heart) but God's forgiving extends to internal, invisible obliquities, as well as external and invisible transgressions.

Fourthly, When men forgive us, this perhaps may be some lesser offenses, but no great and capital; or if these, then the benefit of this forgiveness is lost and forfeited by the next offense, as in the case of Shimei; but when God forgives a sinner, he forgives all sorts of sinning's, and will never remember those sins again anymore.

2. The mercies of God, whereof some are corporal, and some are spiritual; now forgiveness of sins doth excel.

First, All the corporal mercies or blessings which possibly can be enjoyed in this world; for

1. One may enjoy all corporal blessings in greater abundance, and this may be all his portion; (they have their portion in this life, said David, Psal. 17:14) but forgiveness of sins is a mercy



which never goes alone, but hath the concomitancy of all choice blessings; it is a better portion, and yet not all.

2. The outward blessings respect only the condition of the body, the preferment, delight, ease, relief, support and safety of that; and notwithstanding this preeminence, the soul may be in a most miserable condition; but forgiveness of sins hath a special respect to the soul, and the welfare and everlasting good of it, and happiness of it; it makes us truly blessed.

3. Notwithstanding the presence of outward blessings, the spiritual misery of man is nothing altered, they cannot release you from the wrath of God, nor deliver you from that curse which the Law pronounces against you for your transgressions; but when God forgives sins, then the forgiven person is freed from wrath and curse, and condemnation, and God is pacified and reconciled.

4. One may possibly enjoy them, and yet never enjoy God, nor Christ, nor peace in conscience, nor glory in heaven; nay, his enjoyment of these may (accidentally) cause a farther distance from God and Christ; (as in the young man whose riches and possessions kept him off from closing with Christ) but forgiveness of sins necessarily involves all these grand enjoyments; if sins be forgiven, unquestionably God is your God, and Christ is your Redeemer, and heaven is your inheritance.

Secondly, It excels, if not all yet certainly most of God's spiritual mercies: I am unwilling to make comparisons between them; yet with reverence I speak it, that forgiveness of sins in some respects excels all the graces in man.

1. For the perfection of the work: the change of the soul by grace is indeed an excellent work; nevertheless it is imperfect; (therefore it gets on by degrees) but the forgiveness of sin is a perfect work: when God sanctifies a man, he doth it so that the person needs yet more holiness; but when he forgives us, he doth it not so that those sins need more of forgiveness; when he sanctifies a man, there still remains some corruption; but when he forgives a sinner, you cannot say there remains yet something behind of condemnation; God can find enough in our graces to except against, but nothing in his forgiveness of sins.

2. For the causality in the work; Compare your graces, and your forgiveness's together; there are several choice effects in the soul, which you cannot affirm of your graces as their cause; yet you may safely affirm God's forgiveness of sins to be their cause; e.g. peace in conscience; you cannot say that any holiness or righteousness in you is the cause of this; (for conscience cannot be quieted by anything in us) but forgiveness of sin is a just cause of peace in conscience; being justified by faith, we have peace with God, Rom. 5:1. I will say no more at present, but that all the springs of joy and peace, and comfort, are in your justification. Rom. 8:11. Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee, Matth. 9:2.

Thirdly, Because it is a mercy which doth exceedingly concern afflicted and distressed souls: Beloved, remember three things.

1. All the men in the world do need forgiveness of sins; for who is he that liveth, and sinneth not? And what sinner is there who needs not to have his sins forgiven?

2. All the people of God do see the need and worth of it; how earnest have they been to attain to it? David in Psal. 51, prays

ten times for it, so the Church, Remember not iniquity, Isa. 64:9. Take away iniquity, Hos. 14:2.

3. Afflicted and distressed souls, they infinitely prize it, and thirst for it, and their soul will sink and fail without it. Take me any soul whatsoever, as soon as ever it comes to be a wounded and distressed soul, presently it cries out, what shall I do? What will become of me without Christ, and without forgiveness of sins? If God forgives not these sins, I am a lost man! O that I might have mercy! When shall I find mercy! May I look for mercy? Is there any hope of mercy? I tell you Sirs, the wounded sinner apprehends wrath and condemnation, and feels sin with such a weight and terror in conscience, that if some hope of mercy did not presently appear, Isa. 57:16, the spirit would fail before him; it would be consumed with despair; therefore no marvel that God is pleased in the first place to hold out this golden Scepter of forgiveness of sins, whereby to relieve all broken-hearted sinners.

#### SECT. V.

Is forgiveness of sins one of the mercies first in promise by God unto all his people in Covenant? O how dreadful then is the condition of such who refuse to be in Covenant with God! The doctrine of forgiveness of sins is not so comfortable unto the people of God, but it is as dreadful to all those who refuse to be the people of God.

For the managing of this Use, I will lay down these three conclusions.

1. Some there are who do refuse God to be their God in Covenant, and do refuse to be a people in Covenant with him.

2. All these are an unforgiven people; their sins neither are forgiven, nor shall they ever be forgiven unto them.

3. Because their sins are unforgiven, therefore they are in a most miserable and dreadful condition.

First, There are some who do refuse God to be their God in Covenant, and do refuse to be his people in Covenant. Job 21:14 They say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Ver. 15. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him? Prov. 1:24. Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded. Ver. 29. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. Ver. 30. They would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof, &c.

But more particularly there are four sorts of men who refuse God to be their God in Covenant, and to be his people.

1. Such as refuse the authority of God to rule and guide them by his Will and Laws: When God is a God in Covenant, there he is acknowledged as Lord and Law-giver; (the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, Isa. 33:22) nay, he will be so acknowledged or else he will not be a God in Covenant with us; see Lev. 26:14. If ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these Commandments; and ver. 15. If ye shall dispute my Statutes, and if your soul abhor my judgments; then ver. 17. I will set my face against you, &c. Psal. 81:11. But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me. Ver. 12. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels. If any man hath a nature which is at enmity with God, and will not be subject unto his Will and Law, how can there be a Covenant between them and God? For in forming up of a Covenant, there must be an

agreement between the parties; but if we set up our wills against God's will, that we will do, not what comes from his mouth, but what comes from our own hearts; not what he commands, but what our own proud lusts do like; assuredly God neither is, nor will be in Covenant with such a people; for hereby he should lose the glory of being a Lord, and we should not submit to his righteous will, but he should subject himself unto our ungodly lusts.

2. Such as maintain a contrariety and incompliance with the glorious nature of God: This is the glory of the Divine nature, that it is holy; (Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, Rev. 4:8) and this is that about which God insists with all persons, (whatsoever) whom he will own for his people in Covenant, Ye shall be holy, for I am holy, Lev. 11:44. For there must be a similitude 'twixt God, and the people of God; and as he declares his choice love to them, so must they be a choice generation, and an holy Nation to show forth his praises; therefore such persons as are not only unholy in a privative way, but also hate holiness, and cannot endure to be made holy in a positive adherency of holiness, God neither is, nor ever will be a God in Covenant with them, nor can they be a people in Covenant with God; for what communion can there be 'twixt light and darkness? And what Covenant can there be made 'twixt the holy God who hates all unholiness, and ungodly persons who do likewise hate and abhor all holiness?

3. Such as refuse to let go their sins, and will hold fast their iniquities, who will spare them, and not forsake them, as Zophar speaks, Job 20:30, who refuse to return, as the Prophet speaks, Jer. 8:5. God is no God in Covenant with these, neither are they, nor can they be a people in Covenant with him. Psal 50:16. Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldst take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest

instruction, and castest my word behind thee. Josh. 24:23. Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord God of Israel. Ver. 25. So Joshua made a Covenant with the people that day. If a man's heart be set on his sins, I will love them, I will serve them, I will not forsake them, it cannot be that there should be a Covenant made up 'twixt God and him.

4. Such as through unbelief persevere in the refusing of Christ; you think it no great matter to have Jesus Christ preached unto you, and offered unto you, and yet for you to slight Jesus Christ thus offered; but remember what I say, that person who refuseth Christ, doth refuse God to be his God in Covenant; He that refuseth you, refuseth me; and he that refuseth me, (saith Christ) despiseth him that sent me, Luk. 10:16. God becomes our God, and our Father only in Christ, and therefore Christ saith, I go to my God, and to your God; and my Father, and your Father, Joh: 2:17. We are brought near to God by Christ, and he becomes near to us through the blood of Christ, there you find his love towards you &c. and therefore if you will not embrace Jesus Christ, there is no covenanting 'twixt you and God, he only being the foundation, and head, and Mediator of the Covenant.

Secondly, The second conclusion is this, that all uncovenanted people are an unforgiven people; (i.e.) all who do continue to refuse God to be their God in Covenant, and to be his people in Covenant, their sins neither are forgiven, nor ever shall be forgiven; why so will you say? Because;

1. Forgiveness of sins is only promised in the Covenant of Grace, in no Covenant but this; not in the Covenant of Works, for that is a letter of death and condemnation unto the sinner.

2. And as it is only in the Covenant of Grace, so it is promised only to the people in that Covenant. 1 Kin. 8:34. Forgive the sin of thy people. Ver. 36. Forgive the sin of thy servants. Jer. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity.

3. Only those who are in Christ shall have their sins forgiven. Rom. 8:1. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Acts 10:43. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Joh. 8:24. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Joh. 3:18. He that believeth not, is condemned already.

4. All impenitent persons are unforgiven persons; all uncovenanted persons are impenitent persons. Ergo. The first Proposition is clear in Scripture, see at leisure. Ezek. 18:31. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, for why will ye die O house of Israel? Luk. 13:3. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Prov. 28:14. He that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief. Rom. 2:5. But thou after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Thirdly Now follows the third conclusion, Because these sins are unforgiven, therefore they are in a most miserable and dreadful condition. It is reported of Caesar, that he wondered at one who could sleep so quietly, and yet had so many debts upon him: In like manner we may wonder at many persons who can live so merrily and jovially, and yet have all their sins unforgiven; surely they are persons of very gross ignorance and stupidity, or else are very high and desperate Atheists.

But to the point in hand there are eight things which may set forth the dreadful misery of an unforgiven sinner.

1. His unutterable privation and loss.
2. The full power of the Law against him in all its threatening's and curses.
3. The wrath of God under which he walks all his days, and which may fall on him whensoever the Lord pleaseth.
4. The authority which conscience hath to deal with him in a way of accusation and condemnation.
5. The unavoidableness of death, and the sting thereof, when sins are unpardoned.
6. That just and irreversible sentence of condemnation from God in the day of judgment.
7. The immediate portion and condition in hell amongst the damned after the sentence of condemnation.
8. The eternity of that miserable estate unto which impenitent and unbelieving, and unforgiven sinners are adjudged.

First, The unforgiven sinner is under the greatest loss and privation which man possibly can be; and what is that greatest loss and privation? If you know what the greatest good and happiness is, you may then quickly tell what the greatest loss and privation is; to enjoy God perfectly and fully and eternally in glory, is there any good and happiness like unto this! O but the unforgiven sinner shall never see God in glory, he shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; heaven is no place for the enemies of God;



sins unpardoned, are like the Angel with a flaming Sword, who kept the passage into Paradise; there is no entering into life with sins unpardoned; they do certainly and eternally bar up that door of heaven, and heavenly happiness; and now how miserable must that soul be which is eternally excluded from all true happiness?

Secondly, The Law of God is in full power against every unpardoned sinner. 1. All the indictments and charges of the Law for being transgressed. 2. All the threatening's of the Law, in the several sorts of judicial punishment. 3. All the curses of the Law, even to the utmost extent of them, Cursed is everyone, &c. the soul that sins shall die; and there is no one moment of this life that he can secure himself, &c. they may light on him in the house, or in the field; when he is waking, or when he is sleeping; when alone, or when in company; when rejoicing, or when making merry; when boasting, when in highest abundance and confidence; when sinning, and putting far from himself the evil day.

Thirdly, The unforgiven sinner walks all his days under the wrath of God: God is angry with the wicked every day, Psal. 7:11, not with a Paternal, but with a Judicial anger, even to hatred and abhorment: The wicked is an abomination unto him, and he hates all workers of iniquity, Prov. 3:32, 15:9. And this wrath God can reveal it to his soul, and pour it forth upon him when he pleaseth: and when God pours on him the fierceness of his wrath and indignation, he can neither decline it nor sustain it: it is like the tempest and whirlwinds; it is like burning fire, and devouring flames; it drives the sinner to his feet, breaks down all his arrogancies, and vain hopes, and sensual joys, and fills him with amazing distractions, and terrors, and despairs. How heavy was this wrath on Christ suffering for our sins? It made him to sweat clods of blood; how terrible is the apprehension and fear of it to David, to Heman? How infinitely dreadful will the

sense of it be to the unforgiven sinner who hath no part in Christ, no hope nor plea by him?

Fourthly, The unforgiven sinner is obnoxious to the severe Authority of an awakening guilty conscience, and unto all the powerful workings of it: Indeed whiles the conscience remains stupid and seared, although sins be unforgiven, there is a quietness in the soul (like a sick man asleep.) But when God irresistibly awakes conscience by effectual light, and gives it a charge to act its office of accusing and condemning; O Lord, in what a case will the unpardoned sinner now be! Now the man must see all his sins, and now he must see them in all their offense, and provocations and deserts; and now he must see them all as unforgiven, and himself therefore obnoxious to death, and wrath, and curse, and hell; and conscience sets on all these with a strong conviction, and with such piercing woundings, and with such continual terror and horror, that the unpardoned sinner is at his wits end: A wounded Conscience (or Spirit) who can bear! Prov. 18:14. He is like Pashor-Magor-Missabib, a terror round about unto himself; the guilt of his unpardoned sins works on his soul, and on his body; his soul hath them now before it, and the thoughts of his soul are perplexed and astonished (what shall I do, and what will become of me!) And his afflictions are breaking with fears, and with despairs, his eyes are rolling, his feet and joints shaking, and his body trembling: he knows not what to do with himself, nor how to fly from himself! Conscience still cries, and still pursues, and still wounds, and still gnaws, and still flames and burnt, and still condemns him; thou hast destroyed thyself, thou art lost forever, God is thy Judge, thy sins are unforgiven, and thy portion is damnation; the poor wretch of times cries out, O Conscience be quiet, spare me a little, give me a little space, a minute, an hours rest. I can allow thee no Interim, saith Conscience, how can I! Thy sins are not forgiven, and God hath given me a charge against thee, and

therefore how can I be quiet, or how can I speak to him, unto whom God saith there is no peace but wrath! Isa. 57:21.

Fifthly, The unforgiven sinner must meet with death, and death must meet with him as a king of fears, and as armed against him with the guilt of his sins; the sting of death is sin, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15:56, death is no great matter, but the sting of death, that is terrible, that is like the sting of a Serpent, or of the Scorpion, piercing, poisoning, enraging, and killing.

Luther professeth that there were three things which he durst not think of without Christ, viz. 1. Of his sins. 2. Of death. 3. Of the day of judgment; why what is death to an unpardoned sinner? I will tell you what it is.

1. It is a full period to all comforts and delights; the unpardoned sinner shall never taste of delight more to all Eternity: when a justified person dies, he shall never see any sorrow more; and when an unpardoned sinner dies, he shall never see delight in any kind more.

2. A full period to all Reprieves and Bayles; the sinner during life may be Reprieved from many an Execution of wrath and judgment; but when he dies, there is no longer reprieving, he must now appear in person before the righteous God, answer for himself; and give up his account, and to receive according to what he hath done.

Now how dreadful will this be to the unpardoned sinner, on whose soul and conscience the guilt of all his sins is engraven! O saith he, I cannot live, and I must die, I have not a day longer, nor an hour longer, and then must I appear before God's Judgment seat; and what will become of one who never repented, who never believed,

who never had part in Christ, who never had his sins forgiven to him?

Sixthly, the unpardoned sinner must receive that just and irreversible sentence of condemnation from God.

Beloved, there is a twofold sentence which God will pronounce at the last day.

1. One is of comfort and absolution: Come ye blessed inherit the kingdom prepared for you, Matth 25:34.

2. The other is of terror and condemnation: Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels: and both these sentences are already notified unto us in this life: He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned, Mar. 16:16. How dreadful this sentence of condemnation will be, I pray God that none of us may find; but certainly all unpardoned sinners shall find it; God will pronounce it against them! How can it be otherwise, if sinners be not pardoned? If sinners be not pardoned, then the sinner is not absolved; and if he be not absolved, he must be condemned.

**Object. But God may forgive him in that day?**

Sol. No, no, that day is not a day of forgiving, though it be a day of publication who hath been forgiven, &c.

Seventhly, Upon this sentence immediately follows execution: God condemns these sins, and they shall be condemned; he adjudgeth them to hell to be tormented with the Devil and his Angels, and thither they go to suffer that wrath which their sins have deserved.

Eighthly, And this penal endurance of wrath, it must continue to all eternity; As long as God is God, so long must the wrath of God abide

on them: the worm never dies, and the fire of hell never goes out.

And if these things be so, then by the way learn four things.

1. Come off speedily from your sins by true repentance.
2. Slight the Gospel (as you have done) no more, stand no longer against the offers of Jesus Christ.
3. By all means yield yourselves to be the people of God.
4. Whatsoever you make sure of, make sure of Christ, and of the forgiveness of your sins, and the salvation of your souls.

#### SECT. VI.

Use 2. Doth God promise forgiveness of sins unto his people? Is it one of the first mercies by him promised unto them? Then let us everyone be exhorted to get a capacity of the forgiveness of our sins.

Beloved, it is true, that God can and doth forgive sins, and will do so; but yet he will do this in that way, and in that order which he hath prescribed in his own Word; we may not say, Why, I am a sinner, and therefore God will forgive me: (as if one should say, I am a debtor, therefore the Creditor will release me; and I am an offender, and therefore the Judge will absolve me:) Nor may we say absolutely God is a merciful God, and therefore he will forgive me; for as God is a merciful God, and may therefore forgive; so he is a righteous God, and therefore he may condemn. Nor may we say that God promiseth forgiveness of sins, therefore our sins are forgiven; for as God promiseth mercy, he contracts that promise of mercy unto his own people: and as God saith he will mercifully pardon, so he saith

likewise that he will not be merciful to any wicked transgressor, Psal. 59:5. And he will not spare the audacious sinner, who promiseth peace unto himself though he adds drunkenness to thirst, Deut. 29:19,20.

Now because this Use is of the greatest consequence and necessity for us, who stand in need of this vital and sovereign mercy, the forgiveness of sins, therefore I will discourse of three positions concerning it.

1. Some sinners do erroneously make and take some things for a certain capacity of forgiveness of their sins, which absolutely is not so.
2. Some sinners do certainly put themselves out of a capacity of forgiveness.
3. Some sinners are in a right capacity of God's promise of the forgiveness of their sins.

First, Some sinners do erroneously take these things for certain grounds, that they are in the list and compass of forgiveness of sins which (absolutely) considered cannot be so. e.g.

First, God is of a very merciful nature, ready to forgive, and his mercy is over all his works, and he will not destroy his creatures, he did not make us to damn us, therefore my sins shall be forgiven!

Sol. This cannot be a sure ground to build on, that we are within the compass or capacity of forgiveness of sins, because

1. By this Reason, the Devils also may conclude the forgiveness of their sins, for God is of a merciful nature, and ready to forgive, and his mercy is over all his works.

2. By this ground no sinner should be damned, but every sinner should be saved. For if every man hath his sins pardoned, then no man shall be damned (to have sins pardoned, is to be discharged from condemnation) but if this were a strong and sufficient inference, Sins are pardoned because God is of a merciful nature; then every sinner should have his sins pardoned.

3. Though mercifulness be natural to God, yet the dispensation or collation of mercy is voluntary and Arbitrary; forgiving acts of mercy do not flow from God in that way as effects do flow from natural Agents (in a way of necessity) as the Sun necessarily gives out light, and fire necessarily breaths out heat: But as effects flow from voluntary and free Agents; Rom. 9:15 I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion: So then it will not follow, Your sins are forgiven, because God's Nature is merciful; for forgiving mercy is not a necessary effect of that Nature, but a voluntary effect thereof.

4. Besides Justice is as natural to God as mercifulness is, he is (Essentially) as just as he is merciful, and he doth intend the glorifying of his Justice upon sinners as certainly as he doth the glorifying of his mercifulness: Rom. 9:22. What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction! Ver. 23. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory! Here you plainly see a will and purpose in God to set up the glory of his Justice in the destruction of the vessels of wrath, as well as the glory of his mercifulness in the salvation of the vessels of mercy: Exod. 34. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sins, and that will by no means clear the guilty: Here also you find that mercifulness is so attributed to God, as that justice likewise is

preserved in him; though his merciful nature in forgiving doth extend to thousands, yet it doth not extend to all: For he likewise professeth that he will by no means clear the guilty. Mercy hath a double consideration.

First, as in the nature of God.

Secondly, As in the promise of God, which showeth whom he will forgive; and therefore

5. It would be your wisdom, not absolutely to sit down with this notion that God is merciful; but respectively to search out unto what sorts of persons he doth promise himself to be a merciful God in forgiving their sins: For in his promises you may as certainly discern the will and extent of his mercy, as in his threatening's you may espy the purpose and intent of his wrath; and if you did so, you should presently find that forgiving mercy is promised, and intended only for believing and repenting sinners. Prov. 28:13, Isa. 55:7, Acts 3:19, Acts 10:43.

**Object. And whereas it is objected, that (Psal. 145:9) the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.**

Sol. This place is not for your purpose; for;

1. When he saith that the Lord is good to all, this is spoken only as to his general Providence, whereby he doth good to all sorts of creatures, man and beast in their sustentation and preservation.

2. When he saith that his tender mercies are over all his works; if you take all his works for the whole Creation, and his tender mercies for forgiveness of sins; (unto which forgiveness is ascribed, Psal. 51:1)



then it cannot with any sense he affirmed that forgiveness of sins extends to the whole Creation; for this were to make beasts and trees, and the elements, and heavens to be sinners; but when he saith that his tender mercies are over all his works, either this is spoken in an absolute sense, that all his works do taste of his kindness, bounty and pity; or in a comparative sense, that of all the works of God, his mercies are the highest and chiefest, they are above or over all of them, none like to them.

**Object. But God did not make us to damn us?**

Sol. No, nor yet to sin against him, but to serve him.

Secondly, A second ground upon which some do conclude that they are within the compass and capacity of the promise of forgiveness of sins, is this, that God is a gracious God, forgiving sins freely; so indeed doth that word signify, Col. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses, χαρισάμενος, freely forgiven; and Luke 7:42. He freely forgiveth them both.

Hence they conclude that God stands upon nothing, requires nothing, but without any more ado will forgive the sins of men, as it were of course.

Sol. And yet by your favor God in his Word doth say, Acts 3:19. Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Gal. 2:16. We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ.

But consider,

First, The graciousness of God in forgiving of sins, stands in opposition, not to the means which God hath prescribed to enjoy

forgiveness, but unto our merits and deserts of forgiveness; God forgives sins freely and graciously, (i.e.) without any merit or desert of ours. Isa. 43:25. I even I, am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine name sake; but God doth not forgive sins freely, (i.e.) without our repenting and believing; for these he doth require of us, that we may receive the forgiveness of our sins.

Secondly, When God is said to forgive sins freely, the meaning is not that he forgives every sinner in the world, (freeness notes the means, not the extent of forgiveness) with such a free unlimited largeness he doth not forgive; but the meaning is, that all those sinners who are forgiven, they are freely forgiven; God doth not put them upon any personal satisfactions; nor doth he agree with them for any work of theirs, as a cause or desert of the forgiveness of their sins. Jer. 3:12. Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon thee? For I am merciful, saith the Lord. Ver. 13. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, &c. Therefore take heed that you deceive not yourselves with a confidence that your sins are forgiven, because God is gracious, and forgives freely; for God is gracious to whom he will be gracious, and they whom he graciously forgives, are only the people of his Covenant, even believers and penitents.

Thirdly, A third false ground upon which some do absolutely conclude the forgiveness of their sins, is the death of Christ, that he shed his blood for the remission of sins, and that he died (as to that purpose) for all and everyone; therefore their sins (amongst the rest) are unquestionably forgiven.

Sol. That Jesus Christ did shed his blood for the remission of sins is most true, he himself hath delivered it: Matth. 26:28. This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins; but that his blood did

procure an actual remission of sins for every sinner in the world, this is most false; for Christ himself hath said, Mark 16:16. He that believes, shall be saved; and he that believes not shall be damned. Joh. 10:15. I lay down my life for the sheep. Joh. 8:24. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins; and the Angel to Mary, Mat. 1:21. Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

But for your help and direction in this point, take my mind in these three conclusions.

1. That there was a necessity for Christ to shed his blood, that so our sins might be forgiven. Hebr. 9:22. Without shedding of blood there is no remission.

2. His death did purchase the forgiveness of sins. Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

3. This remission purchased, though illimited as to the sins forgiven, yet it is limited as to the persons forgiven: 1. By the Decree of God to the Elect. 2. By the Covenant. 3. And by the intention of Christ. 4. And by the Gospel to whosoever believes that the shedding of his blood for the remission of sins, did so illimitedly procure the same. That every sinner in the world enjoys the fruit thereof, (whether he believes or not, or whether he repents or not) as I know no man living of so wicked an opinion, so the Scripture delivers no such matter, but the quite contrary. Luke 24:47. That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations. Acts 10:43. To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins. Acts 13:38. Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. Ver. 39. Then Peter said, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. Rom. 3:25.

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. It is true, that remission of sins hath foundation in the blood of Christ, as in a meritorious cause, but our enjoyment of that merited and purchased remission takes in faith and repentance; for neither God nor Christ ever intended nor promised the application thereof unto any, but such as believe and repent; therefore do not venture absolutely upon this, that Christ died for the remission of sins, therefore your sins are forgiven; for as God did ordain the death of Christ as the meritorious cause of forgiveness of sins; so did he ordain that all who have the benefit thereof, should repent and believe.

Fourthly, A fourth false ground from which some do (absolutely) conclude that their sins are forgiven, is this, their sins are but small and little sins, which God marks and regards not, and will never take notice of, but will pass them by; indeed if they were guilty of great transgressions, then they had reason to doubt whether they were within the compass of forgiveness promised, but alas their sins are small, &c.

Sol. For answer unto this deceit, remember these four particulars.

1. No sin is simply little or small.
2. Those sins are not little or small, which people do (ordinarily) count so.
3. God hath severely expressed himself against persons for those sins which we look on as small sins.
4. This very conceit that sins are little, and are past by in course, may lose a man the forgiveness of his sins.

First, No sin is simply or absolutely little or small, though comparatively (when we set on sin by another) we find them to be of different magnitude; some to be great abominations, and others to be lesser transgressions, yet absolutely no sin is little; but as there is a greatness in the least mercy, so there is a greatness in the least sin; for every sin whatsoever is a transgression of the royal Law, and it is committed against a great God; sin is to be considered as to the object, as well as to the act; how were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses. Every sin doth expose to a great curse, even the curse of the Law; Cursed is everyone who continues not in everything that is written to do it: Is that a small offense which may cost a man his life? Nay, it cannot be taken off but by the death and blood of Christ, there is an infinite offense and merit in any sin; you read in the Mosaical Law that the blood of the beast was to be shed for the expiation of sins of ignorance and inadvertency, which did signify the shedding of the blood of Christ for the expiation of the least sins; and surely that offense may not be reputed little or small, which cannot be put away but by the death of the Son of God.

Secondly, Those sins are not little or small which people (ordinarily) do count so; people do look on it as a very small offense.

1. To omit praying and reading in their Families; but God threatens to pour out his wrath upon the Families that call not upon his Name, Jer. 10:25. Though this be spoken of the Heathens, yet it is much more true of Christians.

2. To pass by Christ offered unto them; but the Scripture saith, He that believes not, shall be damned; and that he shall not see

life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, Mark 16:16.

3. To despise the Ministers of Christ; but Christ saith, He that despiseth you, despiseth me, Luk. 10:16.

4. To come unworthily to the Lord's Table; but the Scripture saith, He that eats and drinks unworthily, doth eat and drink damnation to himself, 1 Cor. 11.

5. To be proud, and speak lies; but the Scripture saith, that a proud look, and lying tongue, are an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 6:16,17.

6. To speak idly and vainly; but Jesus Christ saith, Matth. 12:36. That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

7. To wound the name of others behind their backs, whisperingly and cunningly, and privately; but the Scripture saith, Deut. 27:24. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbor secretly.

8. To give way to wicked thoughts, and sins of heart; but the Scripture shows that these are no small sins. Acts 8:22. Pray God if perhaps the thoughts of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

9. To make mention of the Name of God vainly and rashly, and irreverently, on any occasion in ordinary discourse, O God! O Lord! But the Scripture doth not look on this as a small sin. Exod. 20:7. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his Name in vain.

10. To profane the Sabbath by buying and selling; but God threatens to send a fire for this, Jer. 17:27.

Thirdly, God hath expressed himself very severely against persons for those sins which we (perhaps) look upon as small. Adam eating of the forbidden fruit, it lost him Paradise, and brought an exceeding misery on mankind. Uzzah did but put out his hand to stay the Ark, and he died for it on the place. Uzziah would be meddling with the Priests office, and he was immediately struck with a leprosy to the day of his death, 2 Chron. 26:19,21. Korah, Dathan and Abiram misliked the authority of Moses and Aaron, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up. Ananias and Sapphira for a lie are struck dead.

Fourthly, This very conceit that sins are so little and small, that God will pass them by in course, may lose a man the forgiveness of sin; for it is a means

1. Of carnal security.
2. Of impenitency.
3. Of neglect of Jesus Christ.
4. To implore God by prayer for the forgiveness of sins like the proud Pharisee, who sought not for mercy, and missed of mercy, because he took no notice of his sins at all; the greatest sin is pardoned upon repentance; the least sin will damn without repentance.

Secondly, I now come to the second position, which is this; That some do put themselves out of a capacity of the forgiveness of their sins; and there are eight sorts of these persons.

1. They who sin the sin against the Holy Ghost.
2. They who will not repent and forsake their sins.
3. They who delay and defer Repentance.
4. They who do repent feignedly and hypocritically.
5. They who do not believe on Christ, and refuse to be his.
6. They who do absolutely despair.
7. They who do rest on their own works as reasons and causes of the forgiveness of their sins.
8. They who are unmerciful and unmerciful, and will not forgive others who trespass against them.

First, They do put themselves out of a capacity of forgiveness of their sins, who do sin the sin against the Holy Ghost. Matth. 12:31. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. Ver. 32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come: Here you find it expressly and peremptorily delivered from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven.

**Quest. But will some of you say, What is this sin against the Holy Ghost which never shall be forgiven?**



Sol. It is a willful and malicious, and reproachful opposition of the Gospel, attended with a total and final Apostasy from it, after and against the clear convictions of the Holy Ghost.

First, It is an opposition of the Gospel; the Gospel must be preached, and the Gospel must be opposed by such as hear it, else it is not the sin against the Holy Ghost; they therefore who are charged with this sin, are said to hate the light, Joh. 3:20, and to hate Christ, and to hate the truth, Joh. 15:25, and to be disobedient unto the Gospel, and to be a gain-saying people, Rom. 10:21, and to reject the Corner stone, Acts 4:11, and to refuse to hear, Acts 13:46, and to put the Word from them, who resist the truth, and contradict it, 2 Tim. 3:8, as you may read of the Pharisees, and other of the Jews.

Secondly, It is a peculiar kind of opposition, not of ignorance, not of inadvertency, not of passion; but

1. A willful opposition; therefore they who commit this sin, are said to sin willfully; (Hebr. 10:26. If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.) A man sins willfully, when the reason of his sinning rests solely in the perverseness of his will, though his judgment be disarmed of all Apology, and his conscience be convinced, yet he will sin and oppose the Gospel, because he will do so.

2. A malicious opposition; it ariseth from a bitter hatred against Christ, and rage against the truth; therefore they who sin this sin, are said to offer, or do despite unto the Spirit of grace, Hebr. 10:29, as if they did sin on purpose to vex and affront the Spirit of God.

3. A reproachful opposition; hence it is affirmed of these sinners, that they speak evil of the ways of Christ, and blaspheme his Word: The Jews were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, Acts 13:45, that they mock at Jesus Christ, Matth. 27:41. The chief Priests mocking him, with the Scribes and Elders, &c. Ver. 29. When they had platted a Crown of thorns, they put it on his head, and a Reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail King of the Jews; so Acts 2:13. Others mocking, said, these men are full of new wine. And they are said (in Hebr. 10:29) to tread underfoot the Son of God, and to count his blood an unholy thing. How amazing is this reproach? And thus is it with all who sin the sin against the Holy Ghost; the precious blood of Christ, his holiness, his truth, his commands, his ways, his servants are the objects of their mocking's, and scorns, and reproaches.

Thirdly, This opposition is made against Christ and the Gospel, after and against the clear Convictions of the Holy Ghost. They who sin this sin,

1. Have had such a light in them as to know Jesus Christ, Joh. 9:41. Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth. Joh. 7:28. Ye both know me, and whence I am. Hebr. 6:4, who were once enlightened. They that sin this sin, do know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Redeemer, and that there is salvation in him, and in no Name but his, and that the way which he prescribes for salvation, is the true way of life; and after all this, they crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

2. The Holy Ghost hath not only illuminated their minds, but hath also raised them to a kind of approbation of Christ and his truths, and his ways; so that they have taken upon them the profession of Christianity, and side with the Gospel for a time.

3. By the operation of the Holy Ghost, they have attained unto some spiritual taste and experience, as you may see, Hebr. 6:4. Have tasted of the heavenly gift: Ver. 5. And have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come.

Fourthly, And yet after all this they fall away, Hebr. 6:6. Reject Christ and his truths, and ways, and will go on in the ways of their sinful and worldly lusts. This is that sin which shall never be forgiven; not only because God is pleased to shut the door of mercy against it, but also because persons guilty of this sin, do thrust themselves into such a desperate hardness of heart, and they reject Christ in whom alone pardon is to be had; that (as the Apostle speaks, Hebr. 6:6) It is impossible to renew them again unto Repentance.

2. Secondly, They do put themselves out of a capacity of the forgiveness of their sins, who will not repent of their sins; (i.e.) who will not forsake them, but will still persist and continue in them, though they be convinced, though they be reproved, though they be threatened, though they be assured of the inconsistency of forgiveness with impenitency. This point will manifestly appear upon a threefold consideration.

1. Of God's professed resolution, contrary to the presumption of mercy in the impenitent sinner; indeed this sinner presumes to promise mercy unto himself, though he goes on in his sins, but the Lord protests that he shall have none. Deut. 29:18. Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood. Ver. 19. And it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless

himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. Ver. 20. The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. Ver. 21. And the Lord shall separate him to evil, out of all the Tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the Covenant that are written in this book of the Law: So Psal. 50:21. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Ver. 22. Consider this ye that forget, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

2. Of God's restriction of his promise of forgiveness only upon condition of repentance; only to such as forsake their sins; where do you find it otherwise in the whole Bible? Isa. 1:16. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil, learn to do well; — Ver. 18. Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. 2 Chron. 7:14. If my people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins. Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

3. Of God's peremptory sentence in case of impenitency. Exod. 34:7, that will by no means clear the guilty, (i.e.) the impenitent; in absolving he will not absolve, (i.e.) whosoever finds mercy, they shall not. Ezek. 18:21. Cast away from you all your transgressions, for why will ye die O house of Israel? Psal. 63:21. God will wound the head of such a one as goes on still in his wickedness. Luk. 13:3. Except ye

repent, ye shall perish. Jer. 13:10. This evil people which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their hearts; Ver. 14. I will dash them one against another, even the father and the son together, saith the Lord; I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them. Eccles. 8:13. It shall not be well with the wicked. Isa. 65:20. The sinner dying a hundred years old, shall be cursed, then certainly not forgiven. O think of this, you who still go on in the hatred of holiness, in profaning of the Sabbath, in drunkenness, in whoredom, in pride, in lying, in any ungodly course, who mock at reproof, and despise instruction, who flatter yourselves with hopes of forgiving mercy: Be not deceived, for God is not to be mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap, Gal. 6:7, and Rom. 2:6. God will render to every man according to his deeds. Ver. 8. Indignation and wrath. Ver. 9, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil.

Thirdly, They do put themselves out of a capacity of forgiveness of their sins, who do delay and defer their work of repentance. When some sinners are convinced of the inconsistency of mercy with impenitency, and of the necessary presence of repentance for forgiveness; then seeing it must be so, and mercy cannot be otherwise had, they will repent, but not yet; hereafter they will, when they are sick, and when they are old and near to death; and what mean you to do for the present, till the time of sickness, or age, or death? Is it not that you serve your sins, and take your delights and pleasures? And when you can no longer enjoy them, then you will give over your sins, and then God must give down your forgiveness. As if a Malefactor should say, I will steal, and kill a few years more until I be taken, and then I will leave those courses, and the Judge shall pardon me: O what a cheat and deceit is this? 1. To think that we have repentance in our power. 2ly. To think that we have forgiving mercy at our command. 3ly. To love, and serve, and live in

our sins for the present, and to promise unto ourselves the forgiveness of our sins at the last? But wilt thou know and understand, O vain man! That he who defers to repent, is in the meantime impenitent? And he that resolves only (for hereafter) to leave his sins, resolves also (until that time) to keep his sins; and he that resolves to keep his sins, doth for lying vanities forsake his own mercies: He that will not presently repent, doth put himself out of a present capacity of mercy; and he who puts himself out of a present capacity of mercy, may by going on in his sins so harden his heart, as to put out himself from a future capacity of repentance. The promise of forgiveness is to him who doth repent or forsake his sins; it is not to him who defers to repent, and saith he will do so hereafter: O how foolish is the sinner who might be presently forgiven upon a present repentance, and yet will hazard his soul to the loss of mercy upon a presumption of future repenting! Surely thou dost not prize the great mercies of God in the pardon of thy sins, who dost put off that blessed mercy, to enjoy a little longer thy cursed lusts! Today if you will hear his voice, put it not off till tomorrow; for 1. It is a question whether late repentance be true. 2ly. You (at least) will question it. 3ly. And whether God will give it at the last. 4ly. Especially when we put it off to the last.

Fourthly, They do put themselves out of a capacity of the forgiveness of their sins, who do presently repent, but it is feignedly and hypocritically, not cordially and really: Jer. 3:10 Her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord. Psal. 78:4. They returned and inquired early after God. Ver. 36. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue. Ver. 37. For their heart was not right with him.

Now they do repent feignedly, who

1. Spare their beloved sins.
2. Who put them off with a purpose to resume them again.

You have many persons who in the times of sickness, or of danger, or of loss, or of fear of death, or of terror of conscience will forbear their sins, will cry out against their sins, will pray and beg for mercy; and as soon as hope, and ease, and safety appears, they do return again with the dog to his vomit, and with the swine to the wallowing in the mire, 2 Pet. 2:22. They forget their terrors, and tears, and praying's, and resolutions, and professions, and are worse in ways of wickedness than heretofore; Their righteousness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away. To these God may speak as in Hose. 11:12. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit. They think to circumvent and deceive the Lord with penitential pretenses, but indeed they do deceive their own souls; for God searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and his eyes are upon the heart, and upon the truth: and it is just that they should be deceived with the fancy of pardon, who think to deceive God with the shadow of repentance: He who is but hypocritically good, is really wicked; and he that repents feignedly, and falsely, doth but provoke the wrath of God more against his soul, &c.

Fifthly, They do put themselves out of a capacity of forgiveness, who remain unbelieving, whose hearts are not subdued and brought in to Christ by the Gospel, will not consent to take him for their Head and Lord, and will not serve Christ in his commands, will not suffer him to reign over them, to set up his kingdom in them, nor to destroy his enemies in them. Beloved, mark what I say unto you, be you what you will, if yet you remain unbelievers, your sins shall never be forgiven. Suppose you be great or mean persons, rich or poor persons, learned or simple persons, covetous and civil persons, and

just persons, Papists or Protestants, of this or that Opinion for Doctrine or Government, if you believe not on Christ as well as profess Christ, if your hearts will not consent to match with Christ; if there be any sin, or anything of the world which lies nearer your heart than Christ, which holds it off, and keeps it from Christ, you are now unbelievers, and your sin shall not be forgiven: 1 Joh. 5:12. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life. Joh. 3:36. He that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Mar. 16:16. He that believeth not shall be damned.

Sixthly, They also do put themselves out of a capacity of forgiveness, who do absolutely despair of mercy: Isidore said right, *Desperare est in infernum descendere*, to fall into despair, is to fall into hell, where there is perfection of misery without any hope of mercy.

Here consider a few Particulars.

1. It is one thing to doubt and fear, and question whether God will be merciful unto our sins; and it is another thing to despair of his mercies: one may fear and doubt of mercy for his sins, who yet doth not absolutely despair of mercy; fear and questionings about mercy may arise from infirmity, Psal. 77:9. Hath God forgotten to be gracious! Hath he in anger shut up his mercies! Ver 10. I said this is my infirmity; but absolute despair of mercy ariseth from absolute infidelity, and it is a peremptory concluding against all the powers and goodness of mercy in God: My sin (said Cain) is greater than may or can be forgiven, Gen. 4:13.

2. Again, there is a passionate and transient despair; And there is a settled and permanent despair; The one is total, but not final; the other is total and final; In times of strong temptation, and God's desertion, and our own melancholy, and troubles of conscience, one



may possibly conclude there is no hope of mercy, and his sins are such as exceed either the power, or else the purpose of God's mercy; but this dark and sad conceit falls off again from the soul upon conference upon better information, upon prayer, upon hearing the Word, and upon clear consideration of the Covenant of grace, and the terms of it, and of the riches of Redemption by Christ; this kind of despair doth not prejudice you in the capacity of forgiving mercy: but then there is a settled and permanent despair which is total and final, wherein the soul is swallowed up, and forever lies under water and never riseth more with any hope of possible mercy, conceiving of the guilt of sin so superlatively, that neither the merits of the blood of Christ, nor the riches of mercy in God can or will reach to the forgiveness of it. This poor sinner puts himself out of all capacity of forgiveness, and that upon a treble account.

1. The infinite dishonor which he puts upon God's throne of grace and mercy; he gives reproach and the lie unto God who saith he is rich in mercy, and delights in mercy.
2. His utter incompliance with Christ; and riches of all Gospel invitations, promises and assurances.
3. The confirming of his heart in impenitency, seeing there is no hope of mercy.

Seventhly, they likewise do put themselves out of a capacity of the forgiveness of their sins, who do rest and rely upon their own righteousness and good works as the cause of forgiveness. 'It is true that you must be holy, and righteous, and do good works, and walk in them, and abound in them; But if you rely on them as the reasons and causes why God will forgive your sins, you will certainly lose the forgiveness of them: For

1. What is this but to set up a Covenant of Works, and to look for life by the Law, and Justification by something of our own? And what says the Scripture to this? Rom. 3:20. By the deeds of the Law there shall be no flesh justified in thy sight. Tit. 3:5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. Gal. 3:10. As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse, for it is written, cursed is everyone, &c.

2. This is to take away the Crown from Christ; and it is to make Christ to die in vain, to lose the end of shedding his blood for the remission of sins: the Scripture saith, Acts 4:12. There is no salvation in any other, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved: but you will have it in your own name. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood which was shed for the remission of sins. 1 Joh. 2:2. He is the propitiation for our sins. Eph. 1:7. In his blood we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Gal. 5:4. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace: therefore take heed what you do, and how you place your confidences for the remission of your sins; you must neither renounce good works, nor must you rely on them, but only on Christ for pardon, else you debar yourselves of all benefit by Christ.

Eighthly, Lastly they do put themselves out of a capacity of the forgiveness of their sins, who are unmerciful, implacable, revengeful, and will not forgive others their offenses, and trespasses, or wrongs done against themselves.

**Quest. You will say this is strange Doctrine, that God will not forgive me, if I do not forgive others!**

Sol. 1. Nay it were more strange that thou shouldest expect forgiveness, who wilt not forgive thy brother! But peruse the Scriptures, Matth. 18:32. O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt (ten thousand talents, ver. 24) because thou desiredst me. Ver. 33. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? Ver. 34. And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormenters, till he should pay all that was due unto him. v. 35. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from the heart forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses. Math. 6:15. If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive your trespasses.

2. Again, see the express command for this by Christ, in Luke 17:3. If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. Ver. 4. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again unto thee saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him.

Thirdly, I now proceed unto a third Position and Conclusion, viz. That there are some who are in a right capacity, and may safely lay hold on, and own the promise of the forgiveness of their sins.

First, All who do truly repent of their sins; there are four things will demonstrate this unto us.

1. Scripture exhortations to repent, that so our sins may be forgiven. Ezek. 18:30. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Acts 2:38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins. Act. 3:19. Repent, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

2. Express promises that our sins shall be forgiven upon our repentance 2 Chro. 7:14. If my people shall turn from their evil way, then will I forgive their sin. Prov. 28:13. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy. Ezek. 18:21. If the wicked will turn from all his sins which he hath committed, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Ver. 22. All his transgressions which he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him.

3. Assurance of the forgiveness of sins upon repentance, though they have been very great and heinous. Isa. 1:16. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil: ver. 17, learn to do well. Ver. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

4. Express Records and Instances of forgiveness unto such as have repented: 2 Sam. 12:13. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord; and Nathan said to David, the Lord hath also put away thy sin. Jer. 31:18. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself; and Turn thou me and I shall be turned, &c. Ver. 19. Surely after that I was turned I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed, yea even confounded because I did bear the reproach of my youth, Ver, 20. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child! For since I spake against him I do remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Luk. 7:38. And she stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment. Ver. 47. Wherefore I say, her sins which were many are forgiven, &c. V. 15:18. I will arise and go to my Father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and

before thee; Ver. 19, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, &c. Ver. 20, and he arose and came to his Father; but when he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him.

**Quest. But here some may reply, It is granted that all who do truly repent are within the compass of the promise of forgiveness of sins, and many do think that they do truly repent of their sins; but how may one know that he doth truly repent, that so he may safely conclude the forgiveness of his sins?**

Sol. I thank you for the propounding of this doubt; for the clear resolution whereof I shall thus deliver myself;

1. I shall show unto you the integral part of Repentance (i.e.) those particular Branches of which true Repentance doth consist, and unto all which forgiveness of sins is promised.

2. I shall show unto you the right qualifications of those particular parts of Repentance, that so you may know whether you do truly Repent or no.

First, For the first of these, you do know (as I suppose) that there are three parts of Repentance, viz.

1. Contrition or grief of heart for sins committed, which is called sometimes godly sorrow, 2 Cor. 7:10, and sometimes a contrite spirit, Isa. 66:2, and a broken and contrite heart, Psal. 51:17, and sometimes the afflicting of our souls, Lev. 16:29, and sometimes the humbling of the heart, 2 Chron. 7:14. If my people shall humble themselves, &c. Lam. 3:20. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me: and sometimes a mourning, Zach. 12:10.

And they shall mourn as, &c. and sometimes a weeping, Mar. 14:72. And when he thought thereon he wept.

First, There is no man a penitent sinner, but he is a mourning sinner; his soul is grieved, his heart is displeased, and humbled for his sins: If the heart be hardened, it is impenitent; if thy sins which have grieved and troubled God, do not trouble and grieve thy soul, thou art an impenitent and hardened sinner; much more art thou so if thy sins be the matter of thy delight and rejoicing: And on the contrary all penitent persons are mourning persons; Judge. 2:4. The children of Israel repented, and the people lift up their voice and wept. 1 Sam. 7:6. They repented, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. Psal. 6:6. David repented, and watered his Couch with his tears. 2 Chro. 32:26. Hezekiah Repented, 2 Chron. 33:12, and humbled himself for the pride of his heart. Manasseh (as some think) repented, and he humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers. Jer. 31:18,19. Ephraim repented, and Ephraim bemoaned himself, and smote upon his thigh, and is even confounded. Luke 7:38. Mary Magdalene repented, and she wept, and washed the feet of Christ with tears. Luk. 22:62. Peter repented, and he went out and wept bitterly. 2 Cor. 7:9. The Corinthians repented, and they were made sorry after a godly manner.

Secondly, Thus you see that all truly penitent persons are broken-hearted persons, and mourning persons for their sins; and now ye shall find that all these persons are within the capacity of the promise of forgiveness of sins: Zach. 12:11. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo. Zach. 13:1. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. Jer. 31:18. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, &c. Ver. 20. I will surely have

mercy upon him. Mark the place, Ephraim's heart is troubled for sinning, and God's bowels (so are his mercies styled) are troubled for Ephraim; Ephraim (like a penitent Child) falls a weeping, and God (like an indulgent Father) falls a bemoaning of him. I am grieved, and troubled, and ashamed at my very heart that I have thus sinned against thee, saith Ephraim. O peace, refrain thine eyes from tears, saith God to Ephraim; I cannot refrain my mercies from thee; Lo this is thy pardon for thy sins: Psal. 51:17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; and why is a broken spirit called sacrifices of God? Is it not for the acceptableness of it unto God? And is it not because as upon sacrifices sins were put away, so upon contrition of heart for sins, there comes out the forgiveness of sins? Isa. 57:15. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones: And can the contrite heart be revived without forgiveness of sins? Matth. 5:4. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Surely this is spoken of spiritual mourning (of mourning for sin) for can you say of any other mourning besides these, that they are blessed! And their blessedness lies in this, that they shall be comforted; and what comfort is that which a mourning sinner looks upon as blessedness? Why none but that in Isa. 40:1,2. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her iniquity is pardoned.

2. The second part of Repentance is confession of sins which flows out of a contrite heart: I speak not of a formal, verbal, empty confession (we are all sinners, God help us, &c.) but of such a confession of sin as ariseth from a true and full sense of sin, when the tongue speaks out of the abundance of a troubled spirit, ingenuously and humbly acknowledging iniquities and transgressions, and judging himself worthy of wrath, and unworthy of mercy, &c.

This confession you shall find in Repenting sinners, and those persons so confessing, under the capacity of the promise of the forgiveness of their sins.

First, You shall find Repenting sinners confessing their sins. Ezra 9:6. O my God; I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face unto thee, my God! For our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Ver. 10. And now O our God, What shall we say after this? For we have forsaken thy Commandments, &c. Psal. 51:3. I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Ver. 4. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. Dan. 9:4. I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord the great and dreadful God, &c. Ver. 5. We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments, &c. Ver. 8. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face, as at this day. Luk. 15:18. I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: Ver. 19, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, &c.

Secondly, Now these penitently confessing sinners you shall expressly find to be under the promise of the forgiveness of sins. 1 Joh. 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. Psal. 32:5. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid; I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin, Selah.

3. The third and last part of Repentance, is conversion, or turning from sin unto God. Ezek. 33:11. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways. Repenting in Scripture is (to this purpose) styled a putting away of sins. Isa. 1:16, and a casting away of our sins. Ezek. 18:31, and a



forsaking of our sins. Prov. 28:13, and a departing from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2:19, and a turning: to repent of sin, and to continue in sin, are a contradiction; as if you should say, that a man leaves his sins, when yet he holds them fast, and will not let them go.

Two things you also read of this part of Repentance.

1. One, That truly penitent persons do forsake their sins, they turn from them, they put them away. Isa. 30:22. Ye shall defile the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornaments of thy molten images of gold; Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; Thou shall say unto it, Get thee hence. Hos. 14:8. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do anymore with Idols? Judge. 10:15. And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned, Do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Ver. 16. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord. Job 34:31. Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not offend anymore. Ver. 32. That which I see not, Teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more. Jonah 3:8. Let them everyone turn from his evil way. Ver. 10. And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way.

2. The other, That they who do penitentially turn from their sins, are under the promise of forgiveness, of sin. Prov. 28:13. Whoso confesseth, and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy. Many men confess their sins, who yet do still love to keep their sins, and therefore shall miss of mercy; but the way for mercy is, to forsake their sin, as well as to confess sin. Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and let the unrighteous forsake his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Thus have I opened unto you the integral parts of Repentance, which doth certainly bring us within the capacity of the promise of forgiveness of sins.

Secondly, I shall now proceed to handle the Qualifications of every one of these parts of Repentance, by which you may know that you do in truth act every one of them, and consequently are under the promise, &c. And the rather do I insist on this, because many persons do think that they are sorry for their sins, and do think that they do rightly confess their sins, and do think that they forsake their sins (and thereupon do presume upon forgiving mercy) whereas really they are still under the love and power, and service of their sins, and do not repent at all; all which you shall find (in every part which I have mentioned) clearly instanced in Scripture.

First, For mourning and weeping, and afflicting the soul; persons have acted something in this way, and yet have not repented in truth, and therefore have missed of forgiveness. Mal. 2:13. This have ye done again, covering the Altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying, insomuch that ye regarded not the offering anymore. All this was but hypocrisy; for notwithstanding all these tears, they dealt treacherously everyone against his brother, Ver. 10. And profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and married the daughter of a strange god, Ver. 11. Isa. 58:3. Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge? Ver. 5. Is it such a Fast as I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? &c.

Secondly, For confession of sins, some have done this, and yet they have not rightly and penitentially done this. Exod. 9:27. Pharaoh said, I have sinned this time, the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked; see what a confession is here! But then see, Ver.

34, when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail, and the thunder were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

Thirdly, For turning from sin, some have pretended thus far, and yet have not truly acted therein. Psal. 78:34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and inquired early after God. Ver. 35,36. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. Ver. 37. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his Covenant. Jer. 2:20. Of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy hands, and thou saidst I will not transgress; when upon every high hill, and under every green Tree thou wanderedst, playing the harlot. Thus you see that some have pretended to all the parts of Repentance, and yet have not acted up to any one part in truth. Therefore I will now deliver unto you the right qualifications of all those parts of Repentance, that so you may know whether you do truly repent of your sins, and consequently are under this most comfortable promise of the forgiveness of your sins.

First, The qualifications of penitential grief, or mourning for sins, are these.

1. It is a grief which is supernatural, and wrought in us only by the Spirit of God; it doth not arise from the strength of any natural principle in our own hearts, as worldly sorrow doth; (in which one may abound who hath no grace at all, and for which he needs not to pray at all) but this sorrow is given from God, and is sought by us from him. Job 23:16. God maketh my heart soft. Ezek. 36:26. I will take away the heart of stone, and will give you a heart of flesh. Zach. 12:10. They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. You may easily mourn for worldly losses, and under

worldly distresses, and melt, and weep, as David's men did, who wept until they had no more power to weep: 1 Sam. 30:4. And yet under all these floods of grief, the person may not be able to shed one tear of godly sorrow for his sins, because this comes from another kind of Spring, and is raised upon other Motives and Considerations; it will cost you many convictions, and many meditations, and many earnest supplications, and attendances on the Word, to get this Fountain set open in your hearts.

2. It is a grief which is sincere for sin as sin; sin as sin is a transgression of the Law of God, a provocation of God, a dishonor unto God, a separation and withdrawment of God, a defilement and pollution of the soul; and in a respect (solely) unto these considerations of sin, doth truly penitential mourning break forth in the soul; though no hell to damn me, though no conscience to torment me: Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, saith David, Psal. 51:4. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Job 7:20. One may be troubled for sinning because of punishment from man, or of punishment from God, feared or inflicted; but this is not a trouble for sin as an offense to God, but as an offense to ourselves.

**Quest. But now the scruple is, How he may know that he doth grieve for sin as sin, and only for sin?**

Sol. He may know it:

First, By the acting of grief for sin, when there is a universal cessation of punishment; though conscience cease to torment, and the hand of God is drawn off, and there is no fear of man what he can do, yet the heart is humbled, and mourns still for offending of God.

Secondly, By the rising of grief for sin, upon the Assurance and Certificate of peace and reconciliation with God, of which the more certain evidence is given into the soul, the more sorrow and grief breaks forth out of the soul for sinning against such a God.

Thirdly, By the extension of grief, not only for our own sins, but also for the sins of others, the punishment of whose sins reacheth not to us, but yet the dishonor by these sins doth reach unto God, which therefore doth cause our hearts to mourn. Psal. 119:136. Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy Law.

3. It is a grief which is very high and great; the Scripture seems to make it a superlative sorrow, calling it a great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Valley of Megiddo, and a bitterness, as one is in for his first born, Zach. 12:10. And my bowels are troubled within me, mine heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled, &c. Lam. 1:20, and David watered his couch with his tears, Psal. 6:6.

**Quest. You know it is a question whether grief for sin ought not to be the highest and chiefest; in quem dolorem.**

Sol. For the resolution of which, they distinguish of grief of passion, and grief of the will, which is a displeasure of the heart with itself; perhaps another kind of grief may be higher in a passion; but grief of heart for sin, is the highest for displeasure, and also for duration; when that Land-flood is gone, yet then the River of godly sorrow still runs; My sin is ever before me, said David, Psal. 51, and yet his Absalom (for whom he took on so passionately) was not ever before him.

4. It is a grief which is virtual; godly sorrow worketh Repentance, 2 Cor. 7:10. He who truly mourns for sin, his heart doth hate sin, and separates from sin, and sinful ways; and it becomes more holy and godly; and he fears to sin against his God anymore; thus it is not with any false grief whatsoever.

5. Lastly, It is such a grief, under which the soul seeks comfort from God, and nothing can relieve the soul so grieving, but the voice of joy and peace from God. Psal. 51:12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Psal. 85:8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, &c.

Secondly, The qualifications of true penitential confession of sins.

There are five Ingredients in penitential confession.

1. It is the acknowledging of our sins from a deep sense or feeling of them, and our misery by them: Penitential confession is the language of a sensible and troubled spirit; like a sick man's opening of his estate to the Physician, O here lies my grief, my pain, my distemper, my danger, and I fear my death; so here in penitential confession of sins to God, out of a tender and troubled feeling of them, a repentant sinner cries out, O Lord, this is my heart, and this hath been my life; thus have I lived, and thus have I sinned, and thus and thus have I dishonored thee; O I am ashamed and confounded, &c.

2. It is a self-judging acknowledgement of our sins, that for them we are unworthy of the least mercy, and most worthy of the greatest judgment. I am not worthy to be called thy son, Luk. 15:19, not worthy to be called an Apostle; confusion of face belongs to us, Dan. 9:8. And thou art just in all that is brought upon us; thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly, Neh. 9:33.

3. It is an ingenuous acknowledgement of our sins; not hiding or concealing the greatest and worst, nor extenuating or lessening any one sin in the nature or desert, or circumstances of it; nor afflictions devolving or throwing our sins upon others, (as Adam did upon his Wife, and she upon the Devil) but it is a clear Inditement, Accusation, or Charge against ourselves before God. I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, said the Prodigal, Luk. 15:18. I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, and of sinners the chief, said Paul, 1 Tim. 1:13,15.

4. It is a fiduciary acknowledgement of our sins, it is joined with some degree of faith; for it is made to God not as to a Judge only, who condemns upon the Parties confession; but as to a Father, who knows how to pity and forgive the mourning and repenting child, who begins to accuse and condemn himself. Hosea 14:2. Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. Deut. 9:8. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, and because we have sinned against thee. Ver. 9. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Lord, I am a sinful creature, but thou art a merciful God! I deserve wrath, but thou canst show mercy; I am unworthy of any mercy, but thou forgivest sins freely: and thou hast promised forgiveness unto them who confess their sins; O forgive me all my sins for Christ's sake.

5. Lastly, True penitential confession (which shall obtain forgiveness of sins) is attended with desires of humbling, and endeavors of reforming. When a Patient lays open his diseases to the Physician, it is for this purpose, that the Physician would cure them; as the poor man having related unto Christ the grievous distempers of his child, requested, Mark 9:22. But if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us: So when a penitent person

confesseth his sins to God, it is always accompanied with earnest desires, O Lord, heal these diseases of my soul, heal my pride, and heal my vain-glory, and heal my filthiness, and heal my impatience, and heal my unbelief, and heal my worldliness; as David with the confession of his sins, joined this petition, Psal. 51:10. Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Nay moreover, the right confession of sins, is attended with the real endeavor of reforming our sins; therefore Solomon puts these together, He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy, Prov. 28:13. And this was the practice of, the children of Israel, they joined Reformation with their Confession, and good came of it unto them, as you may see, Judge. 10:15. We have sinned. Ver. 16. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord, and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

Thirdly, The qualifications of the right turning from sin, which puts us within in the capacity of the promise of forgiveness of our sins.

First, It is a cordial turning. Joel 2:12. Turn ye, even to me, with all your heart. Deut. 30:10. If thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. 2 Chron. 6:38. If they return to thee with all their heart, and with all their soul. Ver. 39, then hear thou from the heavens their prayer, and their supplication, and forgive their sins, &c. Here are singular expressions to set forth the life and truth of penitential turning from sin; viz. To turn with the heart, and with all the heart, with all the heart, and with all the soul; What may these expressions mean and signify?

There are two things principally intended in them.

1. One is a reality of turning; for he doth indeed repent, whose heart repents; and he doth indeed turn from his sins, whose heart doth turn from sin; if the heart turns not, the repentance is



but feigned and hypocritical: Suppose you should for a while lay aside your sins, you may therein seem unto men to repent; but if you still love your sins, and hold them fast, and will not part with them, you are so far from repenting in the sight and account of God, that he looks upon you as plain hypocrites, who pretend only to forsake your sins, when indeed you are the servants of sin, and intend not at all to forsake them. Well then, to turn from sin with the heart, is to have a heart giving a Bill of Divorce unto our sins, breaking the league with sin, casting it off for anymore love and obedience, &c.

2. Another is, a perfection or fullness of turning; that doth the turning with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with the whole heart, signify; as when one's whole heart is set upon an object, or is employed in any service; the meaning is, that every faculty of the soul is unitedly and concurrently engaged to that object, and in that service: I have sought thee with my whole heart, said David, Psal. 119:10. (i.e.) Not any one faculty of my soul, but is drawn out, and exercised in that work. So to turn from our sin with the whole heart (with all the heart, and with all the soul) is to have every faculty drawn off from sin, and disinterested of sin and (as it were) outing and discharging itself thereof, all of them agreeing and consenting to course it away; viz.

First, The understanding saith, I will never give way to any deceitful motions of sin anymore, nor to any delightful contemplation of it anymore; I will not count it as pleasure or profit, but shall esteem of it as indeed it is, an object every way to be hated and rejected.

Secondly, The Judgment turns away from it by disapproving and disallowing, and condemning of it; I will never reason and plead for

it more; I will never contrive or devise to gratify it more; I will never make pretenses and shifts to color it anymore: O it is the greatest evil, the only dishonor of God, the only cause of the death of Christ, and the only danger and damnation of the soul.

Thirdly, The conscience turns away from it; O saith conscience, sin hath been the thorn in my eye, and the arrow in my side, it hath wounded me, and made me restless, and filled me with bitterness, I will give warning against it, I will threaten against it, I will trouble and vex you for it.

Fourthly, The will turns away from it in resolution and purpose; I will never obey sin anymore in the lusts thereof; I will never give over till I find the virtue of Christ to crucify and mortify them.

Fifthly, And every affection of the soul turns away from sin in true repentance.

1. Love saith, I will never embrace thee more.
2. Desire saith, I will never long after thee more.
3. Delight saith, I will never take content in thee more.
4. Hatred saith, I will never be reconciled with thee more.
5. Fear saith, I will watch, lest the soul be surprised by thee anymore, and I will fly all occasions, &c.
6. Grief saith, I will mourn and lament, because the soul hath been beguiled by thee.
7. Hope saith, I will look up to Christ, that the poor soul may at length get victory over thee, &c. This is indeed to turn from sin

with the whole heart, and this is the way (certainly) to find forgiveness of our sins; whereas if the heart still retains sin, and cleaves unto it, our repentance is but feigned, notwithstanding all the professions we make against it; yea, if any one part of the soul continue an harbor and refuge to sin, you do not truly turn from sin; perhaps you do sometimes for bear sin but yet you love sin; perhaps you are sometimes troubled for sinning, but yet you will keep sin; perhaps your judgment condemns your sins, but yet still your affections run after your sins; why, this is not a true penitential turning from sin, &c.

Secondly, It is an universal turning, a turning from all sins. Ezek. 18:30. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions. Ver. 31. Cast away from you all your transgressions. 2 Cor. 7:1. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Psal. 119:101. I have refrained my feet from every evil way. Ver. 128. I hate every false way. Ephes. 4:22. Put off concerning the former Conversation, the Old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way. There are four sorts of men in the world:

1. Some turn from no sin; these are profane, Ephes. 4:19.
2. Others seem to turn from some sins only; these are hypocrites.
3. Some who turn from one sin to another, from prodigality to covetousness.
4. And some there are who turn from all their sins; and these are true penitents. Beloved, Mark what I am going to say unto you; Every true penitent

First, Looks on the reasons of turning from sin, as universally binding his soul; by the same reason he turns from any one sin, he sees reason to turn from every sin. Do you turn from one sin, because God forbids sin? Why, by the same reason you are obliged to turn from every sin: Do you turn from any one sin, because it is a transgression of the holy and righteous will of God? Why, by the same reason you are engaged to turn from every sin: Do you turn from any one sin, because thereby you do offend and dishonor God? By the same reason you turn from every sin: Do you turn from any one sin, because of the curse which God threatens for that sin? Why, by the same reason you are to turn from every sin; for the curse reacheth to every sin.

Secondly, Again, Every penitent person is a converted person, (else he were not penitent) and every converted person is sanctified throughout; he is a new creature; there is a new nature of holiness diffused and spread over his whole soul; and that new nature of holiness is contrary to all sin, as light is to all darkness, and heat to all cold; and delivers up the whole heart to God; and this could not be, unless it did turn the heart from all sin.

Thirdly, There is in every penitent, a true hatred of sin; they hate the thing that is evil, and they loath their abominations, Psal. 79:10. Now hatred is universal, it is of the whole kind; he who hates a Toad, because it is a Toad, hates every Toad; and he who hates a man because he is holy, hates every holy man; and so he who hates sin because it is sin, he doth hate every sin; and if he hates sin, he turns from sin.

Fourthly, He knows that it is in vain to turn from some sins, and not from all sins; for

1. This is but hypocrisy to spare any known sin, Job 20:13.

2. Sin still remains in dominion; one sin set up in the love and service of it, really maintains the dominion of sin; His servants we are whom we obey, Rom. 6:16.

3. That sin will be your ruin and damnation; for,

First, It certainly keeps your heart from closing with Christ.

Secondly, It continues you Impenitent.

Fifthly, Would you have God to forgive you some of your sins only? Why, any one sin unforgiven, will undo and damn you; you would have every sin to be forgiven, and is it not just then that every sin should be forsaken?

**Object. But will some object, If a man repents not, unless he turns from every sin, then there is no man in the world who repents: For in many things we offend all, Jam. 3:2. And who can say My heart is clean? Prov. 20:9. And there is no man who liveth, and sinneth not, 1 Kings 8:46.**

Sol. For answer unto this, Know, that turning in a penitential way from sin, doth not consist in this, that no sinful quality doth remain any longer in the soul; nor in this, that a person never commits any sin more, concerning which both the places alleged do speak; but it doth consist,

1. In the alienating of the heart from all sin; the heart is turned from the love of all sin, and from all willing subjection unto sin.
2. In the detestation of the will; the heart hates all sin, and will not enter into a league of friendship with any sin.

3. In the resolution of the soul, purposing never willingly to transgress anymore.

4. In the careful endeavor of the soul to leave all former sinful courses, and to walk (forever) in nearness of obedience, and in all well pleasing before the Lord.

5. In the declining of all known occasions and inducements to sin, a shunning and avoiding of them, &c. And can a man be judged truly penitential, who fails in any one of these? Or goes contrary unto them? Therefore look well to yourselves; for if there be any one way of wickedness wherein you walk, and which you will not forsake, you are no truly repenting persons, and you will lose the forgiveness of your sins.

**Object. O but will some reply, It is some one small sin wherein we take delight, and we hope that God will spare us in that; as for any other sin, we are content to forsake and turn from it, but we cannot leave that sin; Suppose it be the sin of whoredom, or fornication, or drunkenness, or swearing.**

Sol. Do you call these sins small sins? Read the Scriptures concerning them, and the persons guilty of them. 1 Cor. 6:9. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with mankind. Vet. 10. Nor Thieves, nor Drunkards shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Eph. 5:5. This ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean person hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God. Ver. 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Zach. 5:3. This is

the curse that goeth forth, Everyone that stealeth shall be cut off on this side; and everyone that sweareth, shall be cut off on that side.

Secondly, Suppose indeed that thy particular sin (comparatively) were a small sin, yet thy love of that sin, and delight in it, makes that exceedingly heinous, and thy condition very dreadful. Is there anything which God hates but sin? And which he hath forbidden but sin? And against which he hath revealed his wrath but sin? And must this be the only object of thy love and delight? This which his soul abhors, which so dishonors, and provokes, and grieves him, O what a condition is this? To delight in that which dishonors thy God? To love that which grieves and provokes God? As Saul said to Jonathan, Do I not know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion? 1 Sam. 20:30. So say I, Dost thou not know that thou lovest that which will be thy damnation? Is there anything which will damn a man but sin? And is there anything which will more certainly do it, than the love of sin? And is there anything more inconsistent with the nature and practice of true Repentance, than to set the heart on sin?

Thirdly, Of all sins whatsoever, the sins which we have loved and delighted in are to be forsaken, if we will approve ourselves true penitents, and within the hopes of pardoning mercies; because 1. Nothing keeps up the power and dominion of sin, so as the love of sin doth. 2. And nothing continues us in the way and course of sin, so much as the love of sin, &c. 3. Nothing makes us more presumptuous in sinning, than the love of sin. 4. And nothing makes us more to neglect and slight the warnings and threatening's, and calls of God, than the love of sin. 5. And nothing doth more harden the heart in the way of sin, than the love of sin. 6. And nothing doth more hinder our hearts to close with Christ, than the love of sin. 7. Nothing doth

more provoke God, and render us more obnoxious to the wrath and curse of God.

Fourthly, There is not a clearer evidence of true Repentance, than (in time) to forsake our beloved sins, and to walk in ways contrary to them; I have kept myself from mine iniquity, Psal. 18:23. This is the laying of the Axe to the root of the Tree, this is indeed a change of the heart; and other sins will easily fall off, if beloved sins be really renounced.

**Object. But yet some will reply, There are some sins unto which we have been so accustomed, that do what we can, we cannot leave and forsake them; Will not God pardon us unless we come off from them?**

Sol. To this I answer.

1. Be the sin what it may be, if you see it to be a sin, and the way to be sinful, it must be forsaken if we will have mercy.
2. Of all sins whatsoever, the sins of custom are to be repented of, custom is no plea, but an aggravation; for a custom of sinning is a long course and time of sinning; a long time of sinning against God, although he hath exercised much goodness and longsuffering towards the sinner, which should have led him to repentance; it is high time for such a sinner to consider and fear, and return, lest the Lord give him up unto a seared conscience, and a reprobate mind, and never treat with him more, but break out into wrath against him.
3. Although you cannot forsake any sin by your strength, yet you may be enabled to forsake the accustomed sinning by the strength of God, to whom you must pray to turn you, that you



may be turned from sin. This work is very difficult, but not impossible; perhaps impossible; to you, but yet not impossible unto God, who can break the cords and chains a sunder, and say to the Captives, Go free, and to them who have been long dead, Live and rise.

**Object. It is once more objected, But I cannot live, I should be undone if I should turn from every sin; and should I not sometimes sell on the Sabbath, and sometimes lie and forswear, and cheat, and cozen people, my trade should fall, and custom be gone, and I go a begging; This is a strange plea, you should be undone unless you commit those sins by which you are undone; but**

Sol. To this let me thus answer.

1. There is no man whom God puts in a lawful Calling, that hath any reason at all to use any sinful way to uphold and maintain himself; why so? Because God hath abundantly undertaken to provide for him, and to bless him, whiles he conscientiously walks and labors in his Calling. Gen. 17:1. I am the Almighty God, Walk before me, and be thou perfect; q.d. Trouble not thyself for other things, only be thou upright, and I (who am the Almighty God) will take care for thee. Psal. 37:3. Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt then dwell in the Land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Hebr. 13:5. Let your Conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

2. Sinful ways are no ways to live or thrive by, but expose to curse and ruin. Jer. 17:11. As the Partridge sitteth on Eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool. Micah 6:10.

Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked? And the scant measures which is an abomination. Ver. 11. Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? Ver. 12. The Inhabitants have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouths. Ver. 13. Therefore will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins. Ver. 14. They shall eat, and not be satisfied. Ver. 15. Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the Olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil. 1 Thes. 4:6. That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, for that the Lord is the avenger of all such.

3. Suppose thy trading should fall, it were much better to be piously poor than to be wickedly rich; to have a little estate, and a good conscience, than a large estate with a guilty conscience; to lose the world, and to save the soul, than to gain the whole world, and to lose a man's soul, &c.

Thirdly, The third Qualification of a true penitential turning from sin, is this, It is a constant and continued turning from sin: And thus also it stands in opposition unto hypocritical turning which wants depth, for it is not with the heart; and which wants breadth, for it is not from all sins; and which wants length, for it is not constant and steadfast, but inconstant, and unsteadfast, and quickly off; come say they in Hose. 6:1, and let us return unto the Lord; but ver. 4. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee! O Judah, what shall I do unto thee! For your goodness is a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Hypocritical turning from sin ariseth from a deceitful heart, and from mutable grounds and circumstances, and therefore it is compared to a deceitful bow, Hose. 7:16. And to a dog who returns again to his vomit, 2 Pet. 2:22. But he who truly repents, doth so turn from sin, that he never returns to his sins again. The Israelites were

charged never to return the way to Egypt anymore, Deut. 17:16. So the Repenting sinner he never returns to the house of bondage, to the service of his sins anymore, Rom. 6:2. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein! Psal. 85:8. But let them not return again to folly. Hose. 14:8. What have I to do anymore with Idols? Therefore repenting is styled a ceasing to do evil, Isa. 1:16. And casting away of sin as a menstruous cloth, saying, Get thee hence, Isa. 30:22.

**Object. But now will some of you reply, You break all our hearts by this Doctrine: For if this only be the true penitential turning from sin, never to return to sin anymore, we are then all of us deceived in our repentance; for we have often committed sin, since our hearts have been afflicted for our sins, and have endeavored to forsake our sins; yea perhaps have committed the same kind of sins.**

Sol. I make no question but this is a very serious Objection which is made by you, and it doth deserve a serious answer, because indeed it may be an Objection from confidence itself something troubled about this qualification of true turning from sin, and fearing the sincerity of repenting.

For answer therefore unto this great Scruple,

**1. I shall lay down some Concessions.**

**2. I shall state out unto you the right meaning of that continued and steadfast turning from sin, which is the certain evidence of true repentance.**

The Concessions or things which I would grant are these.

First, A person may be a true penitent, and although he be so, yet possibly he may sin again; did not David truly repent of his murder? And yet after that he sinned again in the numbering of the people; did not Paul truly repent? And yet he complains, (Rom. 7:19) The evil that I would not, that I do. What penitent is there upon earth, who doth not fear least he should sin, and who doth not many times grieve because he hath sinned again! Nay if we did every day survey our walking, should we not every day find just cause to renew our tears and our repentance? Prov. 24:16. A just man falleth seven times and riseth again. Luk. 17:4. If he trespass against thee seven times, in a day, and seven times in a day turn again unto thee, saying I repent, thou shalt forgive him. And what did the continual burnt-offering which was to be made day by day, import but a daily sinning and expiating of it? &c. Numb. 28:3.

Secondly, A person may be a true penitent, and (possibly) he may relapse or fall into the same kind of sin again: as that is a Relapse into sin when one doth (after some recovery) fall back into the very same sin, either for course or act: we read this in Abraham, and in Lot, and in Peter, and in other true servants of God, they have been overtaken with the same sins into which they did formerly fall. It is true, that they do not relapse in such a manner as wicked men do, neither in respect of willingness, nor of choice, nor of affection, nor of course, nor of quietness, nor of continuance, nor of worseness; but yet as to the very nature of relapsing, they have been overcome with the same sins: 1. Partly from their own weakness. 2. Partly from their own worldliness. 3. Partly from the strength and subtlety of temptations from Satan.

But notwithstanding all this, the Penitents turning from sin, is a continued and steadfast turning, because

1. His habitual purpose not to sin, still continues the same: I said I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue, Psal. 39:1.

2. His habitual desire is that he may not sin: Psal. 119:133. Order my steps in thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. Ver. 5. O that my ways were directed, &c. Ver. 10. O let me not wander from thy Commandments. Ver. 36. Incline my heart unto thy Testimonies, and not to covetousness.

3. His habitual endeavor still continues not to sin: Psal. 119:11. Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee: and Psal. 18:23. I have kept myself from mine iniquity, and Psal. 119:112. I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always unto the end. And ver. 115. Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God.

4. His hatred remains firm against sin, although sometimes he doth sin: The evil that I hate, that I do, Rom. 7:15.

5. His steadfast and continued path, or way, or course of life, is quite contrary to sin: Isa. 26:7. The way of the just is uprightness. Job 23:10. He Knoweth the way that I take. Ver. 11. My feet have held his steps, his way have I kept and not declined. Ver. 12. Neither have I gone back from the Commandment of his lips.

Secondly, Therefore for the right stating of the Penitents continued or steadfast turning from sin; Remember

First, It stands in opposition, not to every new particular act of sin (for that cannot be expected in this life: not such a Repentance as a man shall never sin anymore, no more than such a Faith as that a

man shall never doubt anymore) but it stands in opposition to the former course or way of sinful conversation; (i.e.) He who truly turns from sin, he never doth return anymore to that sinful way in which formerly he lived and walked; it shall never (henceforth) be his Path, his Trade, his Course: How shall we live any longer therein? Rom. 6:2.

Secondly, It stands in opposition not to an unwilling captivity by sin; (Paul himself complains that he was brought into captivity to the Law of sin, Rom. 7:23) but unto a willing subjection, and a willing service of sin anymore. The repenting person never yields himself a servant anymore unto any sin; he never saith that this, or that, or any sin shall be my Lord, my King, my Master, unto which I will yield obedience willingly in its commands and lusts: No, but as in the state of impenitency we were the servants of sin; so in the state of repentance we do become the servants of Righteousness: See Rom. 6:17,18, &c. Therefore though the penitent person doth many times sin, yet he never returns anymore to the former service of sin.

Thirdly, It stands in opposition, not to every sudden and indeliberate surprisal by sin, or to sin, but in opposition to all or any affectionate and deliberate renewing of any league of friendship with sin anymore: The penitent person may and doth sin; but it is one thing to sin, and it is another thing to love sin; it is one thing to be overtaken with a violent temptation, and it is another thing to take sin into the affection and heart, to love it, and embrace it, and delight in it again.

Fourthly, it stands in opposition, not (simply) to falling into sin; but (modally) to resting in sin, for that as Solomon speaks the just falls seven times, yet he riseth up again; And even this that he will by no

means lie in any sinful act (but still riseth with renewed Repentance) this shows that his heart is fixed.

Therefore Beloved, let us sadly and seriously consider of these things which do so intimately discover the truth of that Repentance, upon which God hath promised the forgiveness of sins, that we deceive not, and undo ourselves at the last.

There are three things which foolish and presumptuous sinners do make out only in their own fancies.

1. One is a God of their own, all of mercy, and nothing of justice.
2. Another is, a Faith of their own, a confidence however that they shall be saved, without any doubt or fear.
3. A third is, a Repentance of their own, which is, I am sorry, and I forgive all the world, and God be merciful unto my soul: But be not deceived, there is more in true Repentance than most of us do imagine; This let me faithfully assure you of, that,

1. If your hearts be not broken with shame and sorrow for sin past.

2. If your hearts hate not every present sin.

3. If your hearts fear not to sin for the future.

4. If notwithstanding your professions (nay perhaps your vows) in times of sickness, or danger, or agonies of conscience to leave your sins, you do return again unto the same course of drunkenness, of whoredom, of swearing, of Sabbath breaking, of lying, of stealing, of worldliness, of pride, of maliciousness, of any known sin, so that you project for it, love it, serve it, defend

and continue in it; assuredly you are no true penitents; and if you should live and die in such a condition, you will never find God to be merciful unto you in the forgiveness of your sins. And on the contrary, though you have been formerly great transgressors, even notorious sinners, if now God hath given unto you hearts to see, and to bewail your sins, and humbly to confess them, and to turn from all your wicked ways with a real purpose of heart never to walk in any path of sin, but in all the paths of Righteousness, God will certainly and accordingly to his many promises, forgive you all your sins. And thus have I finished the first sort of persons who are within the compass of promised forgiveness; I shall now proceed unto a second sort, viz.

Secondly, All who do truly believe in Jesus Christ, are undoubtedly within the promise of forgiveness of sins: And for the clear opening of this Conclusion, I will briefly speak unto three things.

1. There is a necessity of Faith, for to enjoy the Remission of our sins.
2. That Faith must be true Evangelical faith.
3. That true Faith may be weak or strong, and whether weak or strong (if it be true) it hath a certainty of forgiveness of sins annexed unto it.

First, There is a necessity of Faith for to enjoy the remission of our sins: There is a necessity of the presence of Faith, and there is a necessity of the use and exercise of faith.

1. A necessity of the presence of Faith: As repentance must necessarily be present, if you would have your sins forgiven; so faith



must be necessarily present in you, if you would enjoy the forgiveness of your sins. Put such a supposition that, Repentance might be in a person without Faith, I dare affirm that the sins of that person should not be forgiven;

**Object. Why, will you say, have you not already proved several promises of forgiveness upon Repentance!**

Sol. True, I have done so; I have cleared it that Remission of sins is promised upon repentance, but not upon repentance as separated from faith; but as repentance is required, so is faith required for the forgiveness of sins: Neither Faith without Repentance, nor Repentance without Faith, but both of them as inseparable Qualifications in every person whom God will pardon; Nay and it is very convenient or useful to make comparisons between these two graces, in reference unto the forgiveness of sins; I humbly conceive that it might easily be demonstrated, that of the two Faith hath the nearest relation, and is of the stronger necessity, and of more immediate approach to the forgiveness of sins than Repentance, although both of them are necessarily required. But I shall not go that way to work, I will only demonstrate the necessity of Faith in us for the forgiveness of our sins; and there are five things which will do that.

First, The precept of Faith, in respect to our forgiveness; faith is expressly commanded. 1 Joh. 3:23. This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ. And it is enjoined and commanded us, if we would have our sins forgiven: Acts 13:38. Be it known unto you, that through this Name is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. Ver. 39. And by him all that believe are justified. Believe and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16:30.

Secondly, And the promise of forgiveness of sins upon the condition of Faith: Acts 10:43. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins: And truly if we do seriously consider the matter, we must acknowledge that faith is the only condition of the Covenant of grace, wherein God becomes our God, and we become his people; and by which (therefore) we become heirs of all the promises of God, and consequently of the promise of the forgiveness of sins; none are the children of God, and heirs of the Promises but by Faith.

Thirdly, It is expressly taken in to the justification of a sinner: So taken in, that by no other means he can be justified, and by this only he must be justified: Rom. 3:28. We conclude that a man is justified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law. Gal. 5:4. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace. You know that the forgiveness of our sins is only in our justification, and that the justification of a sinner is (as to him) only of grace (being justified freely by his grace) Rom. 3:23. And that the sinner is justified by faith, and by faith only, that so it may be of grace; and therefore there is a necessity of faith for the pardon of sins, &c.

Fourthly, It is impossible to find remission of our sins out of Christ, forasmuch as his blood (only) was shed for the remission of sins. Matth. 26:28. And in him only we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Ephes. 1:7. And him only hath God set forth to be a propitiation, and to declare his righteousness for the remission of sin, Rom. 3:25. And it is as impossible to enjoy Christ without Faith, which is the only grace (on our part) to receive Christ, to join us unto Christ, and by which Christ doth dwell in us. Now if we cannot have the forgiveness of sins, but we must first have Christ, and we cannot have Christ but by faith, there is then a necessity of faith for the remission of sins.

Fifthly, If for want of Faith, we shall certainly lose the remission of sins, then the presence of faith is necessary for the forgiveness of sins (this Consequence cannot be denied by any rational Christian) but the want of faith will certainly lose us the forgiveness of sins; three places will clear that. Mar. 16:16. He that believeth not shall be damned. Joh. 3:36. He that believes not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. Joh. 8:24. If ye believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins, If for want of faith we die in our sins, shall not see life, shall be damned, have the wrath of God still abiding on us, then for want of faith we do certainly lose the remission of our sins (for these are utterly inconsistent with remission) but you read, that for want of faith we shall die in our sins, &c. Ergo, there is a necessity of the presence of Faith for the forgiveness of our sins.

2. As there is a necessity of the presence of faith, so is there a necessity of the use or exercise of Faith for the remission of sins: For as in the Covenant of works actual obedience was necessary to enjoy the life then promised, so in the Covenant of grace actual believing is necessary to enjoy Christ and forgiveness purchased by him, and promised in him.

Now there are two acts of faith (especially) required in everyone who would enjoy the forgiveness of his sins.

1. One is an Act of acceptance.

2. The other is an Act of reliance on Christ only for that forgiveness promised.

First, An Act of acceptance, his soul must be brought into Christ, acknowledge and consent to receive him, and whole Christ with the whole heart. If a man think thus, I will have my sins forgiven me, but I care not for Christ, my heart cannot comply with him, his

Commands are too strict, and his ways are too holy for me, I cannot yield to be his upon such terms as he requires! Let me tell you plainly and faithfully, you shall never have your sins pardoned; why? Because the forgiveness of sins is promised upon this condition, if you do believe and receive Christ. You may as well say, that you will be saved forever in heaven, but you will not believe, you will not receive Christ, you will not be his. No no, a Communion in what he hath purchased cannot possibly be without a precedent union with himself; all the Benefits, and all the Privileges by Christ, are communicable only unto them who are Christ's; to them there is no condemnation, but, &c.

Secondly, Besides this Act of acceptance of Christ, there must be also an Act of reliance on Christ, and on him only for the forgiveness of your sins: Put the case you do repent of your sins; yea put the case that you do by faith receive Christ; if now you do rely on your Repentance, and on your Faith, or on any other thing besides Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, you will certainly lose the forgiveness of them. If you should say, God will forgive me for my tear's sake, for my grief sake, for my confession sake, for my turning sake, for my believing sake, but not for Christ's sake, you will certainly miss of pardoning mercy, because all forgiveness of sins unto us, is for Christ's sake: Ephes. 4:32. Forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. 1 Joh. 2:12. Your sins are forgiven you for his Name sake. So then there is a necessity of such an act of faith as to rely only on Christ, as the reason of the pardon of your sins (i.e.) to trust on his Righteousness, on his Redemption, on his blood only, as the All sufficient, and as the effectual reason of your forgiveness, &c.

Secondly, The second thing which I would show unto you is, what that Faith is which is so necessary for us, if that we would enjoy the forgiveness of our sins. For as to the õrt of Repentance, we generally

grant it for a truth, that men must repent if they will have their sins forgiven; so as to the ὅτι of faith it is generally granted that men must believe; and if they do truly believe, their sins shall be forgiven. But the difficulty is what this faith is which entitles us unto, and really assures remission of sins: And great reason there is to clear this, because of the general confidence in men that they have faith, and because of the ordinary self-deceit of men contenting themselves with a false faith, and because of the dreadful hazard and loss upon such a mistake.

Therefore rightly to state out unto you this great Point (upon which our life or death depends) lend me your patience and attention while I briefly discourse upon four Conclusions.

1. All men have not faith.
2. All faith brings us not to a certain remission of sin, although there is a faith which doth so.
3. Some men may think they have that faith which doth entitle them unto remission of their sins, but yet they are deceived.
4. That faith which is necessary unto the remission of sins, and infallibly attains it, may be clearly made evident unto us for the truth of its presence in us.

First, All men have not Faith; So the Apostle expressly, 2 Thes. 3:2. Who hath believed our report! So the Prophet, Isa. 53:1. He came amongst his own, and his own received him not. Joh. 1:11. Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, Joh. 12:37. And there are four things do demonstrate this.

1. The ignorance in many men, they know not Christ the Lord of glory: How shall they believe on him, of whom they have not heard? Rom. 14. So say I, how shall they believe on him whom they have not known? Though knowledge may be without Faith, yet it is impossible there should be Faith without knowledge?

2. The carelessness in many men about the offer of Christ, and the invitations of Christ; they make light of them, Matth. 22:5, and know not the day of their visitation. Luke 19:44. And follow their worldly pleasures and profits, neglecting Christ, and the great things of Christ, Luke 14:18,19,20.

3. The opposition of Jesus Christ; We will not have this man to reign over us, Luke 19:14. Let us break his bonds asunder, and cast away his cords from us, Psal. 2:3. All day long I have stretched my hand unto a disobedient and gainsaying people, Rom. 10:21.

4. The obstinate perverseness of will in the refusing of Christ: ye would not, Matth. 23:27. Ye will not come to me, Joh. 5:40. They have both seen, and hated both me and my Father, Joh. 15:24.

Secondly, Though some men have faith, yet all Faith doth not bring us to the certain remission of sins. There are five sorts of Faith which may be had, and yet no remission of sins is annexed to any one of them,

1. A diabolical Faith: The Devils believe and tremble, Jam. 2:19. They believe that there is a God, and that that wrath which he hath threatened them; shall inevitably befall them, and thereupon they tremble; such a kind of Faith many have who do utterly despair of mercy, and are without hope.

2. A merely Historical Faith, which is an assent unto the Word of God as true, and there it rests: many do firmly believe revealed truths, who yet never embrace the goodness of those truths; they do believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he was sent into the world to save sinners, that he died for sinners, that he made peace by his blood, that there is remission of sins to be had by him, that whosoever believes and repents shall be saved. All these Points they do believe to be certain truths, because the Word of God saith so; and yet for all this their hearts are not drawn to receive Christ, nor to love him, nor to serve him, without which there is no benefit to be had from Christ.

3. A temporary Faith; Luke 8:13. They on the Rock are they which when they hear, receive the Word with joy, and they have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away, Luke 8:13. A man may go far, as to hear the Gospel, and to receive it (to own it in some sort) and that with joy (he may be somewhat taken with the newness of it, or with the sweetness of it) and he may thereupon believe that it sets out the true way of life, and thereupon may make a profession of Christ and the Gospel, and come into an outward communion in the Gospel; and yet this man's faith may not be sound, which Christ shows in two particulars. 1. It wants a root, and it is but superficial, it doth not root in the heart in Christ, nor doth it flow from Christ as a Root or living Principle. 2. It wants constancy or duration, it is not fixed on Christ for Christ alone, but for some self-advantages, and therefore in time of temptation it withers and falls off: Now that Faith which neither roots us nor engrafts us into Christ, nor keeps us faithful and steadfast to Christ, is false faith, and therefore shall miss of the forgiveness of sins.

4. There is a verbal Faith, a Faith which consists only in profession, and words without any vital fruits and manifestations of truth and

power: Jam. 2:14. What doth it profit my brethren, though a man saith he hath Faith, and have not works? Can Faith save him? The Apostle in that place taxeth the vanity of empty and boasting Professors, who talked much of their Faith, and trusted for great matters by it; alas (saith he) you deceive yourselves much in your Faith; there is a Faith which will indeed profit and save, but the faith of which you boast will not do so; for your faith is but a dead faith: If it were true, it would appear in love and good works (as the living Tree doth in fruits) but there is no such working faith in you.

5. And lastly, there is a presumptuous Faith; which is nothing else but a phantastical faith: The simple believeth every word, Prov. 14:15. Ver. 16. The Fool rageth and is confident: So is it with the man who hath presumptuous faith, he believeth every word, Christ is his and died for him, and his sins shall be forgiven, and his soul shall be saved, and yet the fool rageth and is confident: He is a wicked man, and lives wickedly, swears, and lies, and whores, and breaks the Sabbath, and derides holiness, and will not obey the Gospel of Christ, and yet he is confident; he hath no Scripture grounds at all for his confidence; nay there is clear ground for him to believe the wrath of God if he repent nor, &c.

Thirdly, Some men do think that they have that true Faith which doth entitle to remission of sins, but they are deceived. Beloved, self-deceit is very natural and common, that a man may think himself to be in a very good estate when he is in a very wicked estate; and a man may think he hath every grace requisite to salvation, when indeed he hath not any one of them; he may deceive himself about repentance, and about faith, and about love, &c. For there is no true grace, but there is also a counterfeit of that grace which may look like it, but it is not so; Ahab humbled himself, and so did Hezekiah, but his humbling was of another sort: David repented; and so did Judas; but



David's repentance was of another kind than his; Simon Peter believed, and so did Simon Magus, but Peters faith was another kind of faith than his.

There are three Grounds or Reasons upon which men may and do deceive themselves that their Faith is the true Faith which shall bring Remission of sins unto them, when really their Faith is not that Faith unto which forgiveness is promised.

1. They find some things which are the Ingredients of true Faith, which yet are but common ingredients, which another faith may have that gives not title unto forgiveness of sins. As suppose knowledge and assent unto heavenly truths: these are in that faith which gives us the Remission of our sins (though not as giving that Remission) and these may be in a faith which shall never bring you to the Remission of your sins.

2. They find some affections like unto those which come from true faith: Some sudden joys, and delights, and desires upon hearing the Word, and yet these are not those joys which do flow from faith, but are sudden and transient Raptures, flowing only from their own self-deceiving persuasions, and not from any certain knowledge of union with Christ.

3. They find some kinds of conforming of themselves unto the Word in matters of practice, reforming and doing many things, and yet this is not that conformity and that obedience which flows from true faith; For it is not internal, but only external; and it is not universal, but partial; Let the same word strike at a separation 'twixt their hearts and their beloved sin, and press them to a strictness of holy walking, their Faith will not be able to bring them up to a subjection therein unto the will of Christ.

4. These things being premised, I now come to set out before you that Faith for the truth and quality of it, which will certainly get you the remission of your sins. That Faith

First, It always follows special contrition and humiliation for sin: For Faith cannot act on Christ as a Savior until I find myself a sinner, needing him to be my Savior; and therefore the ordinary usual way of the Spirit, is to convince of sin, and to lay us low in the sense thereof (and to break down all our high imaginations and self-confidences, that we come to see no hope but in the free grace and rich mercy of God in Christ) before he conveys Faith into our souls: Luk. 3:5. Every mountain and hill shall be brought low, &c. Ver. 6, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Acts 16:29. He came in trembling and fell down. Ver. 30, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Ver. 31, and they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

2. Is wrought in us only by the power and mighty working of the Spirit of Christ; So the Apostle in Ephes. 1:19, called there the exceeding greatness of his power, and the working of his mighty power: The Spirit of Christ doth accompany and actuate the Gospel, and it sets it on upon the heart (for the truth and goodness of it) with such Majesty, Authority, and Efficacy, that the poor sinner is not able to resist and withstand the precept of Faith, but is made willing and ready, and yields up his heart to receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, It is always raised by Evangelical offers and premises; when the Lord works faith indeed, and draws the heart to believe on Christ, the heart takes ground and encouragement for this from the Offers, and Invitations, and Commands of the Gospel; Come unto me, saith Christ; this is his Commandment that we should believe.

And from the Promises; He that believes shall be saved. Come unto me and I will give you rest, &c.

Fourthly, In true Faith the whole heart or soul is carried out unto Christ: True believing is a believing with all the heart; the whole heart yields unto Jesus Christ; the understanding admires at the glory, and at the kindness, and goodness, and love of Christ; the judgment is filled with choicest thoughts, and highest estimations of Christ, None like Christ, and none but Christ; the will falls in with Christ freely, readily, fully; O Christ, thou art my chiefest good and blessedness; and Christ hath all the affections of desire, love, delight, and joy; these are taken up and filled with Christ, &c. Faith brings in all to Christ.

Fifthly, True Faith sincerely sets up all Christ; takes and sets up Christ as our Priest for Expiation of sins, Reconciliation, Intercession, and him alone; and as our Prophet to teach and instruct us; and as our King to rule us, to destroy his enemies in us, to give us Laws, to receive obedience from us.

Sixthly, True faith eternally unites the heart to Christ; neither earthly preferment on the one side, nor persecutions and discouragements on the other side can separate the heart of a true believer from Jesus Christ.

In a word, true faith (which hath the promise of forgiveness of sins) doth not only know Christ, but approves of Christ; not only approves of Christ, but receives Christ; not some of Christ, but all Christ; not with some part of the heart, but with the whole heart; not for a time, but forever; not upon our conditions, but upon his own conditions; not occasionally and upon an exigence, but freely and upon choice; not only for safety, but also for service; nor only for profession, but also for union and communion. It matcheth us to Christ as a Wife to

the Husband; it unites us to Christ as Branches to the Vine; it joins us to Christ as Members to the head. Beloved, this is that faith which is necessary for the remission of our sins: If you have not a Faith produced by the mighty working of the holy Ghost; if you have not a faith planted in a broken heart; if you have not a faith grounded on Gospel-offers and promises; if you have not a faith which brings in all your heart to match with Christ; if you have not a faith which receives whole Christ in all his offers; if you have not a saith for service on your part, as well as for benefit on Christ's part; if you have not a faith which will conform you to Christ, as well as apply Christ to you, it is but a counterfeit faith; and as it gives you no interest in the person of Christ, so it will never entitle and convey unto you any forgiving mercy and salvation by Christ.

Thus you see what that Faith is which is necessary for the forgiveness of sins: Now a word to the third Particular, viz.

Thirdly, That true Faith (which entitles to the forgiveness of sins) it may be either weak or strong: Compare believer with believer, there is this latitude in true faith; therefore you read of great faith in some, and of a little faith in others; of some whom Christ styles his lambs, and others his sheep; and John calls some young men, others little children, and others fathers; there are different measures of faith amongst believers, 1. Partly from the different imparting's of the Spirit, who is a free and wise cause; and from partly 2. The different means and helps which conduce to the improvement of faith; and 3. Partly from the different Age and times of faith; some have been long in Christ, in others Christ is but newly formed; and who can expect that babes newly born should have that strength and sufficiency as men have who are grown to a riper age? Yea, and the same faith is in the same person first but weak and tender, but as the bruised reed, but as the smoking flax, &c.

Fourthly, Bur then in the last place, (which shall close up this Discourse) whether the faith be strong, or whether it be weak, if yet it be the true Gospel faith, (of which I have spoken) it hath a certainty of the forgiveness of sins promised and annexed unto it. The Scripture expressly clears this Conclusion, Acts 10:43. Whosoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins. Joh. 3:18. He that believeth in him, is not condemned; why then he is absolved or pardoned. 1 John 2:12. I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you. Acts 13:39. By him all that believe are justified. Isa. 53:6. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

And there are five clear Demonstrations of this.

First, Every believer (whether strong or weak) is in the Covenant; God is their God, and they are all of them his people; he is their father, and they are all of them his children. Gal. 3:26. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Now everyone in Covenant hath the express promise of forgiveness of sins. Jer. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Secondly, Every believer is in Christ, and Christ is in him; Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith, Eph. 3:17, and Gal. 3:28, speaking of all sorts of believers, he saith, Ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Now the Scripture affirms six things of all who are Christ's.

1. That they have love. 1 Joh. 5:12. He that hath the Son, hath life.
2. That there is no condemnation to them, Rom. 8:1.
3. That they shall never perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16.

4. That in his blood they have redemption, even forgiveness of their sins, Eph. 1:7.

5. That Christ bears their sins, 1 Pet. 2:24, and did put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, Hebr. 9:26.

6. That Christ is made unto them (and that of God) righteousness and redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30.

Thirdly, The promise of forgiveness is made to the believer as a believer; not as a strong believer, for then none but strong believers should be forgiven; nor as a weak believer, for then none but weak believers should be forgiven; but to the believer as a believer, and therefore to every believer whether strong or weak.

Fourthly, All believers have the like and equal advantage (by virtue of their union with Christ) in all things purchased by Christ, which are of a necessary respect to their safety and salvation. I say of a necessary respect to these; whatsoever is necessary to deliver from hell, and whatsoever is necessary to bring to heaven, in that doth every believer share alike; therefore every believer is sanctified, because without holiness no man shall see the Lord; and therefore every believer is justified, because only they are glorified who are justified; and so every believer hath his sins forgiven, because pardon of sin is necessary to salvation; otherwise he must be damned for his sins, and never shall see life.

Fifthly, Shall I add one Argument more? If there were any believer who should not have his sins forgiven, Then some believers might be in the same condition with unbelievers, both unpardoned, and both under condemnation; but this cannot be; for Christ hath plainly differenced the state of the believer and of the unbeliever thus, Joh. 3:18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that

believeth not, is condemned already. Ver. 36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

And thus you have heard these two Conclusions manifestly cleared from the Word of God; viz. That;

1. Every truly repenting sinner is within the promise of forgiveness of sins.
2. Every truly believing person is also within the same promise of forgiveness of sins.

And on the contrary, you have heard it also cleared, 1. That no impenitent person, 2. That no unbelieving person hath any promise of the forgiveness of sins.

What should these truths work on all us who have heard the testimony of God given in so abundantly for them? I will tell you what impression they should make upon us.

First, We should all of us fear and tremble, lest we should come short of such a mercy which doth so nearly, and so eternally concern us, as the forgiveness of our sins.

Secondly, Be no more so averse unto the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance and Faith.

Thirdly, We should with all carefulness and seriousness, and speediness search our hearts, and try our ways, whether we have attained the grace and practice of true Repentance; and whether true justifying faith be in us yea or no; especially considering the general course of men is impenitency and unbelief; and our own courses of life have been like that of other men, a walking (as the Apostle

speaks) in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable Idolatries, 1 Pet. 4:3. Foolish, disobedient, deceiving, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another, Tit. 3:3. And perhaps (as the Apostles fear was of many of the Corinthians) we have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication, and lasciviousness which we have committed, 2 Cor. 12:21.

Fourthly, We should be most importunately fervent with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom alone every good and perfect gift doth come; that he would grant unto us (as he did unto those Gentiles) repentance unto life, Acts 11:18, and that it may be given unto us (as once unto the Philippians) to believe, Phil. 1:29.

Fifthly, We should more diligently and reverently attend the preaching of the Word, by which God doth put forth his power and his grace for the working of Repentance and Faith in us. Luke 11:32. The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonas. Ephes. 1:13. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your Salvation.

## SECT. VII.

Doth God himself promise the forgiveness of sins unto all people in Covenant with him? Behold then (you who are the people of God) your condition, and your portion; you are the Generation of God's mercy, you (and you only) are the people who have their iniquities forgiven, and upon this very account, your very condition

1. It is a very comfortable condition; Son, Be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee, Matth. 9:2. Comfort ye, comfort ye my



people, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her iniquity is pardoned, Isa. 40:1,2.

2. Yea, it is a very blessed condition; Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputed no iniquity, Psal. 32:1,2.

**Quest. But will some say, Wherein lies the comfortableness and blessedness from this, that our sins are forgiven?**

Sol. I will show you, 1. In a privative way. 2. In a positive way.

1. In a privative way.

First, If God himself hath forgiven you your sins, Then you are (forever) delivered and secured from the wrath of God. God will never deal with you, or against you as a revenging Judge, as an enemy in wrath. Beloved, it is better to have all the world to be our enemy, than to have God to be our enemy; and to have all the world displeased with us, than to have God displeased with us; for he is of infinite power, and his wrath is of infinite weight; it doth exceedingly distress and vex the conscience, and fills up the soul with dreadful amazement, and with unsufferable pains, and with continual restlessness, that the sinner (upon whom it is fallen) is utterly cursed, and sinks with what he feels, and with what he still fears, and every day and hour expects from the just God for all his unpardoned sins. Now from this wrath of God as a revenging Judge, (whatsoever it may be in the nature of it, or in the effect of it, and in the eternity of it) is every forgiven sinner delivered and secured; it shall never fall upon him at all; though temptations may fall upon him, and afflictions may befall him, and the fatherly displeasures may befall him, and though some kinds of desertions may befall him, and though misapprehensions of God's love may befall him, and though

sickness and weakness, and death itself may befall him, yet the judicial wrath of God shall never befall him; neither in whole, nor in part; neither in greater, nor in lesser degrees; neither in this life, nor in the life to come; for Rom. 5:9. Being justified by the blood of Christ, we are saved from wrath through him. Ephes. 2:16. And by his Cross all enmity is slain. Gal. 3:13. And Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; when sin is forgiven, wrath is gone, and curse is gone; sin being taken away, they are taken away: Mine anger is turned away from him. Hos. 14:4.

Secondly, You shall never be condemned for your sins, you are certainly off from that sentence: Who (saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:33) shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Who (Ver. 34) is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. To be condemned, and to be justified, are absolutely inconsistent: for condemnation is the act of justice; justification is the act of grace; in condemnation sin is imputed, but in justification sin is not imputed; in condemnation the sinner is adjudged to that punishment which his sins deserve; but in justification he is discharged of that punishment which (for sin) he was obnoxious unto; in condemnation the sinner is called to an account, and he is questioned, and sentenced as a cursed Malefactor; but in justification he is dismissed, cleared, and acquitted by the blood of Christ, and his sins are mentioned no more, and never shall be remembered. Now what an unspeakable mercy is this, that thy poor soul shall never be damned? That notwithstanding all thy sins, which deserve an eternal separation from God in blessedness, and an eternal endurance of the flames of hell, yet none of these things shall ever befall thee! But the Lord himself hath delivered thy soul from going down into the pit, in forgiving all thy transgressions, in which he hath cancelled the handwriting which was against thee, and taken it out of the way; so that nothing is to be found anymore which may be an effectual Charge

against you, and which can remain as a ground or reason for God to condemn and destroy you. There is nothing whatsoever for which God will condemn any person, but sin; and no person can be condemned for sin, if God hath been pleased to forgive him his sins in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Conscience hath no more authority to accuse you; to threaten you; to terrify you; to disquiet or trouble you; why so? God hath discharged you, and conscience must speak as God speaks, and act in a subordination to God's acting. If God doth bind, conscience must not loose, but bind; and if God looseth and acquits, conscience must not bind, but loose: If God condemns, conscience must not acquit and forgive; and if God acquits and forgives, conscience must not condemn; if God speaks trouble, conscience must not speak peace; and if God speaks peace, conscience must not speak trouble; for conscience is but God's Deputy or Officer, and hath Commission to act always in the way of subordination and conformity unto God; as it must bring home the threatening's unto those whom God threatens; so it must supply the comfort unto those to whom God promiseth comfort and mercy: If God saith, Be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee, conscience now hath no longer Commission to disquiet the heart, saying, Peace belongs not to thee, and comfort belongs not to thee, but God is still displeased with thee, and holds thee for his enemy, and will be avenged on thee for thy sins: If conscience (through darkness and misinformation, or temptation) should speak thus, it now exceeds its Commission, and deals unrighteously, and God will not ratify such a testimony, or such a charge from such a conscience. But by the way, Take notice what a mercy it is to have your sins pardoned, in that your consciences have no more power or authority to wound and charge, and threaten, and condemn you for any of your sins; if a wounded conscience be one of the dreadfulest punishments here on earth; then to be totally

secured from that, (and upon this ground, that he hath forgiven us our sins) is one of the greatest blessings here on earth, which privatively concerns us.

Fourthly, If your sins be pardoned, then also you are discharged of the spirit of bondage to fear; you are fenced from all slavish fears which formerly did abound in your hearts, and oppress, and distract them. Before a man's sins were pardoned, and guilt lay on him, there were ten distracting and crushing fears lying on his heart; The sinner

1. Did fear the secret purpose or intention of God against him; O said he, What will God do with this guilty soul of mine! I fear lest I be one of them to whom he will never show mercy.

2. Did fear the open threatening's of God: O saith he, Will not all these evils and curses which God hath threatened, will they not shortly be my portion?

3. Did fear every judgment of God walking upon the earth, as if it were an evil drawing near to him, and which his sins would bring to his house, and to his person, and he should not escape

4. Did fear that some time or other his sinning's would be discovered, and that they should be laid open to his shame and reproach before the whole world.

5. Did fear any outward enjoyment and comfort which he had, that for his sins God would ere long deprive him of them in wrath.

6. Did fear many times to come and hear the Word of God, lest it should awaken and trouble his conscience with more apprehensions of his own guilt and God's wrath.

7. Did fear the very thoughts of death, and especially lest God should suddenly cut him off from the Land of the living, before he had so improved his opportunities as to make his peace with God.

8. Did fear all appearing's before the Judgment-seat, lest he should receive his sad and eternal sentence there for his sins.

9. Did fear all his approaches and requests unto God, that God would not hear nor regard them, because his sins were upon record in the Court against his soul.

10. Did fear that no way could ever be found so powerful and effectual, as to satisfy the justice of God, and purchase mercy enough for the pardon of his sins; but now repenting of his sins, and believing on the Lord Jesus, and having in his blood obtained the remission of sins, this spirit of bondage to fear, is taken away; the forgiveness of his sins by God himself, hath satisfied him, and hath answered all the doubts and fears of his soul; his sins are pardoned, and God is reconciled, and now all is well and safe; of what, or of whom should he be afraid?

Fifthly, If your sins be forgiven you, then nothing which befalls you in life or death shall ever be an evil or hurt unto you; for when sin is pardoned, all curse is removed. Whatsoever state the unpardoned sinner is in, it is a cursed estate to him; and whatsoever contingencies befall that sinner, they are cursed unto him; his prosperity is cursed unto him, and his adversity is cursed to him; his enjoyments are cursed, and his losses are cursed; his blessings are cursed, and his crosses are cursed; his life is cursed, and his death is cursed; nothing which he hath doth him good; and nothing which God doth, doth him any good, but hurt; he is the worse under all: But when sins are forgiven, the sting, the poison, the curse is gone, and

nothing is for evil, or for mischief unto him; prosperity shall do him no hurt, but good; and adversity shall do him no hurt, but good; his enjoyments are a blessing, and his losses are a blessing; if he lives, life shall be a blessing; and if he dies, death shall be a blessing. All is food and physic all is good, or for good unto him, he gains by his losses; and that which is another man's misery, is his mercy; sweet shall come out of bitter; and light shall come out of darkness; and good shall come out of evil; and comfort shall come out of sorrow; and life shall come out of death.

Secondly, In a positive way.

First, The obtaining of the forgiveness of your sins, is a clear, sure decision of all the great Questions of a troubled soul. There are six things concerning which we oftentimes complain and question; viz.

1. Hath God Elected us?
2. Are we in Covenant with God?
3. Is God reconciled to us, and we are reconciled to him?
4. Is Christ ours, and are we his?
5. Have we truly repented? And have we truly believed?
6. Shall these poor souls of ours certainly be saved? Have not all these been, and are not some of these the constant debates and doubts, and questions of our hearts? Now mark what I say, when God himself (according to his promise) forgives unto us all our sins, all those debates are concluded and resolved; for

1. None are forgiven but the Elect of God; and all the Elect either are or shall be forgiven their sins. Ephes. 1:4. Having chosen us

in him before the foundation of the world. Ver. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

2. Whosoever have their sins forgiven, are certainly in Covenant with God; God is their God, and they are his people. Psal. 85:2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; Thou hast covered all their sins, Selah. Remission of sins is the portion only of the Church and people of God.

3. God is certainly reconciled if sins be forgiven. 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

4. Christ is unquestionably yours, and you are Christ's, forasmuch as the partaking of this, and other choice benefits by him, doth necessarily presuppose a precedent union with him, and relation unto him; whom he called, them he justified, Rom. 8:30. And what is it there to be called, but to be brought in effectually to Christ? And what is it to be justified, but to be pardoned?

5. And so for Repentance and Faith, certainly they have been true, if forgiveness of sins have been granted unto you, because to none but unto such who do truly repent, and who do truly believe, is forgiveness of sins promised.

6. And lastly, If your sins be forgiven, you shall be undoubtedly saved. Rom. 8:30. Whom he justified, them also he glorified: So Acts 26:18. That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Secondly, If your sins be forgiven you, then your way is opened and cleared, with all boldness of access and confidence to your God and

Father. There are three choice Cordials and Encouragements to all who have obtained pardoning mercy.

1. They may look upon their God as sitting altogether and always on his Throne of grace and mercy; as their loving God, as their kind God, as their good God, as their Father, as their Helper, as their Savior. O what a sight of God is that sight of him in heaven, where there is love, and nothing but love; peace, and nothing but peace; joy, and nothing but joy; favor, and nothing but favor; blessed communion, and nothing but blessed communion! Such a kind of sight of God have justified and pardoned persons here on earth; they may now look on God as their God, as their Father, as loving of them, delighting in them, and rejoicing over them to do them good; and what should hinder them to come with a filial confidence to such a God and Father?

2. They may look up unto him for any mercy which they do need, and which he doth promise unto them. Psal. 81:10. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. Hos. 2:19. I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercy. Ver. 21. And it shall come to pass in that day I will hear saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth. Ver. 22. And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel. Beloved, there is no partition wall but sin; nothing that separates between God and us, but sin; nothing that hinders good things from us, but sin; now if that partition wall be broken down, (as certainly it is when sin is forgiven) there is nothing on your part to hinder you from asking, and nothing on God's part to with-hold him from giving anything that is good unto you.



3. They may look on all their enjoyments as mercies, as the fruits of love with marvelous contentment and delight; mercies are sure and sweet unto them: As every one of the Vessels had that inscription upon it, (Holiness to the Lord) so every receipt which the forgiven sinner partakes of hath this superscription on it, A token of love from the reconciled God; you have the bond and the seal, the wine and the sugar, the day and the Sun-shine, mercies from mercy, mercies in mercy, this and that, and my sins pardoned.

Thirdly, If your sins be forgiven you, this will be a great support, strength, relief, upholdment unto you in all occurrences whatsoever, and in all times whatsoever.

1. In times of outward wants and straits; as Lactantius said of Lazarus, he was sine domo, but not sine Domino; sine vest, but not sine Fide; sine cibo, but not sine Christo: The like may we say of the pardoned person, he may be without money, but not without mercy; he may be without friends, but he is not without a Father; he may be without outward mercies, but he is not without the God of mercies; his body may want riches, but his soul is not without forgiveness: God is his forgiving God, and his reconciling God, and his blessed God and portion forever and ever.

2. In time of outward troubles; when all the world is in combustion and distraction, and there is no rest nor peace to be found amongst men, why then can the pardoned sinner find rest and peace; peace in his God, and peace in his Christ, and peace in his conscience; my sins are pardoned, it is God that justifies me; he is at peace with me, and I am so with him, and therefore I can rejoice in tribulation itself.

3. In times of losses and trials: God hath taken away this friend, and that parent; this child, and that comfort; but he hath not taken away his loving-kindness from me: 'It is but a cross, 'tis not a curse; 'tis but

a refining fire, 'tis not a consuming fire; 'tis but the rod of Father, 'tis not the word of a Judge; 'tis to heal and pacify, 'tis not to harden and destroy; 'tis but the physic of love, 'tis not the sting of wrath; for if sins be pardoned, then enjoyments are from love, and then losses are from love: If God gives, that is in mercy; if God takes away, that also is in mercy. O Sirs, a loss, a cross sits heavily on the heart, when the guilt of sin sits strongly on the conscience; but if the guilt be taken off there, (as certainly it is upon the forgiveness of sins) then may a man take up the cross, and kiss it, then may he stoop down, and bear it; then may he take in a mercy, and rejoice; and then can he give back a mercy, and bless, that God who hath given, and now hath taken, &c.

4. In times of sickness and death; when all the world is leaving of us, and when we are leaving all the world, and the short minute of time is expiring, and the larger date of eternity is appearing; when Physicians say there is no hope, and friends are taking their farewell forever, and no earthy thing can be of comfort or relief: O then the fiduciary apprehension of a reconciling Christ, and of a reconciled God, and of all our sins as pardoned; why this revives, this stays, this cheers up our spirits, this is better than life, this is life in death: Now let thy servant depart in peace, said Simeon, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation; now let me die, and go to my God and Father; it is certain, that that man may look on death with joy, who can look on Christ, and the forgiveness of his sins with faith.

5. In times of temptations; How many temptations are answered, if once our sins are pardoned.

1. God will damn thee for thy sins; O no; he hath pardoned my sins, and therefore he will not damn me for them.

2. But do not thy sins deserve hell and damnation? They do so, but God hath forgiven according to the riches of his grace in the

blood of Christ.

3. But thinkest thou that God will not one time or another remember thy sins, and judge thee for them? O no; he saith that he will forgive iniquity, and remember my sin no more.

4. But dost thou not see that he remembers thy sins, when his hand lies now so heavy upon thee? O no; this is no judicial remembrance, but a paternal chastisement.

5. But certainly God loves thee not; nay; if he had not loved me freely, he would never have justified me freely.

6. But thou hast nothing to do with Christ, nor ever shalt thou have benefit by Christ. Why this is strange, that my sins are forgiven me for his Names sake, yet that I should have no part in Christ, and no benefit by Christ.

7. But God is still displeased, and angry with thee. No; for he hath taken away iniquity, and therefore his anger is turned away from me.

8. But God will not hear any prayer which thou makest, nor mayst thou be admitted into any communion with him. O but this is false; for God himself hath said, 2 Chron. 7:14. If my people shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and forgive their sins, and will heal their Land. Ver. 15. And mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attend unto the prayer that is made in this place.

9. But what good will the pardon of thy sins do thee, as long as thy sins rule and prevail over thee? O but that God who

pardoneth iniquity, saith also that he will subdue our iniquities, Micah 7:18,19.

10. But I can and will charge thy sins upon thee, and condemn thee for them. O but what hast thou to do to charge sins, when God hath discharged sins? And what hast thou to do to condemn me, if God hath forgiven me? Rom. 8:33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Ver. 14. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.

#### SECT. VIII.

Doth the promise of forgiveness belong unto all that are in Covenant with God? The last Use then shall be for Instruction unto all the people of God whose sins God himself hath forgiven.

There are five duties which do in a special manner take hold of you.

First, Bless much; How should the heart be filled with the praises of so good a God, and be enlarged in the blessings of him! Psal. 103:1. Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. Ver. 2. Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Ver. 3. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities. Beloved,

1. Set this mercy in comparison with other mercies, and if you find just cause to bless God for them, surely you will find more cause to bless God for this forgiving mercy. You many times bless God for delivering your life from death, and have you not more reason to bless God for delivering your souls from hell? You many times bless God for delivering your bodies from pains and aches, and have you not more reason to bless God for delivering your conscience from

wrath and terror? You many times bless God for a blessing which is but for a time, and but for this life, and have you not more reason to bless God for this blessing of forgiveness, which reaches to eternity, and unto everlasting life? You bless God many times for peace with man, and have you not more reason to bless God for peace with God? Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, &c. Rom. 5:1. You bless God many times that all is well on earth, and no cross befalls you; have you not more reason to bless God that all is well at heaven, and that no curse shall ever befall you. You many times bless God that differences and suits are taken up between you and men, so that you shall never be troubled and punished by men, and have you not more cause to bless God that all differences are taken off betwixt you and God, so that you shall never be questioned, nor be damned by him?

2. Set the unpardoned sinners condition, and your pardoned condition together; How cursed a condition that is, and how blessed a condition this is; and tell me then whether you have not great reason to bless your God: When a sinner lives and dies an unpardoned sinner, he lives under wrath, and dies under wrath; he lives an enemy to God, he is a Christless person, and an hopeless person; all his transgressions stand upon Record, and in their full power of guilt against his soul, and all that curse and punishment which God hath threatened, and which all his sins have deserved, they shall certainly and perfectly, and eternally be inflicted upon him; God will question him, and convince him, and judge him, and damn him, and none shall ever be able to deliver him, or help him; he shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, &c. Now all this would have been the portion of your cup, had not the Lord in much mercy pardoned your iniquities and your sins; for your sins were of the same kind, and of the same guilt, and of the same desert as the sins of others, yet they are condemned,

and you are pardoned: They die, and you live; wrath is inflicted on them, but mercy is bestowed on you; they shall never see Heaven, and you shall never see Hell; they shall be damned forever, and you shall be saved forever; they have no reason to complain, because the righteous God doth punish them (only) for their sins; and you have reason to bless, because the gracious God hath mercifully pardoned your sins for his own sake.

Secondly, Love much; Love your God much, who hath forgiven you much: He frankly forgave them both; tell me therefore which of them will love him most, Luke 7:42,47.

There are six Reasons why we should love God.

1. Because he is good.
2. Because he doth us good.
3. Because he loves us, 1 Joh. 4:19. We love him, because he loved us.
4. Because he sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins, 1 Joh. 4:10.
5. Because he hath provided and promised a Kingdom to them that love him, Jam. 1:12.
6. Because he hath forgiven us our sins, and that freely, when we deserved it not, nay when we deserved the contrary. O how should this God be loved by you, who alone share in his love, in his Christ! In his forgiving mercy! How should your hearts be endeared unto him, be knitted unto him, be taken and affected with him!

The Schoolmen do distinguish of a twofold love, Amor gratuitus; such a love was God's love to us in the forgiving of our sins: Having

forgiven you, Col. 2:13. (the word signifies freely, or graciously forgiven you) all trespasses; and Amor debitus; such a love we do owe to God who doth forgive us: all love, all kinds of true love, and all degrees of true love.

First, A love of desire, our souls should long after him, Psal. 73:25.

Secondly, A love of delight, our souls should take their fill of contentment and satisfaction in him.

Thirdly, A love of ecstasy, wondering and admiring at this great love and rich mercy of God towards us; Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity? Mich. 7:18. But I obtained mercy: I, said Paul, 1 Tim. 1:13.

Fourthly, A love of similitude: Forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Ephes. 4:32, shall we be so hardened to others, when God is so tender to us?

Fifthly, And a love of zeal, in promoting what God loves, and doth respect his honor; and in removing what God hates and makes for his dishonor.

Sixthly, A love of friendship, to have our hearts knit unto him, and bound unto him in an everlasting Covenant.

Thirdly, Fear much: They shall fear the Lord and his goodness, Hos. 3:5. There is forgiveness with thee that that thou mayest be feared, Psal. 130:4. He will speak peace to his people, and to his Saints, but let them not turn again to folly, Psal. 85:8. No man should have a more tender Conscience, than he who hath gained a pacified Conscience: None more fear to commit sin, than he whose sins God

hath remitted; though God can multiply pardons, yet it is not good nor safe for you to put him to it. It is the right and proper improving of forgiveness of sins, to watch our hearts, and to take heed that we sin no more: It argues a profaneness of heart to sin because God is merciful; so it argues a most wicked heart to sin after God hath shown mercy in the forgiving of sins. Is forgiveness of sins so cheap and ordinary, that you will again venture to sin! Did it cost Jesus Christ his precious blood to purchase the forgiveness of sins, and wilt thou as it were crucify him again to procure thee another pardon? Did it cost thee so many troubles of heart and confession, and supplication to gain forgiveness of former sins, and wilt thou break thy bones again, that mercy may set them again! Did God show unto thee such riches of grace after all the evil thou hadst committed, to discharge thee, to be reconciled unto thee, to quiet and pacify thy Conscience, to pass by all, and wilt thou now break the Laws of Love, and Bonds of Friendship, to sin and provoke a pardoning and a kind God?

Fourthly, Improve much this singular mercy that ye are within the promise of the forgiveness of your sins: Improve this four ways;

1. As to what depends upon it.
2. As to what accompanies it.
3. As to what may still preserve you in the sweet and comfortable fruition of it.
4. As to what you may conclude from it, both a parte Ante, & a parte Post.

First, Improve it as to all the fruits which do depend upon it, and flow from it: Our justification (or remission of sins) is a Root which



bears very precious fruit, and a Fountain from which do flow many sweet streams: Thence ariseth all the peace in Conscience; thence ariseth all the transcendent joy of the heart; thence ariseth all the hope of the soul; thence ariseth your great confidence in your communion with God. Peace in Conscience depends on peace with God, which certainly you have when God forgives your sins: And therefore beseech the Lord to speak this peace unto you: O Lord, thou sayest in thy promise unto me, thy sins are forgiven; now I beseech thee say unto my Conscience, Go in peace, live in peace, peace be unto thee; in forgiving thou respectest thy glory and my comfort; say unto my Conscience, Neither trouble, nor be troubled more; let me know that I have found grace in thine eyes, let grace and peace come from thee. Joy of heart, this also springs from forgiveness of sins received by Faith: A condemned Malefactor hath no cause to joy, but the pardoned sinner hath, Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement. Psal. 51:8. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Sin brake his bones (his strength, his comfort, his joys) and the forgiveness of sin, the news of that, the hearing of that, the knowledge of that would be a ground of joy and gladness to him. O thou pardoned sinner, why dost thou walk so heavily, so dejectedly, so pensively, so uncheerfully? Is not the promise of forgiveness of thy sins clear and open to thee? And should not a forgiven sinner rejoice? God rejoiceth when he shows us mercy, and should not we rejoice when we receive mercy: Indeed when we seek for pardoning mercy, we should seek it with tears; but when we have found mercy we should go home with joy.

Beloved, pardoned sinners may rejoice, and should rejoice: In whom after ye believed, ye rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. 1:8. Should not the forgiveness of sins, a passing from death to life, from wrath to love, from hell to heaven, and the enjoying of God

as our God, and as our Friend, and as our Father, are not here causes good enough, sufficient to rejoice in the Lord? Therefore in the times of your sadness cheer your hearts, and expostulate with your hearts, why are you thus cast down? And why walk you thus heavily? What, God your God! What, Christ your Christ! And all your sins freely forgiven! And out of all danger, and within all hopes, and yet be so heavy! &c.

Secondly, Improve the forgiveness of sins, as to what accompanies a forgiven condition: Beloved, forgiveness of sins never goes alone in promise, nor in participation; you shall find the great Covenant of gifts linked together in promise, and they are jointly desired by the people of God; a false heart is only for pardon; do you not find the new heart, and the new Spirit, and the soft heart, and the obedient heart all conjoined with this promise of forgiveness? Ezek. 36:25,26. O then rest not here, saying, My sins are pardoned, but press the other promises there of sanctification: O Lord subdue mine iniquities, as well as forgive iniquities; thou hast given me mercy, O give me grace! Thou hast broken my fetters, O heal my diseases! Thou hast covered my sins, O turn my sinful soul! Enable me to bring thee glory by holy walking, seeing thou hast graciously pardoned the wickedness of my former living!

Thirdly, Improve the forgiveness of your sins as to what may still preserve you in the sweet and comfortable fruition of it: Though one cannot lose the forgiveness which God hath given him, yet he may lose the comfortable sight and feeling of it, either by some great transgression, or by his pride, or by his covetousness, &c. O but do not lose the hive which hath so much honey; by all means (so) preserve this favor and this mercy, that still you may fetch joy, and comfort, and support from it; and therefore when you have attained unto the forgiveness of your sins, learn then

1. To walk humbly with your forgiving and reconciled God (the more is forgiven, the more cause of humility) confessing still your unworthiness of so great a mercy, and that God did forgive your sins, not for your sake, but for his own Name sake; be not lifted up at all, but remember still your own sins which God hath forgiven (as Paul did) and upon what gracious terms God forgave you: Who am I, said David; I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies, said Jacob.

2. To walk exactly before your forgiving God; David saith in Psal. 32:1. Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven. Psal. 32:1,2. Blessed is the man in whose Spirit there is no guile. And Psal. 119:1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord. Ver. 3. They do no iniquity, they walk in his ways; O that my ways were so directed that I might keep thy statutes!

3. To walk steadfastly with so good a God: O that we could but attain one thing! Viz. to keep up that frame of spirit, and that path or practice of walking which we found in ourselves, when God was pleased to let into our hearts the news that our sins were forgiven, and that we could still continue so to walk with that thankfulness, with that humbleness, with that tenderness, with that delightfulness with that enlargement; then would our Sun still shine with strength, then would our forgiveness still appear in sight, and would afford unto us a long harvest of joys, and living springs of lasting comfort.

Fourthly, Improve the forgiveness of your sins so as to be able (in your distresses and trials) to draw out and maintain such Conclusions every way, as that mercy is a ground and Foundation for.

**Quest. You will say, What might one conclude from this that God hath forgiven his sins?**

Sol. I will mention some Conclusions which may infallibly be drawn from it, viz.

First, You may conclude the seasonable enjoyment of lesser mercies, because God hath forgiven your sins which is the greater mercy; if he fulfils his promise in the greatest blessings, surely he will not fail you in the least blessings; as the Apostle argued, He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him to death for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things! Rom. 8:32. So say I, hath the Lord freely pardoned thy sins! Questionless he will freely give thee other things; will he deny thee food and raiment, who hath given thee Christ, and forgiveness? If his love extend to the greatest of mercies, will it fail and fly off for the least of mercies?

Secondly, You may conclude that certainly you are his people, and that the Lord is your God, that you do stand in a near Relation unto him, and that he stands in a near Relation unto you; why so? Because forgiveness of sins is the portion only of the people of God, of such who are in Covenant with him. A Prince may forgive a Malefactor, and yet there be no Covenant between them; But God forgives none, unless such as are first in Christ, and by Christ are in his Covenant of mercy and peace.

Thirdly, You may conclude that in all your changes and losses certainly you are still under grace and love, that the Lord hath set his love upon you, that his favor is towards you; Because forgiveness of sins is an act of special grace and favor; and no man is forgiven, but the Lord doth love him with an exceeding great love in and by Christ.

**Object. I but I am chastened and afflicted.**

Sol. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, Heb. 12:6.

Fourthly, You may conclude certainly that God is reconciled, and that his wrath is off, and shall never redound unto you, and that the accusation and condemnation of the Law are stopped and superseded, &c.

Fifthly, You may conclude that at length your souls shall go to heaven; for your sins are for that end forgiven, that you might be brought to glory, &c.

Fifthly, Having your sins pardoned in God's promise, rest not until you have got the notice and assurance of this in your own hearts and consciences: Here let me speak briefly unto two things.

First, That God doth sometimes pardon sins, and yet doth not presently notify or make the same manifest or evident unto the person pardoned, no not though he truly repents: As it is clear in David, whose sin God did put away, and yet it was a long time before David could get the evidence and assurance thereof in his own heart: I grant that upon true repentance sin is forgiven, and it is as true that sin may be forgiven, and yet the forgiven sinner not be assured thereof. Whether the Reasons of this may be,

1. Because the manifestation of pardon to us is a mere act of grace and divine liberty.
2. Or because God would teach us hereby, that it is not so easy a matter to get the voice of joy, after we have sinned and provoked him, and should therefore fear to sin any more.
3. Or thirdly, because it is so difficult to believe the forgiveness of sins, though promised by God himself, when the Conscience

hath been previously troubled for sin, &c.

Secondly, That the assurance of our own hearts and consciences that God hath pardoned our sins, is a mercy much to be desired, and would be of great advantage to pardoned sinners: For

1. This would exceedingly settle our hearts, and put an end to all our hard suspicions, and fears, and jealousies.

2. This would abundantly satisfy the longing desires of our souls, to see our great discharge, and relief, and acquittance under the hand and seal of God: Return O my soul unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

3. This would admirably enlarge our hearts in the praises of mercy, Psal. 103:1,2.

4. This would wonderfully inflame our hearts in the love of God; the sense of love begets love, 1 Joh. 4:19. We love him, because he loved us first.

5. This would most powerfully melt our hearts in filial grief, and pure mourning's for our sins; nothing melts the heart more than the apprehension of mercy, Zach. 12:10.

6. This would effectually constrain us to walk in all well pleasing before God; Paul obtained mercy, and returned duty.

7. This would mightily strengthen and advance our confidence toward God.

8. This would make all our communions with God more pleasant and delightful, &c.

9. This would make us patiently to bear all our afflictions, and to rejoice under them, Mich. 7:9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned; and why so? Because I am pardoned.

10. This would make us willing to die; Thy loving-kindness is better than life; and in death to be above death. O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin, &c. but thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15:55,56,57.

From all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. - Ezek. 36:25.

These words are a fuller and larger discovery of this sweet and gracious promise of God's mercy in the forgiveness of sins: They do contain in them the quantity of that forgiving mercy, respecting both the number of sins, and the greatness of sins; (From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.) There are two Propositions which these words do afford unto you.

1. That God's promise of forgiveness of sins doth extend unto all the sins of all his people.
2. That though the sins of persons have been exceeding great, yet when they become the people of God's Covenant, even these sins also are forgiven them.

## CHAP. III.

1. Doct. That God's promise of forgiveness of sins doth extend unto all the sins of all his people (from all, &c.) They have been guilty of Original sin, and of Actual sin; of sins of Omission, and of Commission; of sins of Ignorance, and of sins of Knowledge; of sins against the first Table, and against the second Table; of sins against the Law, and sins against the Gospel; of sins in Youth, and of sins in riper Age; of sins considered only in Kind, and of sins considered in their aggravating Circumstances: Now all these and other sins (all which though they are in number like unto the hairs on the head, and as the sand on the Sea shore, so, the Scripture alludes) of which the people of God have been guilty; upon their repentance, and upon their faith in Christ, I say all of them, every one of them is forgiven to them. Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Ezek. 18:22. All his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him (i.e.) not one of them shall. Col. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses. Ver. 14, blotting out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us; which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross. 1 Joh. 1:17. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. Mich. 7:19. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea: (Alluding as is supposed) to the drowning of Pharaoh and all his host, Psal. 106:11. The waters covered their enemies, there was not one of them left; so there is not one sin of the people of God, which God doth not pardon in the depths of his mercies, and of the blood of Christ.

### SECT. I.



Now there are four Arguments which may demonstrate this comfortable truth.

First, The first shall be taken from Jesus Christ in relation to the people of God: where observe

1. That all their sins were imputed unto Christ, Isa. 53:6. He laid upon him the iniquity of us all. 2 Cor. 5:21. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. 1 Pet. 2:24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

2. That Jesus Christ stood in their room, as to answer for all their sins, as a Surety. Heb 7:22. He was made a Surety of a better Testament: That Surety is that other Person who stands legally charged with all our debts, and is bound to discharge it for us: and at his hands it is required.

3. That Jesus Christ suffered as much as all the sins of the people of God did deserve, and which could be inflicted on them for their sins, Gal. 3:13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; More than the curse of the Law could not be deserved on our parts, nor inflicted on God's part for our sins; and that curse (which was the comprehension of all punishment) Christ was made for us; and for this end to Redeem us from that curse, yea he hath done so.

4. That Jesus Christ by his suffering for all their sins, did purchase for them the pardon of all their sin; I pray you to remember, This was the purpose and intention of Christ in his sufferings, to procure the remission of sins, Matth. 26:28. This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins. This was the fruit and effect of his sufferings, Ephes. 17. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

5. Nay, yet more, Jesus Christ by his sufferings did make peace between us and God, and reconciled us, which could not possibly be, if he had not discharged all our sins; for any one sin unsatisfied for, and unpardoned, hinders that peace and Reconciliation, Col. 1:20. He made peace through the blood of his Cross. Ver. 21. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies hath he reconciled. Ver. 22, in the body of his flesh through death.

6. So did he suffer and satisfy, That there is no condemnation to any who are in Christ, Rom. 8:1. And who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. Ver. 34. If there be no condemnation to any in Christ, and none to condemn them, then all their sins are pardoned; for if any sin remained without pardon, that sin would be matter and reason of condemnation, and for that sin God himself would condemn.

Secondly, The second Argument to demonstrate the total forgiveness of sins unto the people of God, shall be taken from God himself, and some Considerations of him in a respectiveness unto his people: Here take notice of five particulars;

1. God will show unto his people the riches of his mercy, and the exceeding riches of his grace, even those hidden and unsearchable Treasures of his loving kindness, such as infinitely exceed all the mercies, and all the kindness of men, not only for acting, but also for thinking and comprehending; Ephes. 2:7. That in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness towards us through Jesus Christ. Chap. 3:30. To him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or think, &c. Now although the pardon of sin doth assure us that God hath mercy, and grace, yet it must be

the pardon of all our sins which doth demonstrate the exceeding riches of his grace: To pardon a few sins, and to damn us for the rest, this is not exceeding riches of grace, nor exceeding abundance of mercy, nor exceeding great kindness.

2. The Reasons within God himself, yea and the Reason without God, are both of them of a universal and total obligation from God, to pardon all the sins of his people, as well as any one of their sins.

The Reason within God himself which moves him to forgive the sins of his people, is his own love and grace, they are a ground of perfect mercy and forgiveness: Now the same love and grace which moveth him to pardon one, doth likewise move him to pardon all the sins of his people.

Again, the Reason of forgiveness without God, which is the meritorious sufferings of Christ, on which God also looks (for he forgives us for Christ's sake, Ephes. 4:32) this is an universal motive; for Christ did not suffer for some of the sins of the Elect, and not for other of their sins; he did not die for some of the greater sins only, or for some of the lesser sins only, but for all and every one of their sins, and accordingly made such a satisfaction as reached to the discharge of all.

3. This must necessarily be granted, that when God forgives the sins of his people, he doth then show so much of his grace that he now becomes their friend; and so much of his love towards them, that he ceaseth to be their enemy: O but if all their sins were not forgiven (but if some were, and some were not) then this inequality of his grace, and partiality of his love, would at the same time set him out as our friend, and also as our enemy; and would also at the same time set us forth as a people of love,

and a people of hatred; so far as we are forgiven, there you see the love of a Father; and so far as we are not forgiven, we may also see the wrath of a Judge.

4. He qualifies his people for an universal remission of their sins, in bestowing on them such gracious qualities, upon the presence and actings whereof, he hath by promise assured them of that universal Remission: For he hath given such a Repentance by which their hearts are turned from the love unto the hatred of all sin, and from the service of all sin, to a contrary course of new obedience: And upon this doth God expressly settle a forgiveness of all sin, Ezek. 18:21,22. He hath likewise given such a Faith unto his people which joins and unites them to Christ, and consequently gives them a full claim unto Justification (Rom. 5:1. Being justified by Faith) Now Justification is opposed to condemnation, Rom. 8:33,34, and therefore it carries with it the forgiveness of all sins.

5. There is such a Relation, and such a love between God and his people, as must necessarily take in the forgiveness of their sins: The relation is very near, and full of love and delight in his people, and they are very dear unto his heart, his soul delighteth in them, and all the tokens of his loving kindness are sent unto them, and bestowed on them; his presence is with them, and he takes up his habitation in their hearts, he dwells in them; they are his Temples where they meet with him, and he with them. Now none of these would be, if yet any of their sins stood before his eyes as unpardoned: For unpardoned sins make a separation and distance, and so are contrary to the nearness of union; and likewise do hold up a difference and an enmity, and so the contrary to all gracious communion.

Thirdly, A third Argument which may demonstrate that the forgiveness of sins is universal (it is of all sins) to the people of God, is this, viz. The consideration of forgiveness of sins as a sure ground of many precious effects redounding thereby unto the people of God: The Scripture delivers five of them unto us.

1. One is, Peace with God, Rom. 5:1. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God.

2. Another is, Peace in Conscience, which if I mistake not, the Apostle calls the peace of God which passeth all understanding, Phil. 4:7, and Psal. 85:8. He will speak peace unto his people, &c.

3. A third is, Joy and rejoicing: We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, having now received the atonement, Rom. 5:11.

4. A fourth is, the hope of glory: The Apostle delivers this as the proper effect of our justification, Rom. 5:1,2.

5. A fifth is, a boldness of access unto the throne of grace, that we may find grace and mercy to help in time of need, Heb. 4:16. Which of these fruits could any of the people of God enjoy, were not all their sins forgiven? Did any of their sins yet stand upon Record, did God yet hold them guilty,

1. Ye could not say that ye have peace with God; for God is not at peace with you, nor are ye at peace with him, whiles enmity continues between you; and so it doth whiles any sin remains unpardoned.

2. Nor can you have any peace in Conscience: In three cases Conscience cannot be quieted. 1. When it sees no forgiveness at all. 2ly. When it fears it is such a forgiveness as God will quickly

recall and reverse. And gly. When it sees only a part of the debt forgiven, but much, or some of it still standing upon the accompt. O but saith Conscience, your condition is sad, and unsafe; any one of these sins (yet unforgiven) will lose your soul, will bring you to hell.

3. And what joy can you have from a partial forgiveness only? Suppose the Malefactor be pardoned as to his theft, if yet he shall be tried and condemned, and executed for murder, what joy can he have? So if God should pardon some of our sins, and judge, and condemn, and everlastingly punish us for the rest of our sins, here would be small cause of rejoicing unto us.

4. Again, where were the hope of glory? Hath the unpardoned sinner any hope of heaven? Doth not every sin deserve the loss of heavenly glory? And will it not effectually and eventually prove so, unless God pardons it?

5. Where is the liberty of access, and boldness of approaching to God, if any of your sins are unpardoned? The very spirit of fear and bondage lies still on you, that God is not reconciled to you, but is your enemy, and he will not own and bless you, but will reject and curse you, and will bring on you all the evil that he hath threatened.

Fourthly, A fourth Argument to prove that God will forgive all the sins of his people, is this, We are to forgive all the trespasses of an offending brother, in case he repent, Luke 17:4. If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him. Now we are to forgive our brother, as God forgives us (Ephes. 4:32.) Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us; his forgiving is a pattern to our forgiving, and he would have ours to be universal,

therefore his is so to us: Matth. 18:32. I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me. Verse 33. Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

Thus have you heard the Assertion cleared by Scripture and Arguments, that God will forgive all the sins of his people. Now before I pass to the useful Application of this unto ourselves, I would speak something unto a Question much agitated amongst the Learned and others, viz.

## SECT. II.

Quest. Whether God (which promiseth to pardon all the sins of his people) doth pardon all their sins Simul, and Semel, together and at once? All sins past which his people have committed, and all sins present which they do commit, and, all sins future which they may hereafter commit.

Sol. This is (I confess) a very nice question, and hath (if it be well weighed) something of difficulty in it, peremptorily to resolve it: And there are very godly and learned men, who have spoken and written differently concerning it, and yet all of them consent in this, That God doth forgive all the sins of his people: If it might not be burthensome unto you, I would

1. Present unto you the several opinions of men, with their chief Arguments for their different opinions concerning this Question.
2. Offer my own private thoughts concerning this Controversy.

First, Some are for the Affirmative, and their opinion is this, that as soon as any are made Believers in Christ (and so are within the

Covenant Actually) all the sins which they have committed in time past, and all the sins which they are guilty of as to the time present, and all the sins of which they do come to be guilty of in time future, they are actually pardoned unto them, in general and in particular: Neither are Believers ever henceforth to pray unto God for the pardon of any sin which they do or shall commit, but only for the assurance of the pardon of them in their own Consciences; neither is any future Repentance required to attain the forgiveness of any new and future sin; but only for the more comfortable assurance of former forgiveness unto ourselves: Nay Repentance is not required of God as an Antecedent work to pardon of sins, but only as a consequent work and fruit thereof, &c. This is their Opinion.

**Quest. Now what might be the ground inducing unto this Opinion, That all the sins of a believer, not only past, but also present, and to come, are pardoned at once, and actually unto them?**

Sol. The chief which I do find in writing are these.

First, The Covenant expressions: Isa. 43:25. I, even I am he which blotteth out thy transgressions Heb. 8:12. I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more. Ergo, all is pardoned at once.

Secondly, Again, Rom. 8:1. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. And Ver. 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. And ver. 38,39. Nor things present, nor things to come shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And Joh. 5:24. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into



condemnation, but is passed from death to life. Ergo, all sins are pardoned at once, or else they were in a state of condemnation, &c.

Thirdly, A believer (even when he sinneth) is still united to Christ, and is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, which covers all our sins, and dischargeth us from them, so that no guilt shall redound to us.

Fourthly, A believer is not to fear curse, or hell at all, which he might do, if all his sins were not pardoned at once, but some of his new sins were for a while unpardoned.

Fifthly, Repentance is not at all required for our justification (where our pardon is only to be found) but only faith; therefore pardon of sins is not suspended until we repent of our sins.

Sixthly, Again, if new sins were not pardoned until you do repent, then we should be left to an uncertainty whiles our sins be pardoned, or when they will be pardoned; for it may be long ere we repent, and more long ere we can know that we do truly repent of our sins.

Seventhly, If all sins were not forgiven at once, then justification is not perfect at once, but is more and more increased and perfected, as more and more sins are pardoned, which (as they conceive) cannot consist with the true Doctrine of Justification.

These are the chiefest and strongest Arguments which I have read for the Affirmative Opinion, and I have delivered them rather with advantage than with any prejudice.

Secondly, Nevertheless, there are others of the Negative and contrary Opinion unto this, who although they do hold that God hath pardoned all sins past unto believers (brought into Covenant with Christ) and that he will pardon also all the sins of which hereafter they shall be guilty, yet they do conjecture, that all these are not forgiven (at once) unto them, but upon (though not for) their renewed repentance for them, and upon a renewed act of Faith on Christ for the particular forgiveness of new and particular transgressions unto them: Neither do they lay any Popish reason of worthiness, or merit in Repentance (as some unjustly do charge upon them) for the forgiveness of any sin (old or new) but do urge Repentance in relation to forgiveness upon those very accounts, which (as they conceive) the Scripture promises of forgiveness do require: Now the Arguments produced for this opinion (that God doth not pardon all sins past, present, and to come, at once and together) are these.

First, Those very Covenant expressions respecting the pardon of sin, which the former Opinion used to the contrary, e.g. Heb. 8:12. Their iniquities I will remember no more: Not to remember iniquity anymore, doth (say they) in common sense, suppose say they, that that iniquity was before; for if it never yet was, it cannot be said to be remembered at all, nor to be remembered anymore; So that passage in Jer. 31:34. I will forgive their iniquity. And Jer. 33:8, I will pardon all their iniquities: do suppose an iniquity or offense committed: For if it be not yet committed, how can it be properly said to be forgiven? Unless (as Bishop Downham saith) we will make God like the Pope, who aforehand forgave sins to come, which never yet were committed? So Isa. 43:25. I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions: where pardoning of sins is compared to the blotting out of debts entered into a book: But say they, debts which as yet never were made, may not be entered into the book, and therefore

cannot be said to be blotted out; and consequently sins yet to come, cannot be said already to be pardoned.

Secondly, other Scriptures (purposely) speaking of the forgiveness of sins, have a restrainedness unto sins committed, and look only at them, Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Mark, have sinned, and have transgressed! Respecting the sins past, not what they shall commit, which if already forgiven, must have come in also, which they have sinned, and which they shall sin. Ezek. 18:22. All the transgressions that he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him. 1 Joh. 2:1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father. Here Christ makes intercession for sin as an Advocate, but it is upon this supposition, if any man sin, as if sin must be committed before he makes Intercession for their pardon of it: As in the Old Testament there were no sacrifices for any future sin, but all the sacrifices for sin were for sins already committed so; &c.

Thirdly, These conditional qualifications which God himself makes, with respect to the forgiveness of sins (and therefore I wonder how any one dare to call them Popish and Antichristian) they do necessarily suppose a precedent Commission of sins: vide 2 Chron. 7:14. If my people which were called by my Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I forgive their sin. 1 Joh. 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins. Prov. 28:13. He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy. Acts 3:19 Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Mark, if my people shall humble themselves, if they shall pray, if they shall turn from their wicked ways; If we confess our sins, &c. All these penitential Qualifications (which God makes Antecedents unto forgiveness) do suppose a peculiar respect unto sins already committed; for, doth

God put us to humble our hearts for sin which we never yet committed, or for sins only which we have committed? Doth God put it upon us to pray for mercy, to pardon sins which never were, or sins which have been? Would he have us to confess these sins which never yet were in being to offend him, or only such whereby we have offended him? Doth he at any time enjoin us to forsake, and turn from sins which perhaps we never thought on, much less actually fell into, or else the sin in which we have walked, and into which we have fallen? Why then, say they, if these be required for forgiveness, and these respect sins only that are past, then all sins past, present, and to come, are not pardoned at once.

Fourthly, If all sins (past, present, and to come) are forgiven at once unto believers, then no believer is to pray unto God for the forgiveness of any sin which he commits after he is once brought in to Christ; yet Jesus Christ doth teach even believers to pray, Forgive us our trespasses, Matth. 6:12. Luke 11:4. For he teacheth them thus to pray, who could upon good grounds call God their Father, which none can but true Believers.

Here some do think to evade the strength of this Argument by distinguishing 'twixt pardon of sin, and the manifestation of that pardon unto the soul: They grant that Believers do pray for the pardon of their sins committed in respect of the manifestation thereof unto their consciences, but not for any new act of remission as unto sin committed before God.

Unto which there is a double Reply.

1. One, that it cannot easily be demonstrated in Scripture that to pray for the forgiveness of sin, is anywhere so to be taken, as to mean (only) the manifestation of forgiveness, and not the act of forgiveness: And in the Petition (before mentioned) it seems it

cannot hold: For Christ teacheth us to pray unto God, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; now our forgiving of their trespasses is not only in way of manifestation to the trespasser, but also in a real precedent act of condonation.

2. The other is, that the Saints in Scripture when they sinned against God, did humbly acknowledge their sins, and did earnestly pray unto God, first, for the pardon of those sins; and next for the manifestation of that pardon; e.g. David, in Psal. 51:1, prays expressly for the pardon of those great sins which he had committed, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions: He useth the very same Phrase, which God himself useth in his Covenant for the actual forgiving of sins, I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, Isa. 43:25, so he blotteth out my transgressions, and not for a mere manifestation only. And after this he prays for the manifestation and sense of the forgiveness of his sins, in ver. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Fifthly, It is possible that a believing person may fall into such a sin, or sins of scandal, for which he may be justly cast out from the visible Church, and upon his neglect of Repentance, or practice of Repentance, he stands bound, or loosed from his sin, not only in earth, but also in heaven; for so Christ himself delivers it to us, in Matth. 18:18. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. But this cannot possibly be, if all his sins be already pardoned in heaven; for then he is always loosed, and never bound in heaven. This Argument is of that strength, that I do

not see how it can be answered: for if upon the right sentence of the Church of Christ, the offender is bound in heaven as well as on earth in respect of his sins, then his sins are not all pardoned at once; and if upon repentance he is loosed in heaven (i.e.) absolved and forgiven, as well as loosed on earth; thence also it follows that all his sins past, present, and to come, are not at once forgiven in heaven: take the one or the other, or both, still it shakes that Opinion of a forgiveness of all sins at once.

Sixthly, If all sins (past, present, and to come) are forgiven at once, before they are repented of, then a Regenerate and a justified person in the midst of his grossest sins (as suppose David's adultery and murder) may joy and rejoice as much in God, and look on him as well pleased, as when they do humble their soul, and repent, and seek his face.

To this one Francis Cornwell answers freely and plainly; When sin is most prevalent, and the heart is most hardened (he speaks expressly of Regenerate and justified persons) yet then can they glory in Christ Jesus with a large heart breaking forth into thanksgiving, as Paul did, Rom. 7:25. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yea, and he that commits a gross sin, and doubteth the pardon of it, committeth a double sin; the one against his Sanctification, and the other against his Justification: And what though a believer (usually upon the committing of gross sins) doubts of his estate? This is from a defect in faith, and not from any Rule and Precept of God's Word.

And that it is all one, and alike unto God, when a person is humbled, or not humbled; and when he repents and forsakes his gross sins, or repents not of them, but continues in them; for all is already pardoned on God's part, &c.

But these strange deliveries are contrary

1. To the Word, which in case of gross transgressions calls for humbling, and mourning, and repenting of the heart, and weeping, and supplication, because God is dishonored and displeased.

2. To the exigence in all the children of God so fallen, who thereupon have broken their peace, and lost their joy, and exceedingly interrupted their confidence with fear.

3. To the Assertion of these very men who do hold, that in case of gross transgression, there must be deep humiliations to get assurance and joy.

Seventhly, To these another Reason may be added, and is added by some, that forgiveness of sin is a judicial act in God, as the contrary act of condemning is; now the Judge neither condemns, nor yet forgives offenses which are not extant, and which cannot be proved upon the Offender, that ever he was guilty of them: But when they are charged, and pleaded, then doth he condemn or acquit; so it would be strange for a Judge to condemn one for faults not committed, and so acquit a man for sins never in being, and so not deserving punishment.

Eighthly, Lastly, the great and continual work of Christ in heaven as our Intercessor and Advocate, 1 Joh. 1:2, and the daily suing out of pardon in his Name, and for his sake, seems to carry much in it for the acquiring of daily pardon, and continued forgiveness of sins: His great work of Intercession and Advocator-ship, surely it contains in it something more than to obtain an assurance that all is still pardoned.

Thus have I delivered unto you the two different Opinions, with their several Arguments concerning this great Question, whether all the

sins of believers (past, present, and to come) are pardoned by God at once. Now I shall make bold to deliver unto you my own thoughts concerning it, and those different Opinions about it.

First, I do observe that they do both agree in five particulars. e.g.

1. That as to God's eternal decree or purpose of forgiveness, all the sins of his people are forgiven. God did not intend to forgive some of their sins and not the rest; but a universal, and full, and complete forgiveness was fixedly purposed and resolved on by God.

2. That all the sins of his people (in their absolute number, from first to last) were laid upon Christ; who in the days of his suffering did meritoriously purchase perfect Remission of all their sins, to be applied in future times to them and by them.

3. That as soon as ever any person is brought into the Covenant by believing on Jesus Christ; all his sins past (whatsoever they have been) they are actually forgiven unto him, and God will never remember them anymore.

4. That as to the state of Justification, there is a full and perfect remission of all sins (considered under the differences of time past, present, and to come) As in the state of condemnation there is not any one thing pardoned, so in the state of Justification there is not any one sin but is pardoned; for the estate of Justification is opposite to all condemnation, and curse, and wrath.

5. That no Repentance or work of ours is a meritorious cause (neither God, nor any true believer looks on it as so) of Justification, or pardon of any sin; neither the repentance which



we call Initial, neither that which we call Renewed; we acknowledge no meritorious cause of pardon of sins, but the blood of Christ.

Secondly, The main differences which I do observe, do rest in two things.

1. One is, that sins not yet committed are actually pardoned, and we are to believe so, say the one party; not so, say the other party, until committed or repented.

2. Repentance is required say both of them, but with this difference, because sin is pardoned say the one; but the other say, that sin may be pardoned. That we may have the comfortable sense and experience of pardon, say the one; that we may have the actual forgiveness, as well as the comfort of it, say the other.

In this difference, my own judgment inclines to that Opinion which holds, That all the sins past of a Believer are (at once) forgiven, and all his future sins are remitted unto him upon renewed acts of believing and repenting for Christ's sake. If that Opinion be true that Justification be one continuing, or continued act, this would reconcile all.

To me this Opinion;

1. Hath clear grounds in the Scripture.

2. Doth best suit with the Covenant, which in this case still suits Faith and Repentance together.

3. Doth best agree with the ways which God still hath put his people upon, in relation to forgiveness.

4. And with the practice of the Saints all along.
5. And it seems to be a strong Guard against presumption and carnal security, and looseness.
6. And hath no direct natural appearance of inconveniencies in or from it.

**Object. Whereas they say this is Popish and Legal.**

Sol. They speak ignorantly, if not maliciously; for they know that Jesus Christ in the Gospel-Commission joined Repentance and Remission of sins: It is as Popish to say Repentance is required for Assurance as for Remission, for both are acts of grace.

**Object. But what if one should die before he repents?**

Sol. And what if he should not die? That God who hath promised renewing mercy, hath likewise promised renewed repentance.

**Object. But a man may be damned for the sins committed, if all be not forgiven at once?**

Sol. 1. As if a particular sin destroyed the state of Justification.

2. What a sin deserves is one thing; what it shall redundantly and eventually bring on the person, is another thing.

3. Though God doth not forgive all the sins at once, yet he will certainly forgive them unto his people, when committed, and when repented of; for God hath promised so to pardon them: And no one promise of God can be showed to the contrary. It was Fulgentius his prayer, Domine da poenitentiam & postea indulgentiam.

**Object. But God justifies the ungodly; therefore no need of subsequent repentance in relation to forgiveness.**

Sol. 1. Nay and put in too, any Repentance or Faith at all, for God justifies the ungodly.

2. But he justifies the ungodly, (i.e.) a man stands before God when he justifies him, as a poor undone sinner, having no righteousness of his own; nor is Repentance required as the meritorious, or as the material cause of Justification; but as a means to enjoy what God hath promised to the believer.

Having thus waded through this great Controversy, I shall now proceed unto the useful Application of the Doctrine, That God doth promise to forgive all the sins of his people.

SECT. III.

Use 1. The first Use shall be of Information; It may inform us of five things.

1. Of that exceeding greatness of mercy which is in God.
2. Of that exceeding love and kindness which is in God unto his people.
3. Of what a heavy weight did lie upon Jesus Christ.
4. Of the high Obligations which rest upon us who do enjoy this promise of universal forgiveness.
5. Then multitude of sins is not absolutely inconsistent with pardon.

First, In that God engageth himself by promise to forgive all the sins of all his people, This doth manifestly declare unto us, that he is a God of infinite mercy; must he not needs be so, who forgives such a number of sins and transgressions.

There are two things which discover unto us the infinite fullness and depth of mercy in God.

One is, that vast Title attributed unto him, and his mercy: He is said to be of great mercy, Psal. 105:8, and to be rich in mercy, Ephes. 2:4, and to be plenteous in mercy, Psal. 86:15, and to pardon abundantly, Isa. 55:7, 1 Pet. 1:3, according to his abundant mercy: and to keep mercy for thousands, Exod. 34:7, and to be of everlasting mercy, Psal. 100:5, and to be of transcendent and incomparable mercy (As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him, Psal. 103:11.) In like manner there are ascribed to his mercy and mercies a multitude, Psal. 51:1. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies. A depth, Mich. 7:19. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Not only an abundance, but an exceeding abundance: 1 Tim. 1:14. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. Nay an overabundance: where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, Rom. 5:23. It did superabound, &c.

2ly. The other is the vast quantity of sins of which the people of God have been guilty: Who (saith David, Psal. 19:12.) can understand his errors? (i.e.) the number of a man's sins is so numerous, that with all the Arithmetic he hath, he is not able to cast up how often he hath sinned. Nay, David surveying the number of his own sins, he is nonplussed, and professeth that they are innumerable, and that they are more than the hairs of his head, Psal. 40:12. And Ezra in his confession, Chap. 9:6. Our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespass is grown up into the heavens. Now if the number of

sins in respect of one person be so innumerable; what then is the number of all the sins of all the people of God? Yet there is mercy enough in God to pardon all and every one of them: To pardon all their sins which they do know, and all the rest which they do not know.

Secondly, In that God doth pardon all the sins of all his people; this doth likewise discover the exceeding love and kindness of God to his people: The Apostle saith, in 1 Pet. 4:8. That Charity or love covereth a multitude of sins, and that he that converts a sinner, shall hide a multitude of sins, Jam. 5:20. Certainly then it shows exceeding love in God to cover, to blot out, to forget, to pass over, to pardon all the multitude of sins in his own people: To injure God, is infinitely more than to injure man; to offend and dishonor him, is infinitely more than to offend and dishonor man; and for God to pass by all this, it must needs flow from his infinite love and kindness; and therefore God is said (Rom. 5:8.) To commend (or highly to exalt) his love toward us, in that whiles we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; and to show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:7. And the forgiveness of our sins is rightly attributed to the riches of his grace, Eccles. 1:7.

Thirdly, in that God forgives all the sins of all his people, this may inform us, What a heavy weight did lie upon Jesus Christ, and of that wonderful power and virtue of his sufferings. There is no man who is able to express the surpassing desert and burden in any one particular sin: we find (many times) that someone sin (set on with the wrath of God) doth drive us to our feet; it is more unto us than the shadows of death; it doth fill us with such distractions and horror, that we can neither live nor die; we are not able to sustain it, nor yet to decline it: what work then would all our sins make within us, if the Lord should in wrath return them upon us? Now all the sins

of all the people of God (from the beginning of the world to the end thereof) were in all their kinds, and numbers, and aggravations laid upon Jesus Christ, he bare all our sins; he was made sin for us, and a curse for us: How heavy was this burden, all the sins of all the Elect (at once) lying upon him! And all the curse, and all the wrath due unto those sins (at once also) lying upon him! No marvel that he did sweat drops of blood, and cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And yet all this he went through, and so endured, as that he satisfied the very Justice of God for all these sins, and purchased the discharge or forgiveness of all those sins, which he could never have done, had he not been both God and Man, and of infinite dignity, and merit, and power.

Fourthly, This likewise may inform the people of God, what exceeding Obligations do lie upon their souls unto their God, who forgiveth all their iniquities, transgressions and sins, Psal. 103:2. When some few of them heretofore fell into your Consciences, you would have given (if you had possessed it) all the world to have gained but a hopeful possibility and probability of pardoning mercy; but now you are come to a certainty, the Lord himself assures you in his word of promise, that he will forgive, not a few sins only, but all your sins; O beloved, how should your souls love your God, and bless your God who forgives all your sins, and casts them all into the depths of the Sea! Why, everyone of your sins would have been the loss of heaven, and a curse, and a hell, and a damnation, and an eternal wrath unto you, had not the Lord been merciful unto you in the forgiveness of it, or them: But now God will discharge you of all, and blot out all, so that damned you cannot be, and saved you shall be; O the depth of love and mercy, and kindness to your souls! Meditate more of them, be taken up more with them, and as you are the only objects of riches of mercy, so strive to express yourselves the

choicest people in exactness of love and life answerable to your mercy:

Fifthly, This (that God promiseth to pardon all the sins of all his people) may likewise inform us that no, not a multitude of sins (though the number be exceedingly large and exceedingly increased) Is always an absolute prejudice or bar, or inconsistent with pardoning mercy; this consequence is clear and sound; for if God will pardon all the sins of all his people, and their sins are multitudes of sins, and (in some sort) innumerable, then certainly a large number of sinning's is not absolutely inconsistent with forgiveness; not that everyone who is guilty of a number or multitude of sins, is, or shall be certainly forgiven; but that the multitude of sins is not an absolute bar or exclusion, so as to make the condition hopeless and unpardonable: All manner of sin and blasphemy (saith Christ) shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, Matth. 12:31, where he plainly expresseth a capability of forgiveness for any sin or sins, the sin against the Holy Ghost only excepted; which may be a singular preservation against despair, &c.

#### SECT. IV.

Doth God promise to forgive all the sins of all his people? The next Use shall be for Exhortation, unto all the people of God, and that unto two duties. 1. To believe this truth. 2. To make use of this truth.

First, To believe this gracious promise of their God unto them. As the Apostle spake unto them of Antioch, Men and Brethren, Children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the Word of this Salvation sent, Acts 13:26, so say I unto all of you

who are brought into Christ by faith, and by him are brought into Covenant with God, unto you I say is this promise of mercy made; (I will pardon all your iniquities; from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.)

For the better managing of this Point, I will lay down four Conclusions.

1. The people of God may believe this truth.
2. Many times they do not believe it for themselves.
3. It is very difficult in many cases to believe the same.
4. It is necessary for them at all times to believe and apply it.

First, The people of God may believe this truth, that God will forgive all their sins; they have very good ground and warrant so to do; for

1. They have not merely a single promise from God to this purpose, (which yet were sufficient warrant) but manifold promises; they have the same promise multiplied, often transcribed, and that not darkly and doubtfully, but clearly and plainly, Jer. 33:8. Micah. 7:19, &c.
2. They are the very people unto whom this renewed promise is made; they are believers, they are converted and renewed, they have the very Characters of the Covenant stamped and sealed upon their hearts and lives.
3. They have Jesus Christ (1. In his Person. 2. Mediatorship. 3. Purchase. 4. Benefits.) to be their Mediator both of Redemption and Intercession, who was once offered to bear the sins of many, Hebr. 9:28, and is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in



the presence of God for us, Ver. 24. It is no more than Christ hath purchased, nor than Christ will so apply unto you, nor than God intended for you, when he sent Christ into the world.

4. What other of the people of God have found and applied, that may they believe; but Psal. 85:2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin, Selah. Psal. 103:3. Who forgiveth all their iniquities; this may they believe.

Secondly, Though the people of God may believe that God will forgive all their sins, yet many times they do not believe it; for many times

1. They do not believe lesser matters, a few earthly mercies, Matth. 6.

2. They cannot believe that God will forgive any one of their sins which they have committed, but do fear the wrath of God exceedingly.

3. They stick a long time upon some particular sins, and are in long debates concerning the intention and will of Divine mercy as to the pardon of them; yea, and conclude very often that the Lord will never pass them by.

4. Upon new commissions, they are so far from believing their pardon, that they do question whether God hath (indeed) pardoned their old and former transgressions.

5. They doubt and fear whether it be not presumption in them to believe the forgiveness of all their sins.

Thirdly, It is (unquestionably) a very difficult matter for any one to believe that God will forgive all his sins, especially when a person

doth distinctly and seriously consider them in their number and circumstances, and the heart is really sensible of the injuries against God in them. O how much oftentimes hath he been provoked and dishonored! Psal. 40:12. Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold of me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me. Mark, he is not able to look up, and his heart faileth him: O thinks he, here is such a number of sins indeed; will the Lord ever pardon all these? I fear he will not, I can hardly believe that he will.

There are three things which make it so difficult to believe that God will forgive all our sins.

1. The weakness of faith, which cannot presently apprehend and reach the height and depth, and breadth, and length of the love and mercy of God; a weak faith is like a weak eye, which cannot behold the Sun in its glory; so weak faith cannot so well behold God in the glorious manifestations of his exceedingly abundant grace; but dazzles and doubts, Is there such a treasury of mercies for a sinner? Is there enough in Christ for all these sins?
2. The tenderness of conscience, which being very sensible of a multitude of sins, and feeling God's displeasure and anger, raiseth strong fears and exceptions against universal forgiveness of all our sins; Shall I find mercy, who do feel wrath? Can I be persuaded that God will speak forgiveness to all my sins, who do find him speaking such bitter things for some of my sins? Will he ever discharge me of all my sins, who doth charge my sins with that strong displeasure upon my soul?
3. The strong and manifold, and subtle temptations and suggestions of Satan, who knows how to heighten our sins, and to diminish the mercies of God, when he would bring us to

despair; as he doth know also how to diminish our sins, and enlarge mercy when he would draw us to presumption. O saith Satan, here are such sins, and here are so many of them, that here is no hope at all for mercy; the wrath of God (you know) is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and all unrighteousness of men, Rom. 1:18. For some of these sins hath God (long since) destroyed and damned multitudes of men. What then will he do to you for all these sins? Here is sin upon sin, and nothing but sin (without any interruption, and without any cessation) for twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years together are committed against many threatening's, warnings, examples, punishments, yea, and against many calls of mercy, and offers of grace, which had they been accepted in time, there might have been some hope; but you went on, and multiplied your transgressions against all these; therefore for such a multitude of sins no mercy will be found. 'It is true, that God hath promised to pardon all the sins of his people; but you are none of that number; had you been so, would you, or durst you thus to have multiplied and increased your transgressions against such a God? You would have repented long ago; and besides all this, think you that you should not have had news of forgiveness, (after so many tears and prayers, and hearkening's, and waiting's) if God would have forgave those sins.

Fourthly, Though it be very difficult to believe that God will forgive all our sins, yet it is very necessary to believe this promise of God, and that upon a threefold account.

1. The honor of God, which is as much concerned in this Branch of the Covenant, as in any other; he doth lay forth in it (as I hinted before) the riches of his grace, and the glory of his great goodness, and his heart of mercies to the very full; and besides this, he seals

this part of his Covenant with the same infallibility of truth, and ratifies it with the same blood of Christ, which though it respects the stablishing of the whole Covenant, yet it is more frequently expressed to confirm the Branch of the forgiveness of sins, as you may see in Mat. 26:28, Ephes. 1:7, 1 John 1:7, Rev. 1:5, &c. that our faith might be the more strengthened, and so give unto God the more glory in and for such a gracious truth. And let me tell you one thing, that what ground you have to believe that God will forgive you any one of your sins, the very same you have to believe that he will forgive you all your sins; and upon the same reason that you believe not the promise as to the forgiveness of all your sins, upon the same reason you must deny belief of the promise as to the forgiveness of any one sin; and so God lose all the glory of his rich mercies by your unbelief.

2. The peace of your own consciences; for suppose you did believe that God would forgive some of your sins, but some others of your sins he would not forgive; could this partial forgiveness settle and quiet your consciences? Would they not hold you under as much fear and bondage, as if not one of your sins were forgiven? Surely it would, because there is still in any unforgiven sins so much guilt and merit as will serve effectually to the everlasting destruction of your souls and bodies.

3. The renewing of you again to repentance, and bringing of you back again unto God; for suppose you confine your faith to believe that God will pardon the sins which you have committed in time past, and beyond this your faith will not stir; tell me then I beseech you, what will you do for the sins you have committed since conversion? Will you have them pardoned, or will you not have them pardoned? Will you go on in them, or will you forsake them? Will you still go away, or will you return to your first husband? Surely you would have them pardoned; surely you would renew repentance, and return to the

Lord your God; but how can this be, if you cannot, or will not believe that God will forgive those sins as well as the former? If you be persuaded that forgiving mercy is at an end, and God hath no more mercy to forgive anymore sins, I dare assure you that where the hope of mercy ceaseth, there the practice of repentance will cease: But on the contrary, when you can by faith see God willing and ready to pardon you, and accept of you, this will melt, and this will move your hearts to repent, and to return unto the Lord, &c. God hath yet thoughts of mercy towards me; I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned against thee, &c.

Secondly, And this leads me unto the next Branch of the Exhortation, which is, that we must not only believe that God will forgive us all our sins, but we must make use of this truth in all our occasions. What one day of our life; have we not occasion to make use thereof? After conversion there are two sorts of sins incident unto us.

1. Daily sins of ignorance and infirmity; and they are so many, that we know not the number of them; yet all of them do need forgiving mercy.

2. Voluntary sins, and of a very gross and heinous nature, which make a deep wound, and raise a hideous cry in the conscience, and shake all our foundations, and lie as a heavy burden upon us; and they do the more wound and afflict us, because committed after mercy, and against mercy. Now in such a self-wounding, and self-judging, and self-humbling condition, what should the ashamed and confounded sinner do? Why, he should return speedily to his God, and with tears and shame spread his sins before the Lord, and acknowledge that he is unworthy of anymore mercy, and yet beseech the Lord to show him mercy again, who hath promised to forgive all the sins of his people; and he should hearken what God the Lord will

speaking; for he will speak peace unto his people, but let them return no more to folly, Psal. 85:8.

## SECT. V.

The third Use of this Point shall be partly of Comfort, and partly of Encouragement.

First, Of Comfort to all who are brought into Covenant with God, especially to such as have stood out a long time, and have abounded in transgressions, who have made the very creature groan with the burden of their many sins; why, all these are forgiven as soon as God hath brought you into the Covenant. Luke 7:47. Her sins which are many, are forgiven. 1 Tim. 1:13. Who was before a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy. O what a day of salvation is the very day when God brings a man into Christ, and into the Covenant; all his enemies that pursued him are drowned, not one of them is left, so all his sins are forgiven, and not one of them is alive to his condemnation!

Secondly, Of Encouragement to come out of a sinful and unbelieving condition, and to yield up ourselves to Christ, and to be willing to become the people of God, and to walk in his ways; why, all the sins that ever you have committed shall be forgiven you, they shall not be mentioned unto you; your Drunkenness, Swearing, Whoredom, Theft, Lying, Sabbath-breakings, all your sins of Omission, and of Commission; sins against the Law, and sins against the Gospel; sins that your own hearts can charge you with, and that God himself can charge upon you, all forgiven; any one of them would damn you, and now all shall be pardoned, if you will hear and believe, and repent, &c. Cast away all your transgressions, repent, return and live, why

will ye die O house of Israel, I offer to you life and death, choose life: Do not for lying vanities forsake your mercies. A greater offer there cannot be than Christ; nor motive, than the pardon of all your sins.

From all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. - Ezek. 36:25.

Having spoken somewhat unto the extensive part of promised forgiveness, that it reacheth all the sins of all the people of God, I now proceed unto the Intensive part of that promised forgiveness, which respects the greatness and heinousness of sin, as well as the number and multitude of sins, (from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you) whence you may observe:

## CHAP. IV.

That although the sins of persons have been exceeding great, yet when these persons become the people of God in Covenant, even those sins also are forgiven them, (from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you) forgiveness reached to the greatest sins which the people of God have been guilty of; this assertion

1. I shall clear from the Text itself.
2. From other Scriptures.
3. Demonstrate by some Arguments and Reasons.
4. And then apply it unto ourselves.

### SECT. I.

1. The Text clearly holds out the Assertion; for God doth give here instances of two great kinds of sins: One against the second Table, (all your filthiness) and the other against the first Table, (all your Idols) in the one, is implied the great injury done unto our Neighbor; and in the other, the great injure done unto God, yet God promiseth to forgive both.

I will speak something of both these sins, and something of the greatness of them both, which yet God promiseth, &c.

First, (From all your filthiness) that word (filthiness) is sometimes taken for any sin; every sin is a pollution, and uncleanness, a



filthiness, therefore the Apostle saith; (2 Cor. 7:1) Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; there are bodily sins which the Apostle here calls the filthiness of our flesh; and there are spiritual sins arising from, and acted in the soul, which the Apostle here calls the filthiness of the spirit. Sometimes that word (filthiness) is taken restrictively, for bodily pollution or uncleanness; when the bodies of men and women are defiled and polluted, and do defile and pollute themselves, of which in Scripture you find several sorts and kinds.

1. Bestiality; that βδέλυγμα ἄρρητιν, abomination not to be named, it is confusion; you read of this sin in Lev. 18:23, and of the punishment of it with death, Lev. 20:15,16.

2. Sodomy; of this horrid sin, and the punishment thereof, you read in Lev. 20:13. This is not only a sin, but also a recompense of other sins, and for which God gives men over to a reprobate mind, Rom. 1:27,28, and for which he destroyed those five Cities with fire from heaven, Gen. 19:24,25.

3. Incest; ubi servatur sexus, sed non gradus; it is the sin cum agnata or cognata, with a kinswoman of the fathers or the mothers side, (yea, and with ones fathers wife) see Lev. 20:17. (and with ones brothers wife)

4. Fornication, which is between single persons.

5. Adultery, which is uncleanness between persons married to others, or when one of them is married to another, and yet defileth himself with a stranger; some of these sins of uncleanness are so horrid, that they are said to be against nature, yea, against corrupt nature; the very natural light in natural conscience condemns and opposes them; and the rest of

them (as fornication and adultery) the Scripture sets them out as very odious in the eyes of God, and very foul transgressions, and extremely pernicious; in them you may read ten things concerning these sins.

First, That they are the express fruits of a vile and naughty heart; out of the heart proceedeth fornications, adulteries, saith Christ, Matth. 15:19. The works of the flesh are manifest which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Gal 5:19.

Secondly, The Apostle reckons them up amongst the most detestable sins which the most loathsome Gentiles were guilty of, who were filled with all unrighteousness.

Thirdly, They are so vile sins, that Christians may not once name them (without detestation) Ephes. 5:3. But fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints.

Fourthly, They are such sins as are repugnant unto, and inconsistent with Christian society; Christians must not entertain fellowship with persons guilty of them. 1 Cor. 5:11. If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, &c. with such a one, no not to eat.

Fifthly, They are sins (especially adultery) against the three persons of the Trinity.

1. Against God the Father, who created the man and the woman, and married them to each other, and said, they two shall be one flesh, Gen. 2:24. Now by adultery they are separated whom God hath joined together, and made one; yea, God hath made Marriage a resemblance of Christ and his Church, Ephes. 5, but adultery brings contempt upon this resemblance of union.

2. Against God the Son; Jesus Christ hath paid a price for our bodies, as well as for our spirits; and upon that account we are to glorify him in both, 1 Cor. 6:20, nay, saith the same Apostle, Ver. 15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Now to alienate Christ's purchase from Christ, and to bestow it upon a Harlot, and make the members of Christ, the members of a Harlot, (as every adulterer doth) is exceedingly injurious unto Christ. Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a Harlot? God forbid? So the Apostle, in ver. 15.

3. Against God the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 6:19. Know you not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost? And Chap. 3:17. If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.

Sixthly, Of all sins these are the most brutish, making persons like the beasts; and therefore in Scripture unclean and adulterous persons are compared to beasts. To the Ox, Prov. 7:22. He goeth after her as an Ox to the slaughter. To the Horse, Jerem. 5:8. They were as fed Horses, everyone neighed after his Neighbors wife: and Jer. 13:27. I have seen thy adulteries, and thy neighing's, the lewdness of thy whoredoms, &c. To the Dog, Deut. 23:18. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a Whore, or the price of a Dog into the house of the Lord. By Dog here is meant an unclean, adulterous person; An persona Canina ego? Replied Abner to Ishbosheth, (am I a person like a Dog?) who charged him that he lay with his fathers Concubine, Rizpah, 2 Sam. 3:8.

Seventhly, Adultery in some respect is worse than many other sins against our Neighbors; it is a very great sin to slander the name of our Neighbor, and to bear false witness against him; it is very bad by theft to take away the goods of our Neighbor; it is yet worse to kill

and take away the life of our Neighbor; but adultery is (in some respect) more sinful than any one of these. v.g. In all these sinning's, the person sinning brings a guilt only upon himself; for when he defames another, though he casts reproach on him, yet he makes him not guilty; and in stealing from another, though he brings loss to him, yet he makes him not guilty; and when he kills another, he brings death to him, yet he makes him not sinfully guilty; but in adultery, there is a mutual consent to sin, and a mutual contract of guilt; and although the one party should repent, and so escape wrath, yet the other party repenting not, hath a soul which (for this sin) must be cast into hell.

Eighthly, They are such sins, for which God himself will judge the offender, though possibly they may escape the hands of men. Hebr. 13:4. Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge; and verily God hath severely judged persons for these sins, even in this life. The Old World was drowned for them, Gen 6:2,3, &c. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire, Gen. 19. Twenty and four thousand destroyed with the plague, Num. 25:9. The Tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished, and rooted out upon this account, Judge. 19:28. The Land of Canaan spewed out her Inhabitants for them, Lev. 18:28. How often doth God make these sins (in this life) a punishment unto those who are guilty of them? By causing unto themselves most loathsome and irksome, and incurable diseases, such as make them odious to others, and a shame and burden to themselves.

Ninthly, They are such sins as (many times) do bring with them an universal loss and ruin.

1. To our name. Prov. 6:33. A wound and dishonor shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

2. To our estate. Prov. 5:10 Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger, Job 31:11,22, it roots out all our increase.

3. To our health. ib. Ver. 11. And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.

4. To our consciences. Prov. 7:23, till a dart strike through his liver, &c. The great terrors of conscience (usually) arise from these sins. Job 24:17. If one know of them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

5. To our souls; and as unto them you shall find three very sad expressions in the Word of God.

1. That they are the way to hell. Prov. 7:27. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death: and Prov. 9:18. Their guests are in the depths of hell.

2. That they destroy the soul. He that committeth adultery with a woman, destroyeth his own soul, Prov. 6:32.

3. That they exclude from the Kingdom of God; nor adulterers, nor fornicators, nor effeminate, nor defilers of themselves with mankind shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:9,10.

Tenthly, They are such sins as whereof persons cannot easily repent; they do exceedingly dispose the soul to hardness and impenitency, they darken the mind and infatuate the judgment, and harden the heart, and so make the sinners condition almost desperate. Hose. 4:11. Whoredom and wine take away the heart. Prov. 2:19. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. None (i.e.) very few repent of these sins: For her heart is snares and

nets, and her hands are bands, Eccles. 7:26. All these things do abundantly show what an exceeding great sin the sin of uncleanness is; yet God hath pardoned them unto his people; Lot was pardoned: and David's adultery was pardoned, and the fornications and adulteries, and effeminate-ness, and Sodomies of the Corinthians were pardoned: 1 Cor. 6:11. Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Secondly, [From all your Idols] Having showed the greatness of the sins of uncleanness, I now proceed briefly to show unto you the greatness of the sin of Idolatry; This people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold, Exod. 32:31. And you shall find it very great;

First, By God's singular detestation, and loathing of Idolatry and Idols: Idols are frequently in Scripture called abominations, 1 King. 11:5. Solomon went after Milcom the abomination of the Amorites. Verse 7. And he built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. Idolatries are called abominable Idolatries, 1 Pet. 4:3, which the Learned call Epithetum perpetuum & non distinguens; see Acts 15:20. That they abstain from pollutions of Idols, ἀλισγήματα, Contaminations, filthiness, defilements: Therefore Idols are called dunghill-gods, stinking, filthy, and defiling.

Secondly, By God's special warnings of his people against this sin of Idolatry. Jer. 44:4. Do not this abominable thing which I hate. Deut. 18:9. When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not do after the abomination of these Nations. Deut. 4:23. Take heed unto

yourselves, lest you forget the Covenant of the Lord your God which he made with you, and make you a graven image, the likeness of anything which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. 1 Cor. 10:14. Flee from Idolatry. 1 Joh. 5:21. Keep yourselves from Idols.

Thirdly, By the grievous threatening's of Idolaters; read at your leisure, Deut. 32:15. He forsook God. Ver. 16, they provoked him to jealousy with strange gods. (and ver. 19, and when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them.) and ver. 20, and I will hide my face from you, and ver. 22. A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell. Ver. 23. I will heap mischief upon them, and will spend my arrows upon them. Ver. 24, they shall be burnt with thunder, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction. Ver. 25. The sword without, and terror within shall destroy, &c.

Fourthly, By the unparalleled judgments on Idolaters; God hath given the bill of divorce and broken them in pieces, and rooted them out of their dwelling places, and scattered them over all the earth, and persecuted them in his wrath, until he hath destroyed them from off the face of all the earth.

Fifthly, And besides all this, he hath shut the door of heaven against Idolaters, and threatens them with no less than hell and damnation, and the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

Sixthly, But once more consider the nature or effect of this sin of Idolatry; it is so every way contrary to God's glory of which he is most tender, Isa. 48:11, and Isa. 42:8, and will not give it to graven images: It is the changing of his glory (They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and

creeping things, Rom. 1:23) and the sordid abasing of his glory to imagine any creature capable of that excellency, and of that worship which belongeth to God; and verily we do no less than make the creatures to be God, when we do confer on them that worship which is proper unto God, or suppose such excellencies to be in them, which are to be found only in God.

It is the exceeding provocation of God, Hos. 12:14. Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly; therefore he shall leave his blood upon him. Idolatry is therefore often called adultery, and Idolaters are said to commit adultery with stocks and stones; what greater offense and provocation in a wife than to forsake her husband, and to play the adulteress with strangers? The Lord for this sin of Idolatry hath utterly forsaken people, he would be their God no more, nor would he own them for his people any longer. Nevertheless though this sin of Idolatry is so exceedingly high and provoking, yet God hath pardoned it unto his people: He pardoned it to Abraham, Solomon, to all the Churches of the Gentiles; to those of Rome, to the Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians.

Thus you see the Assertion evinced from the Text.

Secondly, I shall in the next place evince it from other places of Scripture, that God will forgive the greatest sins, &c. 1 Tim. 1:13. Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy. O what sins were these? Blasphemy, persecution, injuriousness, even to banishment and death! But I obtained mercy: In Acts 3:14. And ye denied the Holy One, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. Ver. 15, and killed the Prince of life. Yet Acts 44. Many of them which heard the Word believed, and the number of men were about five thousand. Isa. 1:18. Though your sins be as



scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as Crimson, they shall be as wool.

Thirdly, Let us see it further demonstrated by some Arguments.

1. God is great in mercy; Who is a strong God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the Remnant of his heritage! Micah 7:8. *Grave est quod habeo, sed ad Omnipotentem confugio*, said Austin. Infinite mercy can forgive great iniquity.

2. The satisfactions of Christ are great and full; so that by them grace did super abound: He undertook the whole state of the sins of God's people; sins great and small, many and few, ignorance and knowledge, all their iniquities, and all their trespasses, and all their transgressions: and did satisfy the Justice of God fully, and to the utmost, so that in him there is plenteous Redemption: The obedience of Christ is as much above our sins, as his person is above our persons.

3. When the Lord calls upon people to repent, as therein he deals with them to leave and forsake all their sins, great and small (he excuses them in no one sin) but of all sins he presseth them to forsake their great sins; so to draw and encourage them to this repentance he doth hold out his promise of pardon indefinitely of all their sins; this Covenant makes no distinction at all twixt small and great: God (usually) instances in the greatest sins.

4. God by the Gospel gathers of all sorts into his kingdom; The notorious sinners as well as the civil sinner (Mary Magdalene as well as Lydia, Saul as well as Nicodemus) great sinners as well as small offenders. But unless God would pardon great sinners, the Gospel cannot invite all sorts of sinners: For when you preach it to persons

guilty of great sins, alas say they, mercy belongs not to us, and what have you to do to press upon us to believe? Suppose we should believe, yet we shall not be saved, God will never justify and pardon us, &c.

5. God brings great sinners into Covenant, Publicans, Harlots; and when God brings any (actually) into the Covenant, there is a perfect league of love and peace made between them; a mutual reconciliation and relation; therefore he pardons their great sins: For unless these were pardoned, such a league of love and peace would be impossible: Persons are not perfectly reconciled, whilst the greatest matters of difference do continue.

6. Son, said Christ, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee, Matth. 9:2. Every justified or pardoned person is in a comfortable condition, he hath cause of joy and rejoicing: But if God did not pardon their great sins, as well as the rest of their sins, their condition would not be comfortable at all, but most miserable, and full of just horror and fear, &c.

7. God hath made use of the great sins of persons to humble them; and will he not now make use of his great mercies to pardon them? All our humbling's are wrought by the Spirit, in a reference unto mercy: when God intends to make us vessels of mercy, he doth first make us broken vessels: Acts 2:37. Pricked in their hearts. Ver. 41, then believed. Acts 9:6. Trembled. Chap. 16:29. And when he intends to break and humble the heart of a sinner, usually he makes the Conscience of him to apprehend and to lay hold of some of the greatest and worst of his sins. Paul's Conscience took hold of his persecuting of Christ, and the Jailor of his injuriousness to the Apostles; Zacchaeus on his exaction, and Mary Magdalene on her adultery. God lays on us the sense of our great sins, to make us see

the great need of mercy, and to confess the greatness of mercy in the pardoning of such great sins, and to quicken earnest prayers for mercy.

8. God hath great glory in the pardon of great sins: Who, is a God like unto thee, &c? Mich. 7:19, q.d. there is not such a merciful and gracious God in all the world. Prov. 25:2. It is the glory of God to conceal a thing. Prov. 19:11. It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression. So Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Ver. 9. And this shall be to me a Name of joy, and praise, and honor before all the Nation. This was his glory: Exod. 34:7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, &c.

9. God would have his people to pray for the forgiveness of their great sins: Hose. 14:2. Take away iniquity and receive us graciously; and they have prayed for the forgiveness of their great sins: Psal. 25:11. For thy Name sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity for it is great. And they have prevailed, Exod. 32:32. Therefore certainly he will forgive their great sins: For whatsoever we ask according to his will, and in Christ's Name, he will do it for us.

## SECT. II.

1. Use. Doth God promise to pardon the great sins, yea the greatest sins of his people! Hence we may be informed of the unspeakable goodness of God to his people.

First, That he takes not advantage against them; he seeks not occasions to fall off from them: if he did, then small offenses would serve the turn; our daily failings would have broken up all

communions betwixt him and us; much more would our great transgressions have raised up a partition wall, and caused his soul to abhor us: Psal. 103:10. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Great transgressions are great provocations, and great injuries, and great dishonors unto God; yet you see he promiseth to pass them by, to pardon them; therefore certainly he takes no advantage against us, he doth not mark iniquities and what we have done amiss.

Secondly, That they are no small matters which he doth for us: There are two things which God doth for his people which are not small favors.

1. One is the giving of Christ unto them, and the giving of them unto Christ.

2. The other is the forgiving of their great sins: Moses reputed this work as the fruits of his great power, and of his great mercy; Numb. 14:17. I beseech thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, ver. 18. The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Ver. 19. Pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy. And so doth the Apostle, in Ephes. 1:17. He puts this upon the account of the riches of God's grace, wherein (ver. 8) he abounds towards us. Was it a small thing for the King (in Matth. 18:23,24) to forgive the servant who owed unto him ten thousand talents? What is the desert of any one sin, even of the least of our sins? Death, and wrath, and curse, and hell; what then is the punishment and recompense meritoriously belonging to us for our great transgressions? Yet God forgives them, &c.

Thirdly, That his love is very great, and very firm, and sure unto his people; and never to be taken off and removed; why so? Because he forgives all the sins of his people, and the great, and the greatest sins of them. If anything breaks off the love of God, it must be sin (for that he hates, and that is the only provocation of him) and if any sin doth it, it is likely that a multitude of sins will, (daily and continual offenses) and if any of these will, it is most probable, that great and high sinning's will cut the knot asunder. But you see it is not the multitude of sins, nor yet the magnitude of sins which separates the people of God from the love of God, but he will pardon all their sins, yea the greatest of their sins; therefore his love is fixed, and never to be changed: For if these will not alter it, nothing else shall, or can.

Fourthly, That God takes away all grounds of despair from the hearts of his people: There are but three principal grounds of despair;

1. O my sins are so many, that there is no hope of mercy.
2. O but my sins are so high, and so great, that God will never forgive them.
3. O but though God can and will forgive many sins, and great sins; yet he will not forgive my great sins: My sin, said Cain, is greater than shall be forgiven, Gen. 4. Now God answers all these Arguments and Grounds of despair which possibly may arise in the hearts of his people; For

1. He promiseth that he will forgive all their sins, and will cast them also into the depth of the sea.
2. He promiseth to forgive their great sins; though they have been as scarlet, and red like crimson, and though adulterers, and though idolaters, &c.

3. This promise he himself doth make, with respect unto every one of their persons, as you may see here in the Text, and in other Scriptures; So that there remains no ground at all of despair for them: Indeed there may be matter enough for their humiliation, but none for desperation.

### SECT. III.

2. Use. Doth God promise, the forgiveness of all sins, yea of the great sins of his people? Then let all the people who are sensible of any great transgression, speedily and seriously make out unto the Mercy-seat for the pardon of their great sins.

For the managing of this Use, I will

1. Premise a few Conclusions.
2. Lay down some Directions, what is to be done to get the pardon of great sins.
3. Discover some Signs and Evidences by which one may know that even his great sins are forgiven.

First, The Conclusions which I would premise (as Motives to get the forgiveness of our great sins) are these.

First, Even the people of God may be guilty of great transgressions, both before their conversion, and also after their conversion.

1. Before their conversion, scarce any of them but have been guilty; what soul sins were those Corinthians guilty of, before God had called them by his grace? Even of drunkenness, and

idolatries, and adulteries, and Sodomies; and Paul himself, who seemed so unblameable in his conversation, yet what great sins stood he guilty of? He was mad in persecuting the Saints, he had his hand in the blood of Stephen, he was consenting to his death; nay, the Lord Jesus Christ arrested him, and accused him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Acts 9:4, Ephes. 2:3. Among whom also we had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Titus 3:3. We ourselves were also foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

2. After their conversion, they have also been guilty of great sins. Noah of drunkenness, Gen. 9:21. Lot of drunkenness and incest with his own daughters, Gen. 19:35,36. Solomon of abominable Idolatries, 1 Kin. 11:6,7, and David of adultery and murder, 2 Sam. 11:4, 12:9. And a thousand to one but most of us have been guilty of some great sin or other, either for the kind of it, or for the circumstantial aggravations of it, either of Omission, or of Commission: so that we all have cause to look after the forgiveness of great sins.

Secondly, Their great sins do dishonor God as much, nay more than the great sins of others. 2 Sam. 12:14. By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, &c. Rom. 2:24. The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you. Yea they do exceedingly provoke God to withdraw his comfortable presence of joy from their spirits, and to speak bitter things unto them, and to correct them with a strong and exemplary chastisement, and to suffer them to be buffeted by Satan with very heavy and distracting temptations: upon this account also they have reason to look after the forgiveness of their great sins.

Thirdly, Apprehensions of their great sins as unpardoned must needs fill their hearts with marvelous fears, and their Consciences with unutterable unquietnesses and burdens; as in David's roaring's, and his complaint of broken bones. There is (I think) not any one person whose great sins have not (at some time or other) returned upon him, and deeply wounded him. Great sins (of all other) are certain terrors unto the Conscience; and of all great sins, these are so. 1. The sins against nature. 2. Those of gross uncleanness. 3. Those of blood and murder. 4. Those of compact with the Devil. 5. Those of blasphemy. 6. Those against the workings of Conscience. 7. Those against the Gospel. 8. Presumptions. 9. Relapses. Any of these, and any other great sins of which one hath been guilty, they sit heavy upon the Conscience, and do make dreadful work there, and do often arise with exceeding terror and distraction, so that the soul sinks under the guilt of them, &c.

Fourthly, There is nothing whatsoever which can allay and quiet Conscience troubled, and troubling for the guilt of great sins, but the presence or (at least) the hope of forgiveness of them: No earthly thing can quiet conscience in that condition; David wanted not for them, and yet he roared all the Day long, and his bones waxed old, and his moisture was turned into the drought of summer, Psal. 32:34. Nay (let me speak a bold word) there is nothing in God which can do it, but this merciful and gracious nature to forgive: If the distressed sinner looks on his Justice, he falls down confounded; if he looks on his holiness, O he is of purer eyes than to behold sin! If on his power, O it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Nothing but mercy answers this distress, or gives ease to this pain and trouble: Be merciful unto me, O God, said David; God be merciful to me a sinner, said the Publican; Take away iniquity said the Church: Beloved! In all sorts of distress, there is but one thing which is a proper relief: In sickness, health is the only help; in



hunger, bread is the only help; in thirst, water is the only help; in pains, ease is the only help; and so under the guilt of sin, mercy is the only help: This is life, this is deliverance, this is all.

Fifthly, Though your sins have been, or are very great, yet there is hope of mercy, and that for you; which may appear briefly by four particulars.

1. The promise of God reaches (as you have heard) to the pardon of great sins.

2. The instances or acts of mercy, they are recorded, grants of grace and mercy to great transgressions: You know thus they have passed to David, to Solomon, to Mary Magdalene, to Peter, to Paul, to the Corinthians: As great sins as yours hath God pardoned, yea and perhaps greater sins than yours.

3. God is still of a merciful nature; he is as able, and as ready to forgive as ever; the Fountain is as full, and as open; Although the Lord hath shewn mercy to many and great sinners already, yet he reserves and keeps mercy for thousands, nay for a thousand generations. You are not the first great sinners, nor yet the last great sinners, on whom he hath, or on whom he will show mercy; his mercy endures forever.

4. He calls upon such as have been guilty of great sins, to leave their sins, and to come in unto him; and hath assured them that if they do so, he will forgive their great sins. Isa. 1:10. Hear the Word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodom, and ye people of Gomorrah. Ver. 15. Your hands are full of blood. Ver. 16. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings before mine eyes, cease to do evil, ver. 17, learn to do well, &c. Ver. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though

your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Jer. 3:1. They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go away from him, and she become another man's, shall he return again unto her? Shall not that Land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again unto me, saith the Lord. Ver. 5. Will he reserve his anger forever? Will he keep it to the end; behold thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest. Ver. 7. And I said after she had done all these things, turn thou unto me, but she returned not. Ver. 12. Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, &c.

Secondly, I now proceed to lay down some Directions, what one should do who hath been guilty of great sins, to get the pardon of them.

I will propose unto you no other Course or Practice than what you may read in the Scriptures, that some have taken who have been guilty of great sins, and have thereupon found mercy in the pardoning of them.

**Quest. What's that? Will you say.**

Sol. You shall find

First, That they have been greatly humbled, and have greatly mourned for their great sinning's, and then God did show them mercy in the pardon of those sins. Zach. 12:11. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo. Chap. 13:1. In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin, and for uncleanness. Jer. 31:19. I was ashamed,

yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Ver. 20. I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord, Psal. 6:6. I am weary of my groaning, all the night I make my bed to swim, I water my Couch with my tears. And (you know the Lord forgave his great sins.) Luk. 7:38. Mary Magdalene stood at the feet of Christ behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears. Ver. 48. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven thee. Peter went out and wept bitterly for his great sin, and that sin was forgiven. And Paul fell down and trembled for his great sins, and they were pardoned. In all these instances you see great mourning for great sins, and gracious pardon for them; Go you and do likewise, and you shall find friendship.

Secondly, That they have cordially and really forsaken their great sins; they durst not continue in them, but have loathed themselves and their abominations, and have cast them away: Ezra 9:14. Should we again break thy Commandments, and join with the people of these abominations? Isa. 30:22. Ye shall also defile the covering of thy graven Images of silver, and the ornaments of thy molten images of gold, then shalt thou cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence! Ver. 23. Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, &c. Hos. 14:8. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do anymore with Idols? I have heard him and considered him. I am like a green fir tree, from me is thy fruit found. Judge. 10:16. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord. Acts 3:19. Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. Thus did David, thus did Manasseh, thus did Mary Magdalene, thus did Paul, and the Prodigal, and thereupon did find mercy: Such were some of you, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, &c. Lookst thou for mercy to pardon great sins, and yet still goest on in thy trespasses! &c.

Thirdly, That they have earnestly prayed unto the Lord for the forgiveness of their great sins: Exod. 32:31. O this people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold. Ver. 32. Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me I pray thee out of the book which thou hast written; so Moses prayed. Psal. 25:11. For thy Names sake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. Dan. 9:5. We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled by departing from thy precepts. Ver. 9. To the Lord our God belong mercies, and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Ver. 19. O Lord hear; O Lord forgive! O Lord hearken and defer not for thy Name sake. Ver. 18. We do not present our supplications unto thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. Luke 18:13. And the Publican stood a far off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner. In these Prayers for the pardon of great sins, you may espy four Ingredients.

1. That they have come from broken hearts, sensible of their greatness.
2. That they have come from humble hearts, sensible of their own unworthiness.
- 3 s That they have been sent up with believing hearts.
4. That they have been plied and followed with earnest, and servant, and importunate hearts which would have no denial, and all of them found acceptance.

Fourthly, That they have pleaded with God upon such grounds which have always been prevalent with God for the obtaining of the forgiveness of their sins.

1. For his mercies sake: Psal. 51:1. According to the multitude of thy mercies blot out my transgressions. Psal. 6:4. O save me for thy mercies sake.

2. For his Christ sake: Ephes. 4:32. Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you: Therefore when of old they would have their sins pardoned, they offered sacrifices, and blood was shed and poured out, which Typified the blood of Christ that was shed for the remission of sins: For without shedding of blood is no Remission, Heb. 9:22.

3. For his Promise sake: Numb. 14:17. I beseech thee, said Moses, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, (Ver. 18) The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression. (Ver. 19) Pardon I beseech thee the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now.

Fifthly, They have patiently waited upon the Lord, until that he hath showed them mercy. Psal. 85:8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints. Isa. 30:18. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him. Ver. 19 He will be gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. These are the ways which great sinners (yea, which the people of God being guilty of great transgressions) have taken to get the forgiveness of them, and in which ways God hath met them with his pardoning mercies; and if in the like cases we do thus follow the Lord, he will be merciful and gracious unto any of us, though greatly sinning and guilty.

Thirdly, Having showed unto you what course is to be taken for to get the pardon of great transgressions, I shall now deliver unto you some signs or evidences by which one may certainly know that God hath forgiven his great sins.

There are six Evidences of this.

First, There always goes a great change with the forgiveness of great sins; It is a great question whether Justification be before Sanctification; whatsoever may be disputed for the priority of nature, yet it is agreed there is no priority of time; for as soon as any sinner is justified and pardoned, he is changed and sanctified the blood and the water go together; as soon as any one is in Christ, he is forgiven, and there is no condemnation unto him, Rom. 8:1. And so as soon as any is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things become new, 2 Cor. 5:17. What an unclean person was Mary Magdalene before she was called to Christ, and found mercy? And after mercy was obtained, what an eminent Christian was she? What a violent and injurious Persecutor was Paul in times past? And when he obtained mercy, what an admirable and exemplary Christian was he? Of all the changes incident to sinners, the greatest change appears in the greatest sinner received to mercy and forgiveness; there are two conspicuous changes in them.

1. The greatest inward change; the sins which he formerly loved more than his soul, he now doth hate more than hell; (he once out faced the Word, and now trembles at it.)

2. The greatest outward change; the worst sinner (being received to mercy) proves the choicest Christian; he is now as notable in a gracious walking, as he was (once) notorious in a licentious living, exemplary in both respects, and in both ways and courses.

Secondly, A second Evidence that God hath forgiven our great sins, is our great love to a forgiving God; this note Christ himself giveth, Luke 7:47. Her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Christ brings there a Parable of a Creditor, who forgave two debts; one of them a great debt, and the other a lesser debt; hereupon he demands of Simon the Pharisee which would love him most? Who answered, I suppose he to whom most was forgiven; this he applies to the woman there forgiven (much was forgiven her, and therefore she loved much) he speaks not of a love antecedent to pardon, but of a love following it: 1 John 4:19. We love him, because he loved us first. Ver. 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And indeed none can love God, but such who can by faith see him a merciful, pardoning, and reconciling God in Christ.

Thirdly, A most tender fear to offend and grieve the Lord anymore. Psal. 130:4. There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayst be feared. Hosea 3:5. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness. It is wonderful to observe the singular frame of spirit in a converted and pardoned sinner from what it was in former times; heretofore he feared not the most cursed Oaths, but now he fears an idle word; heretofore he feared not the most beastly practice of uncleanness, but now he fears the very thoughts, and mental imaginations of it; heretofore he could omit all good duties, now he fears to neglect the least; he hath found so much good, so much mercy at the hands of God, and tasted of so much gracious goodness, that he would not willingly offend him in anything in any part of his life; a tender heart hath tasted of tender mercies.

Fourthly, Exceeding zeal for God, who hath showed him great mercy, and for Christ (for whose sake) God hath forgiven all; the greatest

sinner have ever been most zealous; before they have obtained mercy, they have been most zealous for what was evil; and after they have obtained mercy, they have been most zealous for what is good. How zealous was Paul? Even besides himself for Christ; actively zealous; I labored more abundantly than they all, 1 Cor. 5:10. And passively zealous; I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus, Acts 21:13.

Fifthly, Great compassions; Oughtest thou not to have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, as I had compassion on thee? There are no men so merciful, as those sinners to whom God hath showed most mercy; there is a three-fold compassion in them.

1. A pitying compassion of all sinners, especially of great sinners, grieving, bewailing, praying.
2. A helping compassion, especially to those unto whom he hath been the occasion or cause of great sins, even pulling them out of the fire, weeping, entreating, instructing them with meekness, if peradventure God will give them repentance. David after the pardon of his great sins, then saith he, (Psal. 51:13) will I teach Transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.
3. A forgiving compassion; bearing much, and forgiving much, as God for Christ sake hath forgiven them.

Sixthly, True peace and joy, which flow only from forgiving mercy. Luke 7:48. Thy sins are forgiven. Ver. 50. Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace. Rom. 5:11. We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

There is a twofold peace in a sinner.



1. One ariseth from stupidity, and depends upon an ignorant and seared conscience, as a sick man is quiet while he sleeps.

2. Another ariseth from faith, which seals to the goodness and truth of the promise, and causeth the soul to rest in that good and faithful Word, that God for Christ's sake will indeed forgive their great sins; a peace that follows faith, is a right peace, and a right testimony that sin is forgiven. 1 John 3:21. If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.

So there is a twofold joy.

1. Of presumption, which is ungrounded and rash, irrational and irreligious; a joy that a man's sins are pardoned, and yet no Word of God hath said it; only his own heart saith it, and with that joy there is (at the same time) conjoined sinful, sensual joy in some lust or other.

2. Of the Holy Ghost; a joy which comes from the Holy Ghost, and depends likewise upon faith in Christ: By whom we do receive the atonement; this joy doth exceedingly enlarge the heart to God, and fills it with special complacencies and delights in God, and sweet communions with him, &c. such a peace in conscience, and such a joy in God, are the very fruits of his grace and love, and mercy.

#### SECT. IV.

The next Use shall be of Caution, that we take heed, lest we abuse and pervert this gracious promise of God, touching the forgiveness of

great sins; either by continuing under the guilt of former transgressions, or by adding new guilt in the commission of more great iniquities. O say some wild Atheists, God is such a merciful God, that he will forgive any sin, yea, the greatest sins, (adulteries and idolatries, and drunkenness, and blasphemers) and therefore we will continue in these sins, we will not be curbed and restrained, but will take our delights, and give over ourselves unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, Ephes. 4:19.

To prevent such presumptions, and desperate inferences in all that hear of God's great mercifulness to pardon great transgressions, give me favor to lay down fix Conclusions or Antidotes.

First, Such presumptuous inferences are expressly contrary to the goodness and intention of God's great mercy. Psal. 130:4. There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared: He doth not say, There is forgiveness with thee, that we may therefore boldly go on in sin, but that we may fear to sin anymore. Rom. 2:4. Despise thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Rom. 6:1. Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid: q.d. Thou dost utterly mistake and pervert the aim and intention of God's mercy in sparing of thee, and forbearance to punish and destroy thee; alas, it is not that thou shouldst therefore continue in sin, but that thou shouldst repent of sin. Beloved, there is no Attribute of God which can be an encouragement to sin, but every one of them is a strong reason to turn us from sin; he is holy, and of purer eyes than to behold sin, therefore we should not sin; he is just and righteous to recompence the sinner according to his ways, therefore we should not sin; he is mighty in Power, and of great Might, able to make good, and to execute all the judgment which he hath threatened sinners with, therefore we should not sin; he in

much patience bears with us, and forbears to deal with us according to our sins, therefore we should not sin; and he is merciful and gracious, ready to forgive, therefore we should not sin; not therefore we will continue in our sins; not therefore we will multiply and add sin to sin.

Secondly, As God is merciful in pardoning great sinners, so God is just in condemning great sins; and as he hath, and will glorify his mercy in forgiving and saving some great sinners, so he hath and will glorify his justice, in judging and damning some other great sinners; therefore do not presume to go on in great sins, because God hath promised to forgive great sins. Exod. 34:6. The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious. Ver. 7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Here you see his mercy declared, that he will forgive the great sins of some persons; but then read on, and you shall find his justice, that he will punish the great sins of others. —And that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. You read that some of the Corinthians were justified and pardoned, who had been guilty of adultery and Sodomy. 1 Cor. 6:9. And so you read of others that were damned for those sins. Jude, ver. 7. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities about them in like manner giving themselves over unto fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Thirdly, There was never any great sinner whom God pardoned, nor is there any great sinner whom God doth promise to pardon, but he hath repented, and he must repent of his great sins.

1. Consider the great sinners whom God hath pardoned, as they were great sinners, so they were great penitents. David was

guilty of great sins, but he repented of them all; he repented of his murder, and he repented of his adultery, and he repented of his pride in numbering the people. Manasseh was an exceeding great sinner (hardly any the like, 2 Chron. 33, from ver. 1, to ver. 11) but he repented of his great sins; he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, Ver. 12. And prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, Ver. 13. And he reformed all again; for he pulled down, and put away all his Idolatry, Ver. 15. And he did set up the true worship of God again, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel, Ver. 16; &c.

2. Consider the great sinners whom God doth promise to pardon, certainly you shall find that promise to pass upon terms of repentance; not else. Isa. 1:16. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well. Ver. 18. Come now, let us reason together saith the Lord; Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Acts 3:19. Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; what their great sins were, you may read in Ver. 14. They denied the holy One. And Ver. 15. Killed the Prince of life; and if they would have these sins blotted out, they must repent of them.

Fourthly, God hath threatened unto great sinners (on whom his mercy hath not wrought repentance) eternal wrath, and a peremptory privation of mercy, with inevitable destruction unto them who have presumed to go on in their sins; for the first of these, see the known place of the Apostle, Rom. 2:4. Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. Ver. 5. But after thy hardness, and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath

against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: For the latter of these, see that smart place in Deut. 29:19. And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. Ver. 20. The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his Name from under heaven. Ver. 21. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the Tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the Covenant that are written in this book of the Law.

Fifthly, A going on still in great sins, if it be any sure testimony at all, it is rather that God will never forgive you, than otherwise; why so, will you say? Because;

1. There is no promise of mercy to any that goes on in his great transgressions, but refuseth to hearken, and to return; in such a condition and course no promise.
2. There are dreadful threatening's of God against such who shall go still on in their trespasses. Psal. 68:21. And God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goes on still in his trespasses. Isa. 65:20. The sinner being a hundred years old, shall be accursed. Prov. 29:1. He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.
3. Your going on still in sinning (unless the Lord be infinitely and extraordinary merciful towards you) will render you utterly incapable of forgiving mercy; for

First, This course of sinning is that which doth desperately harden your hearts, and fear your consciences, that no dealing whatsoever can make any impression upon you toward Repentance.

Secondly, The Lord doth usually give up such sinners to their own heart's lusts, and to a reprobate mind and soul.

Sixthly, Though (possibly) some few sinners (who have for a long time continued in great transgressions) may obtain mercy, yet they shall find it a very difficult work to be persuaded of God's mercy to their souls. Psal. 6:3. My soul is also sore vexed, but O Lord how long?

My Reasons are these.

1. Because the threatening's of God are so many, and so express against great sins, (especially against the continuing in them) that it will not be easy to over-balance these threatening's of God with the promise of God.

2. Because the truth of repentance is very apt to be much questioned by great sinners, when yet indeed they do repent; they do conceive (and that rightly) that for extraordinary sinning's, extraordinary repentance is required; but they feel such a hardness, such a deadness of heart, O they cannot repent! And let me tell you, if any great sinner be in dispute about the truth of his Repentance, he will also be in dispute about the apprehension of mercy.

3. Because of all sins whatsoever, great sins do incline us (under the clear apprehension of them) to despair: You shall find this experimentally true, that the more desperate people have been in sinning, they are more apt to despair, when conscience ever sets

upon them for their sins. The guilt of great sins will be heavy and bitter, and the woundings for great sins will be sharp and deep; always (for them) there falls in the sense of God's great wrath, and the fear of God's great judgment, and the instances of the great punishments of God inflicted on great transgressions; and with all these, Satan's great and subtle temptations, all which are powerfully apt to sink the sinner with despair; and then this is clear, that the more apt any sinner is to despair, the less apt is the sinner to close with pardoning mercy; nay, it falls off the more from the hope of it.

4. Because the Lord is pleased to hold up the manifestation of his love a long time, from those that have a long time sinned against the offers and calls of his love and mercy; thereby teaching great sinners how unworthy they are to taste of his goodness, and warning other great sinners not to presume of any easy enjoyment of mercy. And you shall find it a hard work to settle and persuade the conscience of a great sinner about mercy, when the Lord doth (after many seeking's) still hold up the manifestations or sensible expressions of his favor and mercy towards him.

5. Because it is a very difficult thing to act faith under the sense of great transgressions; lesser iniquities do many times check and keep down our confidences, much more do great transgressions, &c.

#### SECT. V.

Before I pass away from this Point of God's pardoning great sins, I would speak to a few Cases or Scruples of conscience with which some are, or may be troubled.

**Quest. 1. What that troubled sinner should do who hath been guilty of some great sin, for which he cannot find any one parallel instance of forgiveness in all the Scriptures, (i.e.) that ever God did forgive any that were guilty of that sin.**

Sol. To this very sadly distressing Case, I would deliver these six Answers.

First, It is true, that a person convinced of, and really troubled with the sense of any great sin, doth look after, and will not easily be satisfied in conscience without a parallel instance in the Scripture of some sinners in the like condition of guilt with himself, whom yet God did pardon; but did ever any sin as I have sinned? And did God ever pardon any who have sinned as I have sinned? Or had their sin all those aggravations (though God hath pardoned them) as my sin hath? Can you give me any one clear record or pattern of the same?

There are two reasons which draw a troubled sinner thus to search, and thus to inquire.

1. One is, because he thinks that what God never did in a way of mercy, he will never do.
2. Another is, because he thinks that the apprehension of great mercy past in a case parallel with his, will be a quicker help to his hope and faith, that God may likewise forgive his great sins, even as he hath forgiven the same to others.

Nevertheless (under favor be it spoken) this is not so regular a way, nor yet so sure a ground for hopes of mercy; for



1. If instances and precedent patterns of former mercy were necessarily to be looked at as grounds for hopes in us of the like mercy, then the first transgressors, they that had been first in the guilt of great transgressions must have despaired of forgiveness; for no pattern, example or instance of the like was ever found before; but mercy was pleased to make them the pattern of mercy for others; as Paul speaks of himself in 1 Tim. 1:16. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. The Lord himself would have put us upon that way of searching records and instances, before we should look up unto this promise by faith.

2. These instances of mercy will not (absolutely) quiet the troubled conscience; but notwithstanding them, the fire will still burn, and the torments and fear will abide in strength, and that upon a double account.

First, Though God show mercy to a great transgressor in the like kind, yet he hath not showed mercy to everyone in that kind; so that still the sinner is troubled, But will God show mercy to me?

Again, that a like great transgressor I find hath had a great change wrought in him; O but this I cannot find or discern in myself. Ergo. So then troubled sinners do (usually) look after instances and examples of pardon, before they do look up to the promises of mercy; but this is not so regular, nor so sure a way to raise faith, as I shall presently show unto you.

But secondly, Though you cannot find a powerful instance, yet possibly there may be found instances of transgressors in the same kind of sinning, whom God hath formerly pardoned; though you

cannot find them, yet they may be found in the Scriptures: Suppose your great sin hath been

1. Extortion, you may read that forgiven in Zacchaeus.
2. Drunkenness, you may read that forgiven in Noah.
3. Theft, you may read that forgiven to the Penitent Thief on the Cross.
4. Whoredom, you may read it forgiven to Mary Magdalene; and adultery, it was forgiven to David.
5. Incest, you read it forgiven to Lot, and to the incestuous Corinthian.
6. Sodomy, you read it forgiven to some of the Corinthians.
7. Murder, you read it forgiven to David.
8. Idolatry, you read it forgiven to Solomon, and also to some of the Corinthians.
9. Blasphemy, why, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, &c. Matth 12:31.
10. Apostasy; Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, Jer. 3:12.
11. Scoffing and mocking of the Gospel, and the Ministers thereof, yet some of these have been forgiven, Act. 2:13,38, and 17:32,34.

12. Denying and forswearing of Christ; yea and that after knowledge and faith, yet pardoned unto Peter; possibly the great sin (which lies so heavy upon the Conscience) may be soon one of these, and then you see a parallel instance as you do desire.

But 3ly, admit you read not of a particular personal example, yet if you do read of any instance of forgiving mercy to any sinner whatsoever, whose great transgressions do not only equal, but far exceed that or those of which you are guilty, may not that serve you? Surely it is not impossible that thy great sins may be forgiven, if mercy hath past an Act of grace in forgiving some sinners their great transgressions.

**Object. O no! No man's sins were ever greater than mine, &c.**

Sol. Well; but what if I produce one whose sins have been such, that thy heart will be amazed at, and dread to think of being guilty of such transcendent iniquities? My instance shall be in Manasseh, of whom you may thus read, 2 Chro 33:2. He did evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the Heathen whom the Lord hath cast out before the children of Israel. Ver. 3. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his Father had broken down, and he reared up Altars for Baalim, and made Groves, and worshipped all the Host of heaven, and served them. Ver. 3. Also he built Altars in the house of the Lord, whereof the Lord said, In Jerusalem shall my Name be forever. Ver. 5. And he built Altars for all the Host of heaven, in the Courts of the house of the Lord. Ver. 6. And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: Also he observed times, and used Enchantments, and used Witchcraft, and dealt with a Familiar spirit, and with Wizards; he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. Ver. 7. And he set a

carved image (the idol which he had made) in the house of God. Ver. 9. So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the Heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel. Ver. 10. And the Lord spake unto Manasseh, and to his people, but they would not hearken. Are not these sins greater than thy sins? Such high Idolatries, sacrificing of Children to the Devils. Yet this greatest of sinners that you read of in the Old Testament, upon his deep repentance found mercy; as Paul who called himself the chiefest of sinners in the New Testament, did likewise obtain mercy, &c.

Fourthly, Under the sense of (incomparably) great sinning's, the business is not to debate, but to repent: Not what great sins you or others have committed, and whose great sins God hath pardoned, but to obtain a heart from God to repent of those sins; for though sins be lesser sins, a sinner shall be damned for them, if he repent not: Though sins have been exceeding great, yet they shall be forgiven upon repentance.

You demand what a great sinner should do, who can find no instance of mercy to any under the same guilt with himself! I answer plainly;

1. He should do what God calls upon him to do (and what he hath called upon other great sinners to do) and that is to repent: Let the wicked forsake his way, &c. Isa. 55:7. Repent and be converted, Act. 3:19. Put away the evil of your doings, Isa 1:16.

2. He should by faith lay hold on the promises of mercy by Christ to a repenting sinner: To dispute who hath found mercy, is the least of your business, but do you repent, and you shall quickly see mercy in a promise to your own souls, although you cannot find Instances of mercy unto others

Fifthly, Though you cannot find particular and answerable instances, yet in case of Repentance you may, and shall find sufficient promises (which are proper grounds for your faith to work on) to answer your conditions: All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against, &c. Matth. 12:31. Certainly this promise will reach your sin, be it never so great, unless it be the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that sin you are not guilty of, because you are repenting of your sin, whereas it is impossible to renew those (who are guilty of that sin) unto repentance, Heb. 6:6.

Sixthly, And let me tell you one thing more; That as when God forbids any kind of sin, he doth therein forbid the particular individual branches of that sin: So (if I do not exceedingly mistake) when he doth promise to forgive a sin in any kind, that promise of forgiveness will extend to any one particular or distinct sin of that kind; be that particular sin never so heinous, v.g. When he promiseth to forgive uncleanness indefinitely upon the repentance of a person, this promised forgiveness is applicable to the most vile and horrid ways of uncleanness, of which a person hath been guilty: But I have said enough to this Scruple.

**2. Quest. Whether in case of great transgressions, the first work which concerns the sinner, be to repent of his sin, or first to believe that God hath forgiven his sin, or rather will do so?**

Sol. Truly I think that whatsoever we may (Theoretically) argue in such a case, yet (practically) he that is wounded in Conscience for any great sin, hath little leisure or ability to keep Rank or File; I mean thus artificially to consider the Method or Order of Spiritual actings: But one while he thinks on sin, and another while on mercy; when on his sin, then with great fears; and when on mercy, then with

great doubts. That he should repent, he knows; that he may presently believe, he questions; and to speak plainly, he can neither well repent, nor yet well believe; a third work ordinarily presseth him, which is of a troubled; and troubling Conscience.

But yet if you would have me speak my thought to this Nicety, rather than Case of Conscience, I should say,

First, As to experience; trouble and tears, and fears, and sighs, and groans are (usually) the immediate workings and issues of great sinning's:

Secondly, As to the command; Repentance is the first work which God lays out for the great sinner; This generally you read prescribed both in the Old and New Testament, 2 Chron. 7:14, Isa. 1:16, Isa. 55:7, Ezek. 18:21, and Luke 24:47, Act. 2:38, Act. 3:19. And truly it will be no easy work to clear out, that a man can or may believe, that God (according to promise) will forgive him his sins (though very great) whiles he yet remains impenitent.

Thirdly, As to the order of practice; I would prescribe both of them to be first; The sinner should repent first, and the sinner should believe first; and that he may do both first, he should pray for both first. A believing Repentance, and a Repenting Faith; such a Repentance which is accompanied with Faith; and such a Faith as accompanied with Repentance: And verily in this case, if the Faith be right, it is not without Repentance; and if the Repentance be right, it is not without Faith: you cannot rightly repent unless you have Faith to see some mercy; neither can you confidently believe unless there be some Repentance. I beseech you whiles others are a disputing which of these should appear first, do you earnestly and seriously beg of God for grace to act them both.

**3. Quest. But there is another Case which is more real, and more to purpose, viz. What that sinner should do, who upon the commission of some great sin, cannot find a heart either to repent, or to believe? The heart is become hardened, and no workings can be raised either of mourning for the sin past, or of believing for mercy future!**

Sol. This is unto the sinner a very dreadful case; because;

1. God seems to deal with him in a plain judicial way, and in a forsaking manner, denying unto him the presence and power of his Spirit, to raise him out of the depth of his sin and misery into which he hath plunged himself.

2. God seldom leaves a sinner thus, but where the sinner hath presumed to commit some great transgression against some special actings of knowledge and Conscience. Nevertheless to the case propounded,

First, Let the sinner in this condition consider whether no penitential, and no believing operations at all are to be found in his heart: whether he doth not (at least) with a sad and troubled heart consider into what a condition he hath (by his great sinning) brought himself! Whether there be not some judging's and abhorring's of himself, and some desires after a Spirit of mourning and believing.

Secondly, this sinner should acknowledge it as a great and righteous judgment of God upon him for his sinning; And that the Lord may forever withdraw from him, and utterly leave him, because he hath thus presumptuously sinned against him: Never let him open his mouth against God, but justify and clear him as most righteous, and condemn himself as most unthankful, and unworthy that ever the Lord should look on him anymore: That he should thus (against light

and warnings, and reluctancies of conscience, and against mercy, and love, and perhaps experience) presumptuously venture to offend and provoke God.

Thirdly, If under all the distinct Considerations of this sinning, and his free confessions unto God, and his self-judging's, no tenderness yet appear, and no special workings yet arise, and no hope of mercy; then let him confer with some godly and well experienced Ministers and Christians (if there be a messenger with him, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, Job 33:23) to pity his soul, and to show him his way, and to open counsel unto him, and to pour out his heart in prayer to the Lord for him. The fervent prayers of the Righteous are effectual and prevalent, Jam. 5:16, and should be called in for help in such a case: And when all of them join together and cry mightily unto God, O Lord, in the midst of judgment remember mercy; Lord deal not with this sinner according to his sinning against thee: Lord! Do not forsake him and leave him; Lord! Return in mercy to his soul; and renew him again unto repentance; for thy Name sake, for thy Christ's sake do not abhor him, but heal his backslidings, and be merciful unto his back-sliding's! I tell you that such joint and earnest prayers of the people of God, are seldom denied by God.

Fourthly, If yet no spiritual working can be revived, but his heart like the Shunamites child, which for all that Gehazi could say or do, still remained dead, so this man's heart, for all that private helps can do, still remains hard and unaffected; then let him think on, and repair to some soul-searching and quickening Ministry, which God doth (ordinarily) bless, to break down a presumptuous heart, and to lift up a contrite heart; to pierce and wound a hard heart, and to comfort and revive a troubled heart: Who can tell what the Lord will, or may do in and by his own Ordinance? Especially when a poor sinner comes directly for that end to receive impressions from God? And



renouncing all his own power (as well he may, for it utterly fails him) offers up his heart (such as it is) unto the Lord to be created (as it were) again, and new molded, and formed, and quickened. O Lord! I doubt I have lost all since my sinning against thee (oh that sinning against thee!) I can neither find thee, nor myself; Repentance seems to be dead, O I cannot grieve or mourn! And Faith seems to be dead, and I cannot believe or trust! Lord! May I come to thee! May I look up to thee! May I call upon thee! May I hope in thee! Thou canst yet do me good, wilt thou so! O that thou wouldest make thy power to appear, if yet thou wilt not make thy grace to appear! I have cast myself down, and I cannot raise myself; I have hardened my heart, and I cannot soften it; I have weakened every grace, and I cannot quicken any one again: yet O Lord, thou canst do all this; thou canst convince, and humble, and turn, and raise, and renew: I bring my heart to thee, do with me what seems good in thine eyes, only take not thy Spirit from me; by thy Spirit breathe some life into this dead heart; I have lived a presumptuous sinner, yet O Lord, let me not die an hardened, and impenitent, and unbelieving sinner!

Fifthly, If after all this, nothing appears of change in thy hard heart, then set some solemn time apart for fasting and prayer to humble thy soul, and to seek the face of God: And indeed this is convenient and necessary in this case; for extraordinary sinning's do require extraordinary humiliations; and God gives in, and comes unto us upon such extraordinary seeking, when he holds off upon ordinary and common addresses: The Word of God tells us so much, and experience seals and bears witness thereunto. And therefore let nothing hinder or divert thee from this work; not that this kind of service hath any kind of merit in it, but that 1. God expects it if we would have peace after great sinning's. And 2ly, it shows how much the heart is displeased with itself, and truly longs to be raised and reconciled. And 3ly, God is usually found in this way, and returns

again, and shows compassion, and forgives sins, and subdues iniquities. And withal remember three things about this work.

1. Be not discouraged though at the beginning thou findest thy heart very hardened, and dull, and straitened, yet still hold on, and before the end of it, thou shalt find it altered into some mourning's, and melting's, and hopes of mercy, and gracious answers.

2. Fasten all thy hopes on the Lord Jesus; pray, and ask in his Name, and trust in his Name for thy pardon, and for thy recovery, and resolve plainly to wait, and hearken what the Lord in his time will speak to thee, and do for thee.

3. Apply those promises which do especially respect thy sad condition: What are those, will you say? They are 1. the promise of softening a hard heart. 2ly. The promises of healing a backsliding heart. 3ly. The promises of pardoning great transgressions; you have them all expressed in the Word. Ezek. 36:26. I will take away the heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh. Hose. 14:4, Isa. 1:18. I will heal their back-sliding's. Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them as white as snow.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, &c. - Ezek. 36:25.

You have heard already from this Verse two things. One was the Quality of the mercy promised by God unto his people, and that was the forgiveness of their sins. The other was the Quantity of that promised mercy, respecting partly the multitude of their sins, and partly the magnitude of their sins (From all your filthiness, and from all you Idols will I cleanse you.)

Now there remains yet a little more which God doth promise about the forgiveness of the sins of his people, and that is expressed in the words which I have read unto you (I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.

**Object. For it might be objected, How it is possible, that our sins which are so many, and which are so great, should be forgiven us? What can be found to appease God's justice for them, and to take them away, so that they shall never be imputed unto us? And how may we be assured or ascertained concerning this?**

Sol. The Answer is made in the Text (I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean) by which expression two things are meant.

1. The blood of Christ, which is the effectually meritorious reason of the forgiveness of the most, and of the greatest of the sins of the people of God.

2. The particular application of the blood of Christ unto them, with an assurance that it was shed for their sins. Both these doth the sprinkling of clean water import: You read in the Mosaical Law of divers Ceremonial sprinklings.

1. Of the blood of the Paschal Lamb, Exod. 12:7.

2. Of the blood of the Bullock, Levite. 16:14.

3. Of the blood of the red Heifer, Numb. 19:4. And of the clean water with hyssop, ver. 5.

4. Of the blood of the burnt-offering, and peace-offering, with which the people were sprinkled: Exod. 24:8. And Moses took

the blood and sprinkled it on the people; and said, Behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you: All this the Apostle sums up in Heb. 9:19. Moses took the blood of Calves, and of Goats, with water, and scarlet, wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and people. By all these is meant the taking away of sin by the shedding of the blood of Christ; and the applying of the blood of Christ to the people of God, that is meant by sprinkling. Hence you read, Isa. 52:15. He shall sprinkle many Nations. Heb. 12:24. The blood of Christ is called the blood of sprinkling. 1 Pet. 1:2. We are elected (and saved) through the Sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Now from all this, there are two Propositions observable.

1. That the blood of Christ is the Cause, and it is the only Cause for which the people of God have their many and great sins pardoned (that is the clean water which makes us clean.)
2. That the Lord will, and doth make a particular Application (even to the Consciences of his people) touching the forgiveness of their sins by the blood of Christ: (He will sprinkle that clean water upon them.)

## **CHAP. V.**

Christ's blood the merit of pardon.

That the blood of Christ is the Cause, and it is the only meritorious cause for which the people of God have their many and great sins

pardoned: (That is the clean water (or according to the Original, the clean waters) which makes them clean.)

## SECT. I.

Of this Assertion there are two Branches.

First, That the blood of Christ is the Cause for which the people of God have all their sins pardoned: This truth the Scripture clearly holds forth. Matth. 26:28. This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Rom. 3:25. Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Mark, Christ is our Propitiation, and he is our Propitiation by blood: It is the blood that maketh an Atonement for your souls: Lev. 17:11. And without shedding of blood is no remission, Heb. 9:22. And therefore the High Priest (who was a Type of Christ, when he was to make an Atonement, he always came with the blood of the Sacrifice) Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Rev. 1:5. Who washed us from our sins in his own blood. 1 Joh. 1:7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. Besides these Scriptures, you shall find other places putting the forgiveness of sins expressly upon Christ's account as the Cause, Ephes. 4:32. Forgiving one another, even as God fir Christ's sake hath forgiven you. 1 Joh. 2:12. I write unto you little Children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Name sake. Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received the Atonement. Beloved, The people of God have a three-fold anchor to trust upon for the pardon of their sins.

1. One is the free grace of God: Rom. 3:24. Being justified freely by his grace.
2. A second is the blood of Christ: Rom. 5:9. Being now justified by his blood.
3. The third is the Covenant of God: Jer. 33:8. I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

Before I quit this first Branch of the Assertion, I would directly answer three Questions.

1. How the blood of Christ can be such a Cause as amounts so high as the forgiveness of sins, though very many, and very great?
2. What necessity there was for the effusion of his blood in a Causal order to the forgiveness of our sins.
3. How it may be demonstrated that it doth reach so far, &c.

**Quest. 1. How the blood of Christ can be such a cause as to amount and reach so high for the forgiveness of all our sins, though very many, and very great?**

Sol. To this it may be answered, that it doth arise from

1. The dignity of the person of Christ who was God-man.
2. The Concurrence of both the natures of Christ, in all his Mediatory actions and passions, so that they were Theandrical, sufferings both Human and Divine; and therefore his blood is called the blood of God, (Acts 20:28. God purchased the Church with his own blood.)

and the Lord of glory is said to be crucified, (they crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2:8) And from these two Considerations there is light enough to convince us of the wonderful power and virtue in the blood of Christ to reach the forgiveness of all our sins, because he was an infinite person, and for him to suffer and die, was more than if all the sons of men had done so. And because the virtue of his Deity did so extend unto, and attend his Death or Sacrifice, that thereupon it came to be of more than sufficient worth to satisfy God's justice, and to expiate our sins; for although there was in our sins an abounding measure of guilt, yet there was in the blood of Christ (it being the obedience of one who was God) a superabounding worth to weigh down and remove all the malignity and demerit in the sin of man; there being no more proportion 'twixt the demerit of our sinning's, and the demerit of his sufferings, than there is 'twixt our persons and his person.

**Quest. 2. But secondly, It is demanded, What necessity there was for the effusion of his blood in order to the forgiveness of our sins?**

Sol. It was necessary that the blood of Christ should be shed to wash us from our sins, because

First, Divine justice must be satisfied before sins can be forgiven; till that be done, mercy itself (if I may so speak) is not at liberty; therefore the Apostle tells us that God did set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, (Rom. 3:25) To declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, (Ver. 26) The meaning is, that the blood of Christ reconciled both these Attributes of God; justice calls for satisfaction; there it is saith Christ, my blood hath satisfied you; and mercy longs

to help and pardon the poor sinner; it shall come saith Christ, for my blood hath purchased it.

Secondly, Jesus Christ must make good his bargain and agreement; he did agree with his Father to be a Surety for all his people, and was content to stand in their stead, and to have all their iniquities laid upon himself, and to answer for them, and to suffer for them, and to clear and discharge them, and to reconcile and save them by his death; and therefore even upon that account it was necessary that Christ should die, and shed his blood, that the agreement 'twixt him and the Father might be performed.

Thirdly, It was necessary also in this respect, To convince us of the heinousness of sin; we ordinarily look on sin as a small matter, as if God were not offended and provoked by it; and if he be, yet a small matter will serve the turn to satisfy God, to pacify him towards us, and get forgiveness; but we do extraordinarily delude ourselves; for without shedding of blood there is no remission; it cost Jesus Christ (the Son of God) his precious blood, and if that had not been shed, never could any have got the forgiveness of any one sin.

Fourthly, It was necessary likewise as to the acquiescing, quieting or satisfying of conscience, which would never come to any rest or peace, unless Jesus Christ had shed his blood; for still the conscience cries out, God's justice must be satisfied, and who will undertake that great work? Lo I come saith Christ, I have laid down a price, I became sin, I was made a curse, I wrought redemption, I have satisfied the just God, and purchased the forgiveness of your sins; and now conscience is quieted; Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died.

**Quest. 3. How it can be demonstrated that the blood of Christ is the cause of forgiveness of our sins, though many**



## **and great?**

Sol. Besides the clear Scriptures already mentioned, these Arguments may help us to demonstrate it.

First, We are set free by the blood of Christ. Zach. 9:11. By the blood of thy Covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit.

Secondly, We are justified by his blood, and saved from wrath. Rom. 5:9. Much more being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath by him. Pray, tell me what is it to be justified, but to be pardoned? And what is it to be saved from wrath, but to be delivered from all punishment? And both these depend upon the blood of Christ.

Thirdly, So we are said to be made nigh by the blood of Christ, Ephes. 2:13, and to be reconciled through the blood of his Cross, Colos. 1:20.

Secondly, Now I come to the second Branch of the Assertion, that as Jesus Christ's blood is the cause, so it is the only cause for which God forgives the sins of his people.

Yet let me distinguish; causes of forgiveness are of two sorts.

First, Internally moving God, and that is his own free grace only.

Secondly, Externally meriting, and that is the death or blood of Christ only. Isa. 63:3. I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me. Acts 4:12. Neither is there salvation in any other Name; for there is none other Name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved. Acts 13:38. Through this man is preached unto you the

forgiveness of sins. Ver. 39. And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. 1 Cor. 3:11. Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

The truth of this will easily appear, if you consider

First, The works of God the Father, who laid on Christ (and none but Christ) the iniquities of us all, Isa. 5:3,6, and sealed him, John 6:27. (and set him apart, authoritatively commissioned him) and set him forth to be a propitiation, Rom. 3:25.

Secondly, The office of Christ (amongst the rest) to be our High Priest; and in this respect, two things are proper unto him. 1. The oblation of himself for sin. 2. His intercession for transgressions.

Thirdly, The nature of merit, which

1. Must be opus indebitum; for he who doth do no more than he ought to do, or suffers but what he deserves to suffer, merits nothing by his doing, or by his suffering.
2. Must be opus perfectum, against which no exception can be taken; nothing is meritorious which is short and faulty.
3. Must be opus infinitum, a work of infinite value and worth, which cannot only stand before justice, but plead also with it, and challenge it for the dignity of what is done or suffered.

Now these qualifications (not to mention anymore) set the Crown on the head of Christ alone, and strike it off from us, and all our works, yea, the best; for they are

1. But debts; our best obedience is but so, and our best repentance is but so.

2. But imperfect; when we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants; and so much iniquity accompanies our holy offerings, that we need Jesus Christ to be our Aaron to bear them, and have need to pray, as he that mourned for his sins, Domine, Lava lachrymas meas.

3. Were they perfect, yet they are but of a finite worth, and rise not to the far more exceeding merit in sin, nor yet to the surpassing worth of Divine mercy: If Jacob were not worthy of the least of mercies, much less are we of the greatest of mercies.

Fourthly, The purpose of grace, which is universally to be exalted in the forgiveness of sins, with which, though Christ's merits can well consist, (Rom. 3:23. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ.) yet our merits are contradictorily repugnant. Rom. 11:6. If by grace, then it is no more of works; and if it be of works, then it is no more grace.

## SECT. II.

But let us now make some useful Application of all this unto ourselves. Is the blood of Christ the cause, and the only cause for which the people of God come to have their sins forgiven? From thence let us learn two things.

First, To judge in another manner of our sins than in former times we have done; how heinous they are, and how high the guilt of them is.

There are five glasses in which we may behold the hideous guilt of our sins, of which yet many persons do but yet make a work of pastime.

1. One is the dreadful threatening's of the Law of God, which reveals and discharges the wrath of God, and all sorts of curses, corporal, and spiritual, and eternal against people for their sins.

2. A second is the unspeakable terrors in conscience, raised only from our sins, which makes us like the troubled Sea that cannot rest; and to cry out with Cain, and to despair with Judas, and to long for death with Spira.

3. A third is the wonderful outward judgments inflicted by God on people for sin, plague and famine, and the sword, and tormenting diseases, burning down of Cities, renting up of Kingdoms, and all the miserable evils in the world.

4. A fourth is the eternal duration of the flame of hell fire, the suffering of the vengeance of eternal fire, as the Apostle speaks, Jude, ver. 7.

5. The fifth is the death and suffering of Jesus Christ; one saith, that if it were possible for us to see and feel the torments which the damned do suffer in hell, it could not be so clear and effectual conviction of the true desert of sin, of the heinousness of it, of the odiousness of it, of the dreadfulness of it, as the consideration of it in the death and blood of Christ, without which there could be no forgiveness of our sins, no not of the least of them; I beseech you to attend a little, sin is of such a provoking, deserving nature;

First, That no creature, no not all the creatures in heaven and earth could pacify God, and cleanse us from our sins, and procure the pardon of them, but Jesus Christ the Son of God alone: Neither Angels nor Saints, nor righteousness, nor prayers nor gold, nor silver can give unto God a ransom for our soul; the redemption of it is more precious, it cannot be without the precious blood of Christ.

Secondly, As none can procure the pardon of sin but Christ, so Christ could not do it, but by dying; indeed there was very much excellency and worth in the active obedience of Christ, in the holiness of his life, and exactness of his works; nevertheless to get off our sins, his passive obedience is likewise required, without that there was no remission: Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, Rev. 5:9.

Thirdly, As Christ must die to get the pardon of sin, so every death of Christ is not sufficient, but he must die that accursed death of the Cross, and become a curse for us, or else he could not have got the pardon of our sins; hear the Apostle, Gal. 3:13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a Tree. 1 Pet. 2:24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the Tree. Colos. 1:20. He made peace through the blood of his Cross.

Fourthly, Neither would this have sufficed to die on the Cross, (there enduring the grievous torments in his soul and body due to our sins) if he had not been God as well as man. 1 Joh. 3:16, speaking of the person of Christ, he saith, God laid down his life for us; and indeed that must be of infinite price and merit, which must answer the everlasting torments due for all the sins of all

the Elect; there had not been enough in the death of Christ, had it not been the death of a person who was God as well as Man. Thus you see (even in the blood of Christ) the heinousness of sin, and the high guilt thereof, which may make us to fear and tremble at the consideration of our own exceeding guiltiness, &c.

Secondly, To look after Christ in another manner than formerly we have done: Why, will you say? Because in his blood only we have the remission of sins, that it is the only cause for which God doth forgive us.

Now because this is the principal Use which (I think) can be made of this point, I will therefore briefly speak unto these three questions.

1. How we should look after Christ, seeing that there is no forgiveness but in and by him.
2. Whether we do indeed look after Christ, so as that we may get him to be ours, and have the benefit of forgiveness in his blood.
3. How one may know that he hath got Jesus Christ to be his, and consequently an interest in his blood for the pardon of his sins.

**Quest. 1. Seeing that there is no forgiveness of sins but for the blood of Christ, how therefore should we look after Christ?**

Sol. To this I answer.

First, We should look after Christ (so as to enjoy him to be ours) with all speediness, as David spake in another case, I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commands, Psal. 119:60. So should not we delay from time to time, but hasten in to Christ, that so our sins may

be pardoned: Whiles it is called today, to hearken unto his voice, Hebr. 3:7. Isa. 60:8. Who are these that flee as a cloud, and as the Doves to their Windows? In three cases, swiftness and presentness of action are required, viz.

1. When the danger is great.
2. When the mercy is great.
3. When the opportunity is uncertain, all these circumstances meet together to stir us up speedily to look after Christ, to get him to be ours; for
  1. All the guilt of our sins lies upon our own souls, until Christ be ours; no sin is forgiven, but we are under wrath and condemnation.
  2. All our sins shall be taken off by the blood of Christ, if Christ be ours; so that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1.
  3. We have but our day, our hour, our opportunity, our present moment to look after Christ; the day of life is uncertain, and the day of grace is uncertain, the Spirit blows when and where, and how long, and how short, as himself listeth; O that thou hadst known, even in this thy day! &c. Luke 19:42.

Secondly, We should look after Christ very seriously and carefully; our souls should make it their solemn work and business, yea, all that is in our souls should be united and engaged for to get Christ. As he said to his son, Percute tanquam ad Aratrum, Strike as thou wast wont to strike at the Plough; so would I say, look after Christ as ye are wont to look after the world, (the riches, and honor, and pleasure

of it) earnestly, and with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your might; the Kingdom of heaven should suffer violence, &c. Matth. 11:12, Prov. 8:17. Those that seek me early, shall find me.

Thirdly, We should look after Christ diligently and laboriously, not shrinking at any pains, and any ways, and any means to get Christ. Prov. 8:34. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. Cant. 3:1. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. Ver. 2. I will rise up, and go about the City in the Streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth. Ver. 3. The watchmen that go about the City found me, to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? We should give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1:10, so should we to make Christ sure to our souls; for Prov. 8:35. Who so findeth me, findeth life; and ver. 36. All they that hate me, love death.

Fourthly, We should look after Christ resolutely, against all the discouragements of our own hearts, and against all the reproaches and contempt's of the world, and against all the suggestions of Satan: as Jacob spake, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. Gen. 32:26. Or as David, one thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after, &c. Psal. 27:4. So Lord, My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, and engaged. O give Christ to my poor soul, O bring in my soul to Christ; I perish without him, as those out of the Ark; I live only in and by him, I shall be damned if I have not Christ.

**Quest. 2. Whether we do so indeed look after Christ, as that we may get him to be ours, and find the forgiveness of our sins in his blood?**

Sol. This is a great and necessary question, which may be thus resolved.



First, That man looks after Christ (as most probable to get him) whose minding of Christ doth arise from a burdened spirit, and a broken heart: O when the Spirit of God doth so set our sins upon our consciences, that they appear indeed as sins, and do become the grievous burden of our souls, and we are now concluded and shut up by them as poor Prisoners, utterly lost and undone, and no hope nor help but in a Christ. And hereupon our oppressed and dejected souls (even from a clear experimental sense of our absolute need and want of Christ) are carried out to the Prince of life and peace, Master, save us, or else we perish; thou art life, and thou art peace, and thou art help, and thou only art our hope; this is a right looking after Christ, and this will bring us at length to the enjoying of him.

Secondly, That man looks after Christ, so as to get him, whose soul doth come to an hungering and thirsting for Christ; if any man thirsts, saith Christ, &c. my meaning is,

1. If it be Christ himself that the soul would have; as it is bread which the hungry man would have, and it is water that the thirsty man would have.
2. If his heart be so affectionately set on Christ, and drawn out after him, that all shall go which hinders the fruition of Christ, and that all shall be embraced that makes way for the enjoyment of Christ.
3. If his soul be incessantly importunate for Christ, even importunate for him, O Lord how long! Will not be denied, &c. For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, Phil. 3:8, so Matth. 23:46.

Thirdly, That man looks so after Christ, as to get him, who strives with God for faith, and attends the Word of faith, and meditates

much on Christ, and on the promises of the Gospel, and invitations of the Gospel, and the encouragements of the Gospel to persuade and breed faith in him to join him to Christ. O I want faith, O that God would give me faith, O that he would persuade and draw me by his own Spirit, O that I could lay hold on Christ, and receive him, and give glory to his love and willingness, and offers, and promises! And still the soul is upon this request, Lord give me Christ, and Lord give me faith, and Lord strengthen faith, &c.

**Quest. 3. How may one know that he hath got Christ to be his Christ, and consequently the forgiveness of all his sins by Christ, and for Christ?**

Sol. I do but occasionally move this question for their sakes who would fain be ascertained that their sins are forgiven, of which they cannot be, unless and until they be ascertained of Christ; but to the Queries, one may know that he hath got Christ, that Christ is his, and he is Christ's, by three Characters, expressed in three places of Scripture.

First, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17. A new creature is changed, his mind new, and judgment new, and affections new, and words and conversation new, and company new, and employment new, &c.

Secondly, They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5:24. No sin hath dominion, every sin is crucified, it hath lost its dominion; we are no friends to sin, no servants to sin; as Christ died for our sins, so they that are Christ's, die unto their sins, in respect of love, and of action.

Thirdly, Christ becomes the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, Hebr. 5:9. Christ rules where Christ saves; if he be thy

Lord, assuredly he is thy Savior: His we are, whose servants we are, whom we do obey. Thou hast delivered us, and therefore thou shalt reign over us, said they to Gideon; so the man who is in Christ, Thou hast redeemed me by thy blood, and therefore thou shalt rule me by thy Spirit; but if we will not obey Christ, we have no interest in him.

A second Use of this Point, shall be to show the miserable condition of many persons; for if forgiveness of sins come unto us only for the blood of Christ, then two sorts are in a miserable condition, they shall certainly miss thereof.

First, Who regard not the offers of the Lord Jesus Christ, but stand out and refuse him, and will be enemies or strangers to him; they reserve their hearts for the world, and for their sins; these men will live and die in their sins.

Secondly, Who look for the pardon of their sins upon another account than the blood of Christ; if they give some alms, there's a foundation which they lay for the pardon of their sins; if they say their prayers, if they leave a sin, they conceive here is cause enough why God should forgive them; and if they serve him a little, that also they build their hopes upon. But all this (unless God opens the eyes, and changes the heart) will prove a damnable mistake unto you; for lying vanities you do forsake your mercies. It is 1. Folly. 2. Sin. 3. Loss and Ruin thus to place thy confidence on anything but the blood, &c.

**Object. But have you not told us that God promiseth forgiveness upon repenting and praying?**

Sol. Yea, but never for repenting and praying, but only for Christ's sake; means they are for pardon, but reasons and causes they are not of forgiveness; therefore this do, mourn and repent still, but

remember to stick unto Christ's blood alone, as the meritorious cause of your forgiveness. O Lord, I am a broken and penitent sinner, I beseech thee to forgive me my sins; Why, what reason, upon what account? Saith God O Lord do it for Christ's sake, whose I am, and whom I serve; he shed his precious blood for the remission of sins, for his sake forgive all my sins, &c.

This is of great stay and comfort unto poor sinners who are rightly sensible of their sins and of the surpassing goodness of forgiving mercy, and also of their utter unworthiness thereof, and many times are doubting and disputing what they may bring for mercy, and what they should plead for mercy. I will tell you what you should bring, and what you should plead, for which God will forgive you your sins; bring Jesus Christ, and plead in his blood, and in his Name; he is the propitiation for your sins, and through his blood you have the forgiveness of your sins: I am a great sinner, and do need pardoning mercy; O Lord, I come not in mine own name, but in Christ's Name; I cannot offer up any worthiness of mine own, but I do by faith offer up the blood of Jesus Christ, O pardon me for his sake, wash me from my sins in his blood, drown them in the depth; his blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; it was shed to satisfy thy justice, and to reconcile and make peace; Lord, I rest not on myself, but on thy Christ; not on my works, but on his merits; his blood was shed for the remission of sins, that is my plea, and that is my confidence, &c.

Poor soul, this will carry it, this will prevail for thee.

1. The blood of Christ is the meritorious cause.
2. And it is the only meritorious cause.

3. And it is the effectual cause of forgiveness of sins; God hath appointed it, and God will own and accept of it; he would have us draw nigh by the blood of Christ; therefore make use of it, rest upon it.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, &. I Now come to the handling of the second Proposition from these words, viz. - Ezek. 36:25.

## **CHAP. VI.**

2. Doct. That the Lord himself doth promise not only to forgive the sins of his people in the blood of Christ, but also to apply to everyone of their souls that forgiveness for the blood of Christ: (I will sprinkle upon you, &c)

The sprinkling of the blood of Christ on any, is nothing else but the Application thereof to them for their good and benefit. The sprinkling of the blood of the Lamb upon the posts of the house, and the sprinkling of the blood upon the Leper, did signify the applying of the blood of Christ for pardon, deliverance, and salvation.

Here now I must show unto you

1. What this sprinkling or the Application of the blood of Christ for forgiveness is.
2. Why the Lord makes this promise of sprinkling, or applying unto his people.
3. Why he himself undertakes that work.

## SECT. I.

1. Quest. What this sprinkling or application of the blood of Christ unto the people of God for the forgiveness of their sins, is?

Sol. I humbly conceive, That it is such an imputing of the blood of Christ unto them in particular, as that they come to be certainly assured of the forgiveness of their very sins, by the Spirit of God, and by Faith.

In this description there are three things remarkable concerning this sprinkling or application of the blood of Christ for forgiveness.

1. That in it there is a particular and personal imputation of the blood of Christ for forgiveness.
2. That it is not only an imputation, but also a Certioration, or a respective asserting of them touching the forgiveness of their sins in and for Christ.
3. That this asserting Application is made by the Spirit of God, and by Faith.

First, This sprinkling it is a particular and personal imputation of the blood of Christ unto the people of God for the forgiveness of their sins. As the Lord did impute their sin unto Christ (He laid on him the iniquity of us all; Isa. 53) And as Christ was made sin for them (He was made sin for us, 2 Cor. 5) So the Lord doth impute the sufferings of Christ unto them; (i.e.) accepts of them on their behalf, and puts them upon their account; and as if the Lord should say unto every particular believer, my Son was thy Surety, and stood in thy stead, and suffered, and satisfied, and took away thy sins by his blood, and

that for thee, in his blood I find a Ransom for thy soul, I do acknowledge myself satisfied for thee, and satisfied towards thee, and thou art delivered and discharged, I forgive thee thy sins, and am reconciled unto thee, and will save thee for my Christ sake: In his blood thou hast Redemption, the forgiveness of thy sins: As when a surety satisfies the Creditor for a debt, this is accounted unto the Debtor, and reckoned as a discharge unto him in particular; I am paid, and you are discharged saith the Creditor: So it is in this case of God's forgiving his people for Christ sake; so I am paid, and you are discharged, and I have no more to say to you: 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. But this is not all which is meant by sprinkling, viz. A particular Application or Imputation of the blood of Christ, to the believer for the forgiveness of his sins, which is (if I may so call it) an Immanent Action or work within God himself. But moreover

Secondly, This sprinkling of the blood of Christ for forgiveness, it is a notifying, declaring, ascertaining work of God making known to the very heart and consciences of his people, that for Christ's sake he hath forgiven them their sins: Psal. 51:7. Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean. The Prophet seems expressly to allude unto the Leper, and the cleansing of him, and to the pronouncing of him clean, of which you may read in, Levite. 14:3. The Priest shall go out of the Camp, and the Priests shall look, and behold, if the plague of Leprosy be healed in the Leper. Ver. 4. Then shall the Priests command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds alive and clean, and Cedar wood; and Scarlet, and Hyssop. Ver. 5. And the Priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. Ver. 6. As for the living bird, he shall take it and the Cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the living bird that was killed

over the running water. Ver. 7. And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, &c. Now that the Lord doth on this wise sprinkle the blood of Christ on his people for the forgiveness of their sins (namely in a way of assurance that their sins are forgiven) may thus appear by Scripture: Rev. 2:17. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. The white stone was given in token of absolution; and the black stone in token of condemnation by the Athenians. Psal. 103:2. Bless the Lord, O my soul; Ver. 3, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, Matth. 9:2. Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. Luke 7:48. He said unto her, thy sins are forgiven. Ephes. 4:32. Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Col. 2:13. Having forgiven you all trespasses. 1 Joh. 2:12. Your sins are forgiven for his Names sake. Isa. 60:16. Thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer. Ch. 40:2. Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her iniquity is pardoned. 1 Joh. 3:14. We know that we have passed from death to life, &c. But unless they did know that their sins (in particular) were pardoned, they could not have said, we know that we are passed from death to life.

Thirdly, This ascertaining Application is made by the Spirit of God, and by Faith, and by the testimony of Conscience.

First, By the Spirit of God, which is given to the people of God, that they might know the things that are given to them of God, 1 Cor. 2:12. The Spirit is given not only for implantation of grace, but also for demonstration to manifest (by his light) those graces which he hath wrought in us. Not only for union with Christ, but also for manifestation of that union unto us; not only to bring us into Covenant with God, but also to open and reveal unto us the



love and mercy of God unto us in his Covenant: Rom. 8:16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, ver. 17, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. If the Spirit testify unto us that we are the children of God, and heirs of God, then certainly he witnesses with this, that we are justified and pardoned persons: Ephes. 1:13. In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise; ver. 14, which is the earnest of our inheritance. What is that sealing by that holy Spirit of promise, but the evidencing, confirming, assuring of us concerning the things which God hath promised unto us; and amongst the rest of the pardon of our sins in order to salvation?

Secondly, By Faith: There is an ability in Faith, not only to give a general evidence and assent, that whatsoever God hath promised, is true, but also to raise a particular evidence concerning our very interest in the things promised by God unto us, 1 Joh. 4:16. We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Cant. 15:6. He is altogether lovely: (There is a direct act of Faith) This is my beloved, and this my friend (here is the reflexive act of faith) 1 Joh. 5:20. He hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. Beloved! Whatsoever good the Lord doth promise unto his people, he will give them Faith to believe it, (for that is one great end of his promising, that we might inherit the good promised by believing) but God hath promised the pardon of sins in particular to every particular believer: Act. 10:48. Whosoever believes on him, shall receive the remission of sins. Ergo.

Thirdly, Besides this, there is given unto every one of the people of God an enlightened and renewed conscience which knows the

present frame of heart, and can give in a clear testimony concerning it, whether it doth indeed Repent, and indeed believe (finding it such as the word requires) from whence it can make a concluding evidence that our sins are certainly pardoned; for thus conscience reasoneth: Whosoever doth truly repent and believe, God himself in his Word saith, that his sins are forgiven: But (saith the enlightened and renewed conscience, which knows what is in man) thou dost truly repent and believe, for I find such lively acts and effects of them both, which the Word of God gives concerning them in truth; Ergo, Be of good comfort and rejoice; thy sins are forgiven thee.

Thus you see what the sprinkling is in the Text, namely the imputation of the blood of Christ for forgiveness to every particular believer, with an assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, for Christ's sake.

## SECT. II.

**Quest. 2. Now I proceed unto the second Question, Why the Lord is pleased to make such an application, and such an assurance unto his people?**

Sol. 1. One reason is, because though there be forgiveness for the blood of Christ, yet this is of no benefit unto any but unto whom it is applied, and appropriated, and imputed: Suppose that a great debt be discharged, this avails not me, unless my great debt be discharged: Suppose that a release from the prison or from death, be granted, what is this to me, if the release be not imputed unto me in particular? So though God forgives sins only for the blood of Christ, unless he applies this to me, I am not the better for it. O but God did

peremptorily intend the particular good of every believer in the death of Christ (Christ died for them, and gave himself for them) and therefore he applies the blood of Christ to them; his intention was for them in particular, they shall fare the better for Christ. Ergo.

Secondly, Their great comfort lies in this apprehension and assurance of the forgiveness of their sins in the blood of Christ: There are two Requisites for the Christians comfort concerning Christ and forgiveness.

1. One is Propriety; that Christ is his Christ, and died for his sins; Who gave himself for me, said Paul, Gal. 2:20.

2. Another is, evidence of the propriety; a knowledge that Christ is mine, and that he washed my soul from my sins in his own blood; without these what joy and comfort can there be? Rom. 15:13. The God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. A good prayer for believers, for joy, for peace, for hope; yea and God hath promised every one of these unto them; and therefore he applies unto them the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, and assures them of the same; Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Atonement.

Thirdly, God will be praised and blessed by his people for Christ, and for all the blessings accruing unto them by Christ; and his servants do bless him for them, Ephes. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Psal. 103:2. Bless the Lord, O my soul; ver. 3, which forgiveth thy iniquities: But unless the Lord did impute the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, and did give them some assurance thereof, how could they praise and bless him?

**3. Quest. I now come to the last Question, viz. Why the Lord himself doth undertake to impute the blood of Christ unto his people for the forgiveness of their sins, and to assure them thereof (I will sprinkle)**

Sol. There may be these Reasons given for it.

First, The difficulty, nay the impossibility of this work, unless the Lord himself undertake it: There are three things which you can never attain, unless the Lord himself doth undertake for them.

1. To forsake your sins: Jer. 31:18. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.

2. To believe in Christ; Ephes. 1:19.

3. To gain assurance that Christ is yours, and that God hath for Christ's sake forgiven you your sins. As Christ spake to Peter, when he confessed his Deity, Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven: So say I about the particular application and assurance of your forgiveness of sins; it must be God himself by his spirit which must raise us to that, and make us to know that. Take me a person rightly sensible of his sins, although he be converted, although he hath faith, although he studies the promises, although he hath all the grounds made clear unto him, upon which he may conclude that God hath forgiven him; although others can evidently discern his particular interest and propriety; yet unless the Lord himself let in a special light by his Spirit to make him to see the special love of God towards him in this, he cannot see it, so as to be assured thereof: Therefore you find in experience that this assurance is one of the longest, and last, and most questioned works in the soul.

Secondly, The glory which God doth reserve unto himself of all the effects of his Covenant; he will be known to be the Cause and Author of them all; he will be acknowledged to be the God of grace, and the Father of mercies, and the God of love, and the God of comfort, and the God of joy, and the God of peace; I the Lord create peace, the fruit of the lips peace, Isa. 57:19. As none in the world can give trouble but God; so none can give peace but God, Job 34:29. None can cast down the heart but he; and none can raise the heart but he; none can make sin known to the Conscience but he; and none can make mercy known to the conscience but he: All the Covenant-gifts come from him; and all the knowledge and assurance that we have of those very Covenant-gifts come from him; all the promises are of him; and all the evidences of our propriety in them, are from him; in his light we see light: our graces, our abilities, our comforts, our assurances are from him.

Thirdly, That the effect might be certain unto his people; O what great things doth God promise unto his, and for which he alone undertakes! And if he did not so, his people could never enjoy them! Neither grace, nor comfort, &c.

If the Lord himself did not work the grace in our hearts which he promiseth, whose soul should ever partake of it? And if the Lord did not bring in that comfortable assurance of his forgiving mercy, who should ever taste the sweetness of it?

**Object. Why! Will you say, what doth hinder it? What doth stand in the way, but that we may enjoy it, though God appears not to our help for it?**

Sol. I will tell you what doth hinder, and what will hinder, unless the Lord himself remove them.

1. Your own unbelief of heart, doth and will hinder with such continual fears, and doubts, and exceptions, and reasonings, that unless the Lord himself doth silence that unbelief, it will never be assured, nor will your hearts be quieted with assurance.

2. Satan will and doth hinder it by his many, and subtle, and strong suggestions, and puzzling's of your weak faith, that none but the Spirit of God can answer them, and settle your hearts with persuasion and assurance. But now because God himself undertakes to sprinkle clean water upon them, they shall be sprinkled; if he will make Christ thine, and forgive thy sins for Christ's sake, and make this known to them, they shall certainly enjoy all, for who is too strong for God? Who can resist his will? He is too hard for our unbelieving hearts, and Satan; If he saith to the heart, be of good comfort, be at peace, and it shall be so.

1. Use Doth God himself promise and undertake to sprinkle clean water upon his people? So to apply unto them the blood of Christ, as that every one of them shall have forgiveness, and assurance of forgiveness by it.

Then in the first place, let this serve to stir up the hearts of all the people of God, Not to be sluggish, or rest contented without this, but to give all diligence, until they do attain the knowledge and certain evidence or assurance that their sins are forgiven to them in particular for Christ's sake: You have attained to much already, but strive also for this.

The Reason why I would press this duty upon you, are these,

1. Many of the people of God are not yet come unto this sprinkling of assurance.

2. Many of them are too remiss and negligent about the attaining of it.
3. By reason of the want of it they are in a very uncomfortable condition.
4. There is a possibility to compass this assurance.
5. The advantages upon the encouragement of it will be many and great.

First, Many of the people of God are not as yet come to this sprinkling assurance: They never yet tasted the goodness and graciousness of God in this kind, so as (certainly and evidently) to know that God hath for Christ's sake forgiven them all their sins; they desire that he will do so, and hope that he hath done so, but yet they were never assured of it; nay, they do usually (in great and near afflictions, and in times of sickness, and in their retired considerations of their souls estate) exceedingly fear and question whether God be their God, whether Christ be their Christ, whether all their sins be indeed forgiven or no: Moreover, it is an exceeding discouragement unto them that they still are in darkness, and that the candle of the Lord doth not shine upon them.

Secondly, Some of them are too remiss and negligent about the attaining of it; although they are publicly and privately spoken unto, although they have felt the grief and want of it in their sickness, and times of workings of conscience, and of distresses, although they are extremely afraid to die, although they do sometimes take up purposes and resolutions to set upon this work yea, although they have begun to enter into the ways by which assurance might be attained; yet they faint and give over,

and slack, and lay aside their diligence, either because of the difficulty of the work, or of the inconstancy of their spirits, or of the unbelief of their hearts, or of the many earthly cares which do alienate their minds, or because of the presumption of their souls, to take some more fit time hereafter for so solemn a business: Upon these or some other grounds, they foolishly neglect to discover, and to determine the great estate of their souls, and to ascertain their propriety in Christ, and their personal interest in the forgiveness of their sins, a business of the greatest and nearest consequence which doth or can concern their souls.

Thirdly, By reason of this neglect of assurance, and leaving their condition and interest thus undetermined, they make their condition and their hearts very uncomfortable; for

1. They must necessarily be in suspense, in division of mind under all the Ordinances of Christ: When they come to hear the Word, they know not what part thereof to apply to themselves as their proper portion; when mercies are opened, they hope this is their portion; and when judgment is threatened, they fear lest that may be their lot; they cannot certainly apply the one, nor certainly apply the other; neither mercy nor wrath, neither heaven nor hell, neither comfort nor discomfort. And so when the Lord's Supper is administered, they know not what to do, whither to go, or whither to forbear; they think they are prepared, and yet they doubt they are not prepared; and when they come to that Ordinance, they hope that the Sacrament and Promises may be held out to them, and yet they are not sure that they are. This is my blood which is given for you, and this is my blood which is shed for you; they cannot deny the one or the other, and yet they dare not affirm the one or the other. What a sad condition is this of particular inevidence, wherein a poor soul knows not on what to



settle, on what portion to pitch on? What confidently to own and apply unto itself? But wavers and reels, and comes on, and falls off, sees mercy and much comfort, and dares not taste of them, no more than Saul's Soldiers might of the honey which they saw dropping from the Trees.

2. They cannot avoid the edge of Satan's destructive temptations; when Satan assaults them with fear and sad conclusions, How can they easily come off, or how can they uphold and acquit themselves? Suppose that Satan lay unto your charge the many and great sins which you have committed, What will God do unto you for all these sins? How will you escape the wrath revealed against you for them? And will you say God hath pardoned them, and Christ hath satisfied them? It is Christ that died, and God that justifies. I but not for everyone (saith the subtle Adversary) Many presume, and so do you: Are you upon good ground assured that Christ died for your sins, and that your sins are forgiven for his sake? You think so and hope so; but what grounded assurance have you for this? This temptation you see will lie fair against you, and very strong, and Satan knows how to follow it, unto thy great disadvantages, and trouble, and grief, if not despair of heart.

3. They are frequently distressed about spiritual services, and their acceptance with God: Beloved, remember what I say unto you, That man who hath these questions unresolved, Is God my God? Hath he pardoned my sins? Is he reconciled to me? Will also have many more questions to be answered, May I pray unto him? Will he hear my requests? Is there not yet the partition Wall standing 'twixt him and me?

4. Nay once more, If death (the King of fears) should approach near unto them in this their irresolved and undetermined condition, about

the pardon of their sins; alas, for the woeful and tumultuous, and heavy thoughts working in them; O what fears, and what mistrust, and what crying's out, Whether shall I go? What will become of me? Shall I be saved? I am not sure that Christ is mine; I am not sure that my sins are pardoned; O Lord, space me a little that I may recover strength, and that I may make sure work for my immortal foul.

Thus you see what an uncomfortable condition you lie in, for neglecting to get the assurance that God hath sprinkled the blood of Christ on you for the pardon of your sin, and therefore be awakened, and stir up your hearts to give all diligence to make it sure unto your souls.

Fourthly, Especially considering (in the next place) that this assurance is possible to be attained by you.

There are three things which may convince you of that.

1. One is the promise of it unto the people of God in this Text, and sundry other places of Scripture, which I have already mentioned; and surely this is clear, that whatsoever God doth promise to give unto his people, that is not impossible for them to attain; for promised mercies are not only possible, that they may be had; but also certain, they shall be had.

2. Another is the giving of the Spirit of God unto you, and that for this very end, to make known unto you the things which he hath prepared for you, 1 Cor. 2:10, and which he hath freely given unto you, Ver. 12, and to shed abroad his love in your hearts, Rom. 5:5, and to seal or assure you, Ephes 1:13.

3. The several experimental attainments of the people of God in this one particular. David gained this assurance of the pardon of

his sins, in Psal. 103:3. So did Paul, when speaking of Christ who loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. 2:20, and 1 Tim. 1:15. But I obtained mercy. So have many thousands more in former times, and in our times, who believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory for their interest in Christ, and in the forgiveness of their sins in and for him.

Fifthly, But lastly, propend the advantages which would certainly result unto you upon the assurance that God hath for Christ's sake forgiven your sins; what comfortable advantages?

First, This would quiet all your fears, and possess your consciences with peace. Being justified by faith we have peace with God, Rom. 5:1. I will lie down in peace, saith David, Psal. 4:8. Having got assurance, Ver. 6.

Secondly, This would be a spring of joy and rejoicing. Psal. 51:8. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Psal. 4:6. Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. Ver. 7. Thou shalt put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased.

Thirdly, This would raise cheerful confidence in your approaches to your God. Hebr. 10:22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, &c.

Fourthly, This would fully answer all temptations: Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.

Fifthly, This is it which would bear up your hearts in all the sad days which do or may befall you. If you be sick, this would be

better than health; what a cordial did Christ deliver to the diseased man in Matth. 9:2. Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee! If you be persecuted and troubled, this would be a triumphant security unto you. Rom. 8:35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or peril? Or sword? Ver. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us. Rom. 5: 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. Ver. 3. And we glory in tribulation. I confess that faith can make a man to submit in a cross, but assurance will make a Christian to triumph on it and over it.

Sixthly, What shall I say more? This assurance would make your whole life a delightful Paradise, and your death (at the last) a desirable and quiet harbor and passage. 2 Cor. 5:1. For we know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If your sins for Christ's sake be pardoned, and you are assured thereof by the testimony of God's Spirit, then unquestionably there is no condemnation unto you, and then as unquestionably your souls shall be saved, and everlastingly blessed; for Justification doth infallibly end in Glorification, &c.

### SECT. III.

As I would have you to strive after the assurance that your sins are forgiven in the blood of Christ, so (in the second place) I would have you very careful and circumspect, that you deceive not yourselves with a false assurance in this great and mighty business.

There are four sorts of people in the world.

1. Some have no kind of assurance at all, nor do they look after any.
2. Some apprehend the want of assurance, and are weeping and praying for it.
3. Some have attained unto a true assurance, and are rejoicing and blessing God for it.
4. Some do deceive themselves with a false assurance that their sins are pardoned, when indeed there is no such matter.

For the better managing of this Caution, not to deceive ourselves with a false assurance, I will deliver myself in four Conclusions.

1. It is possible thus to be deceived.
2. Many have in this deceived themselves.
3. Many do deceive themselves with a false assurance.
4. It is a most dangerous deceit.

First, That it is possible for men to be deceived with a false assurance, and persuasion that their sins are pardoned, and that God is reconciled unto them. I do not know any one thing in reference to salvation, but it is possible for some or other to be deceived in or about it. It is possible to mistake a false Religion for a true Religion. It is possible for a man to please himself with false graces instead of true graces; and with false repentance instead of true; and with false faith instead of true; and with false love instead of true; and with a false persuasion or assurance instead of a true persuasion and assurance. Are you assured that Christ is yours, and God is yours, and pardoning mercy is yours, and salvation is yours? Another (even

upon deceivable grounds) may be falsely persuaded of a propriety in all these. Error is a natural to the corrupt judgment of man as any other sin; and heart-deceitfulness is as proper unto us as heart-sinfulness.

Besides, Doth not the Prince of darkness often change himself into an Angel of light? And as he deludes men about the state of grace, so he can as easily delude them about the comforts of that estate: Why is it not as probable that Satan may render a bad estate as good, and so cheat us with joy, as he doth sometimes render a good estate as bad, and so oppress us with fear and grief?

Nay once more, Men will set up such opinions as do easily lead them into a false assurance; v.g.

1. That God is made up only of mercy.
2. That Christ died for all, none excepted.
3. That it is but to cry God mercy, and all is well.
4. That a good heart and a good meaning is enough, and that they always have had.

Secondly, As it is possible, so it is real; Many have deceived themselves with a false assurance instead of a true. The Jews did so, who called God their God, and their Father, and insisted upon it with Christ that so it was, and that they were his children and free-men. So did Laodicea cheat and delude herself with a false persuasion, that she was rich, and increased, and stood in need of nothing, Revel 3. Nay the Apostle Paul, he himself was thus deluded; I saith he (Rom. 7:19) was alive once without the Law: (2 Cor. 10:7. If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, &c.) Did not they deceive themselves

with a false persuasion, who call upon Christ to open the door of heaven unto them, Lord, Lord, open unto us? Matth. 25:11. And they also who plead with Christ, and contest with him, Have we not heard thee preach in our Synagogues? Have we not eat and drunk in thy presence, &c? Luke 13:26. There is not any one hypocrite, there is not any one formal Professor, but he doth deceive himself with a false opinion of his estate, and with a false assurance.

And there are four great Reasons why these men do thus delude themselves.

1. One is Pride of heart and vain-glory; they will appear not to be inferior to any, and therefore will deceive themselves to deceive others, and will boast of what they have not.
2. Another is the reach of common gifts, which may give them a taste of Christ, and of the good Word, and of the Powers of the world to come, Hebr. 6:5. A taste makes them think it is assurance.
3. A third is the neglect of self-examination; they take things upon trust, and will not search their hearts, and try their ways, and bring them to the light, to the rule, to the touch-stone, to the Word; they will not try their hearts by the Word, nor their supposed graces by the Word, nor their comforts nor assurances by the Word, and therefore they deceive themselves.
4. A fourth is the just judgment of God upon them, to send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, because they received not the love of the truth, 2 Thes. 2:10,11. Only a notion of it, but not the love of it; only the form, but not the power of godliness.

Thirdly, As many have deceived themselves with a false assurance, so many still do deceive themselves with a false assurance instead of a true assurance.

**Quest. But will some of you say, that is the question unto which we desire you to speak a few words, what are the discoveries of a false assurance? Or how one may know that the assurance or persuasion which he hath if the forgiveness of his sins is false, is but a delusion.**

Sol. For your help in this, I will present unto you six infallible discoveries of a false assurance.

First, The first is, When it is a seal without any date; my meaning is, when a person always hath had assurance, never was there any time when he doubted of this point, he was never troubled concerning it, but always believed, and his heart hath always been confidently persuaded that Christ died for him, and that his sins were pardoned. Why, this alone may convince thee that thy assurance is but a delusion: Mark the Apostle a little in Rom. 8:15. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Ver. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. Here the Apostle lays out three works of the Spirit with the order of his workings.

1. First, He is (efficient and operative) the spirit of bondage to fear; (i.e.) making us rightly sensible of our sinful and miserable condition, which makes our hearts to fear what the Lord will do against us.
2. Secondly, Hereupon (in time) he is the Spirit of Adoption, working faith in us, by which we become the children of God,



and look on him as a Father, with love, and without any servile fear.

3. Thirdly, After both these, he is the Spirit of assurance, bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. This is the last work of the Spirit, it is not the first, nor the only work of the Spirit; it comes after the Spirit of Adoption, as that comes after the spirit of bondage to fear. From this place thou mayst evidently discern the assurance (of which thou boastest) to be false, to be no work of the Spirit, who begins in a work of conviction and humiliation, and ends in a work of testimony and assurance; begins in bondage, and ends in liberty; begins in fear, and ends in peace and comfort; the Spirit never begins, but ends in comfort.

Secondly, The second discovery of a false assurance is this, that as it hath not the Spirit of God for the Author of it, so it hath not the Word of God for the Instrument and means of it. Beloved, the Word of God is the Organ or Instrument which the Spirit of God doth (ordinarily) use for the forming of all his gifts and graces, and comforts upon the soul of man; I hardly know any one of them for which he doth not employ the Ministry of the Word; when the Spirit

1. Enlightens the soul; he makes use of the Word to convey and let in light into the soul. Psal. 19:8. It enlightens the eyes.

2. Humbles the heart; he makes use of the Word to break the heart, and to lay it low. Acts 2:37. When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.

3. Converts and calls the soul; he calls it by the Word, and converts it by the Word, 1 Thes. 2:19. He called you by our Gospel, Jam. 1:18.

4. Brings in a soul by faith unto Christ, he doth this by the Word, Rom. 10. Ephes. 1.

5. Raises and comforts; when he strengthens and assures the soul, he doth quicken it by the Word, and comforts it by the Word, and strengthens it by the Word, and assures it by the Word, yea, and recovers by the Word assurance when it is lost. Ephes. 1:13. In whom we also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of salvation; In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. 1 Thes. 1:5. Our Gospel came unto you, not in word only, but power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Here you see the Word to be the means of believing, and so making way for sealing and assuring. Psal. 119:50. Thy Word hath quickened me; but now a false assurance was never wrought by the Word; which will appear plainly, if you do consider three things that are usually found in men presumptuously and deludingly assured.

1. They care little for the Word, especially for that Word of God which doth powerfully search and prepare the heart, and fit it for the assuring work of the Spirit.

2. They have most peace and assurance, when they keep them most from the faithful and powerful delivery of the Word; and their assurance is never more interrupted and shaken, and dashed, than under the soul searching, and convincing Ministry of the Gospel; it cannot stand before it, nor abide the trial of it.

3. Notwithstanding all their seeming regards unto the Word, yet never is there anything contributed by the Word unto their assurance, nor further confirming or strengthening, or enlarging; all which doth evidently demonstrate, that a false assurance was never wrought by the Word, but is the fruit of fancy, and a dream of our own hearts only.

Thirdly, A further discovery of a false assurance, is this, it is enjoyed at an easy rate; the price of it is very cheap; as that ill piece of ground presently received the Word with joy, Luke 8:13, so a false assurance riseth very suddenly: This hour very wicked, and the next strangely assured, it cost the man no tears, nor prayers, nor wrestling's; for a man to be much in ignorance and wickedness, and much in joy and assurance, this cannot be right; for the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1:10, would have us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; and Phil. 2:12. To work out our salvation with fear and trembling: All diligence, and much pains must be laid out to attain a true assurance. Many prayers: Psal. 51:8. Make me to hear joy and gladness. Many tears: Psal. 6:6. All the night make I my bed to swim, I water my couch with my tears. Many waiting's: Psal. 85:2. I will hearken what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace, &c.

Fourthly, A false assurance, is a possession without a title: The man talks of much joy and peace, and comfort, and assurance; but there is not any one promise of God, of these things to him; nay, God is so far from promising assurance of forgiveness, that (in the condition wherein this person remains) there is not any one promise of forgiveness; for he is wicked and unconverted, and a stranger to Christ; and to one remaining so, there is not so much as a promise of pardon, much less a promise of assurance that sin is pardoned. Now take this for a certain truth, that the assurance which any man hath of the pardon of his sins, if it hath no foundation in a promise, it is but a false delusion; if God hath not promised to forgive you, you cannot be safely assured that you are forgiven; much more is it false, if God threatens to destroy you for your unbelief and impenitency. Suppose one doth promise and ensure (in a conveyance of land) such or such an estate, to such or such a person, whose name is there inserted and expressed, Will you, or may you thereupon seize yourself of that estate, and think to make money of it as yours, who

are not named in it? This were a ridiculous madness: So the Lord makes promise of forgiveness of sins unto his people, unto them that believe, unto them that repent, (those are their names whom God calls the heirs of his promise) and presently you are confident, and you are persuaded and you are assured that your sins are forgiven; I pray you why so? Is your name amongst the living? Do you repent of your sins, who do still hold them fast and will not let them go? Do you believe, who still refuse to obey the voice of Christ? God doth promise to comfort those that are cast down. 2 Cor. 7:6. Were your souls ever cast down? And that they who sow in tears, shall reap in joy, Psal. 126:5. Did you ever sow in tears, whose heart is hardened to this very day?

Fifthly, A false assurance, it is either without all ground, or without all proper and sure ground; it is like the house built on the sand, and not on a rock, Matth. 7. For put it to any presumptuous sinner, what are the reasons and grounds of your confidence? What is the medium which doth thus persuade and assure you that your sins are certainly forgiven? The man cannot (if he will speak the truth) give you any reason at all; but so he thinks, and he is of that mind, and will be so; and if he doth give you arguments and grounds, they are of such a vulgar and common nature, as no solid Christian dare build on them, and the Scripture rejects them as unsafe, being (at the best and highest) no other than civil men or hypocrites may be possessed of; perhaps some outward temporal prosperity; perhaps some works of civil righteousness; perhaps some common supernatural gifts; perhaps some external religious performances; perhaps some sudden transient affections; these, or some other common works of the Spirit (or matters below these) are the foundations and bottoms upon which all his assurance is built. As if one should build a Ship of paper, and set up there his confidence of safety: The Scripture (as

you shall shortly hear) lays other and more sure and higher foundations of building up a right assurance.

Sixthly, I will add one discovery more of a false assurance, and that is this, it is a vain and ineffectual assurance; like painted fire, which heats not; or like a counterfeit drug, which purges not.

There are five things which it never produceth, and therefore it is not true assurance, but an empty delusion.

1. It makes not the heart more holy: He that hath this hope, purifieth himself as he is pure.
2. It makes not the heart more humble, but always more proud; therefore it is no work of the Spirit.
3. It makes not the heart more sorrowful for sin past, and ashamed for sinning against such gracious mercies, but leaves it hardened.
4. It makes not the heart more fearful to sin, but rather more venturous; neither do anymore additions of sinning shake and interrupt, or trouble this assurance.
5. It puts not out the heart in more love to God, or zeal for him, or to express one jot more of godliness in the conversation: all which doth infallibly prove that the assurance comes not from the Spirit of God, but from a spirit of delusion

Fourthly, Now in the fourth and last place, I will show unto you that this false assurance concerning the pardon of our sins, is a most dangerous deceit, which will appear unto you thus.

First, It is a soul deceit; such a sinner deceives his own soul, which is of all other deceits the highest and the worst.

There is a twofold self-deceit.

1. One respects our bodies, and our outward temporal estates; this many times proves very uncomfortable unto us, and very miserable to our posterity.

2. Another respects our souls, and our spiritual and eternal estates, as to be confident that we are in a good estate, when really we are in a bad estate; and that we belong to Christ, when really we do belong to Satan; and that our sins are pardoned, and that God loves us, and will indeed save us, when indeed our sins are not pardoned, but remain debts uncrossed, and we still lie under the wrath of God, and under condemnation. This is soul deceit, and most woeful deceit; it is worse than to rest upon a false title for all our worldly estate; it is worse than to trust to a false plea, and vain defense for a man's life; and it is the worse because

1. The sinner will not easily be convinced.
2. Nor come back, and begin the work aright, in a contrary grief and sorrow for his mistake.
3. Nor be shamed of his own foolishness.

Secondly, It is soul loss: unless the Lord break down this false assurance in our hearts, it will end in the eternal loss of our souls. I told you the last day, that that man's condition is more hopeful, whose conscience is filled with terror for his sins, than his condition is, whose heart is filled with a false persuasion and assurance that his sins are pardoned; as Christ spake to the self-conceited Pharisees;

Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of God before you, Matth. 21:31. Or as Solomon spake, Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool, than of him, Prov. 26:12. So say I, there is more hope of the salvation of the most doubting, and most terribly dejected and distressed sinner, than of the confident and (falsely) assured sinner; why so will you say? My reason is this, because

1. When a person is in a troubled condition, he is rightly sensible of his condition, he sees that it is ill with him; but the falsely assured sinner doth not see in what an evil condition he is, and certainly it is a worse matter to be in an evil condition, and not apprehend it, than to be in that evil condition, and yet to discern it.

2. When a person sees himself in an evil condition, there may be, and usually there are fears to remain in it, and cares to get out of it: Men and Brethren what shall we do? Spake those wounded in their hearts for their sins. Acts 2:37. And the Jailor came in trembling, and cried out, What shall I do to be saved? Acts 16:30. But when a person hath deluded himself with a false confidence that his estate is good, and with a false assurance that his sins are pardoned, and God is reconciled unto him; this man is whole, he minds not the Physician, looks not after Christ and mercy, and so loseth his soul. Beloved, this is certain, that false assurance breeds carnal security, and carnal security breeds neglect of Christ, and neglect of Christ breeds loss of mercy, and loss of mercy will be the loss of the soul.

Thirdly, It is soul-failure and disappointment; what Solomon speaks in Prov. 25:19. Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint. He is of no use or service

unto you, that say I of a false assurance, when you come to a time of need, and then expect help from your false assurance, and deluded confidence, then you will find that it will be of no more strength and service to you, than a foot out of joint, it will utterly fail you, and deceive you. When the winds and the waves arose, then the house built on the sand did fall, Matth. 7:26,27. So when death comes, and conscience is awakened, and ariseth in exceptions and accusations, and chargeth guilt (as unpardoned) upon the soul, in that day what will become of all your vain confidences? And of all your foolish and false excusations? They will be swept away as the Spiders web, and like a dream they presently vanish into nothing. Now from all that hath been said, you do see great reason as to strive for a right assurance, so to take heed, and beware of a false persuasion and assurance that your sins are pardoned.

#### SECT. IV.

3. Use. Doth the Lord promise to sprinkle clean water upon his people? i.e. To apply unto them in particular the pardon of their sins, with the assurance thereof: Hence let me inform two sorts of the people of God;

1. Those who have found this sprinkling of assurance concerning the pardon of their sins, how they may know that this is the very assurance which is given by God himself

2. Those who never yet have attained to this sprinkling of assurance from God, what they should judge of their estate, and what they should do to enjoy or partake of the same.



**1. Quest. How may one know that the assurance which he hath found concerning the pardon of his sins, be the right and true assurance which God himself undertakes to give by his Spirit, unto his people?**

Sol. I humbly conceive that this may be discerned, partly

1. By some precedently preparing works.
2. By some presently accompanying works.
3. By some subsequently following works of the Spirit.

First, You may know that the assurance which you have had, or which you now have, is indeed from the Spirit of God, By these works or qualities which the Spirit always lays in the soul, before he gives this particular assurance. And there are four works of the Spirit (if I may so style them) qualifying and preparing the hearts to receive this impression of assurance from the Spirit.

1. Humbling and mourning.
2. Reconciling and sanctifying.
3. Believing and relying.
4. Praying and wrestling.

First, There always goes an humbling and mourning heart before a revived heart about the pardon of our sins: Luke 4:18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (saith Christ) because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance unto the captive. And Isa. 61:2. To comfort all that mourn. Ver. 3. To give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for

mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, &c. Mark, here are broken-hearted sinners, and these doth the Spirit heal; and here are captivated sinners, and these doth the Spirit deliver and free; and here are mourning sinners, and these doth the Spirit comfort: Why, it is not reasonable to imagine that the Spirit of God will do anything which is impertinent, or improper, or repugnant to his own Word; but all his works within us are pertinent, and are consonant with the Word.

1. They are pertinent; he will comfort those to whom comfort pertains.

2. They are proper; he will comfort them that need comfort, and in the times of their need.

3. They are consonant; he will apply comfort to them unto whom God promiseth comfort. Now comfort pertains to the broken-hearted, and unto mourners for sin; and it is proper for them, they stand in need of the voice of joy and gladness; and God hath (in a special manner) promised to comfort them that mourn. Therefore if the assurance (which you find) of the pardon of your sins be a gracious peace and quietation, and persuasion after conviction, and after godly sorrow for your sins, this is no feigned nor deluding work of fancy, nor of Satan; but it is the very voice of joy from the Spirit of God. O when a poor troubled soul hath been laid low in the sense of sin, hath gone heavily all the day with that burden, is even confounded and ashamed, and is ready to fail and faint, and cries out, O Lord, pity and pardon, and comfort my distressed soul with the assurance of thy love, and of forgiving mercy for Christ's sake: And then the voice of comfort and joy speaks, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; and writes this good news upon the

conscience. Why, this is right assurance, and right comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Secondly, There always goes a renewing and sanctifying work of the Spirit, before the assuring and witnessing work of the Spirit; Here I will briefly clear two Points.

1. That the sanctifying work of the Spirit goes before the assuring work of the Spirit. 2 Cor. 1:21. He who hath anointed us, is God. Ver. 22. Who hath also sealed us. Psal. 85:8. He will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints. I beseech you tell me whose portion is forgiveness of sins and peace? Hath the Lord promised it unto any but unto his people? And who are indeed the people of God, but Saints, but holy people? See 1 Pet. 2:9. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar people. God will forgive none their sins, but such as are his people, much less will he assure any that their sins are forgiven but his people; and all the people of God (actually called into Covenant with him) are holy; therefore men must be sanctified before they are assured.

2. It cannot be otherwise, whether you consider

First, The Nature of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is a holy Spirit, and he will not afford his presence to any, unless he first make them holy; he always makes the Temple holy, in which he intends to abide and dwell; and if he will not abide in us, unless he sanctifies us, will he give us the assurance of the great love of God in Christ, that our sins are pardoned before he sanctifies us?

Secondly, You find in Experience, that when the people of God fall into sin, and do oppose the sanctifying work of the Spirit, presently they lose comfort and assurance; (David did so, Psal. 51) if we must uphold sanctity, to preserve the peace and comfort of the Spirit,

surely then there must be sanctity wrought before peace and assurance be spoken.

Thirdly, A man must be in Christ before he can have propriety in the forgiveness of his sins, and assurance that God hath for Christ's sake forgiven him; this all of you will grant, as saith the Apostle, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17.

Fourthly, Once more, Mark what God hath threatened to wicked and ungodly persons, namely wrath and judgment, and destruction, and visiting of their sins upon them; this is the portion of their cup. Now would you have the Spirit of God to misapply the Word of God? Whatsoever God hath threatened or promised in his Word, that the Spirit of God is to apply; his work it is to apply threatening's, and his work it is to apply promises; and his office it is to apply the one and the other respectively to the persons under the threatening's, and under the promises; he knows the mind of the Lord, and therefore as he will not apply the threatening's of wrath unto the godly, so he will not apply the promises of God to the wicked: and if so, then no assurance shall be by him applied unless men be holy. Therefore let no man deceive himself with a deluded persuasion or assurance that his sins are pardoned, as long as he remains wicked, ungodly, or unholy; no, no, the holy Spirit never seals any but holy persons.

And there is a twofold holiness wrought in us before the Spirit gives assurance.

1. One is Internal and Habitual, which is the renewing and changing of the heart into a conformity with the Image of Christ.
2. Another is External and Actual in the life and conversation. Psal. 50:23. To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God. Gal. 6:16. As many as walk according

to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. Although this be true, that everyone who is sanctified, is not presently assured, yet this is true, that the Spirit of God assures no man, but first he sanctifies him.

Thirdly, There always goes the believing work before assuring work of the Spirit; the Spirit of God is a Spirit of faith, and then the Spirit of comfort or assurance. Ephes. 1:13. In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise: Rom. 15:13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Mark, first believing, and then a filling with all joy and peace. Psal. 13:5. I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. This Assertion I suppose will pass without dispute, that the Spirit first works faith, and then assurance, and really it must be so; for

1. You must be in relation of children and heirs before you can assure yourselves of the portion of children: Therefore the Apostle placeth the Spirit of Adoption before the witness of the Spirit, as I hinted out of Rom. 15:16. But it is by faith that we are children, Gal. 3:26 And receive the dignity of sons, Joh. 1:12.

2. None can assure himself of benefit, but he who hath first a propriety in Christ, (union is the sole foundation of communion) see 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

**Quest. But now the question may be what faith that is which (necessarily) is precedent unto assurance.**

Sol. A twofold faith is previously required.

First, A faith of union with Christ.

Secondly, A faith of dependence upon the promises.

1. A faith of union, from which results propriety that Christ is yours, and you are Christ's; as upon civil Marriage, there ensues a mutual propriety; this faith doth unquestionably precede the testimony or assurance of the Spirit; for no part of Christ's purchase can be sealed unto you, before you have a part in Christ himself.

2. A faith of dependence upon God, that according to his promises he will both pardon you, and also give you the assurance that he hath pardoned you for Christ's sake; and this faith is many times put forth to believe in hope against hope, Rom. 4:18. Before the Spirit lets in the assurance that our sins are pardoned, I will hearken what, &c. Psal. 80:8.

Fourthly, There always goes praying and wrestling before this assuring work of the Spirit: The Spirit of supplication goes before the Spirit of assurance. Zach. 13:9. They shall call upon my Name, and I will hear them; I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God. Jer. 30:21,22. Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me saith the Lord? Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Isa. 56:7. Even them (especially of those that take hold of God's Covenant, ver. 6) will I bring to my holy Mountain, and will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Isa 30:19. He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry, when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. Psal. 35:3. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. O what earnest wrestling prayer came from David before he could hear that voice of joy and gladness in Psal. 51. And this is so experimented a truth that usually the sweetest assurances do attend our deepest tears, and our highest prayers. If therefore the assurance which you find concerning the pardon of your sins, be the persuasion given to

you by the Spirit of God, it doth always follow mournfulness of heart for sin, and a holy change of heart, and faith in Christ, and on the promises of Christ, and earnest prayer; if it be before, or without any of these, it is not the assurance of the Spirit of God, but a delusion of our own spirits.

Secondly, You may know that your assurance is the right assurance of the Spirit, by those present appearing qualities which do always accompany the assurance which comes (indeed) from the Spirit.

I will mention three of them.

First, If it be the very assurance from the Spirit of God that your sins in particular are forgiven, this will immediately kindle such a flame of love to God, as you never found the like in all your lives. We love him (saith John) because he loved us first, 1 Joh. 4:19. O Sirs, when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 5:5. (and so it is when he assures us that God for his great love, and rich mercy hath forgiven us) never was the heart of tender wife more knit to her husband, than the heart of the assured sinner is to his forgiving God; never did Jonathan delight more in David, than this poor soul doth in his God; why, he loves him so sensibly, so enlargedly, that he meditates and meditates, that he admires and admires, and cries out, Who is a God like unto thee? O I love thee for this love, for this mercy of mercies. Mary had many sins forgiven her, and Christ assured her of it, therefore she loved much, Luke 7:47.

Secondly, If it be the very assurance of the Spirit of God that your sins are forgiven, this will immediately soften and melt your heart into such pure springs of tears, that hardly you ever found the like for kind or degree. There are tears which a man sheds before assurance for his sins, and they are acceptable to God, nevertheless they are something brackish, and mixed with some trouble and distress; but

the tears of sorrow for sinning against God, assuring us that he hath pardoned our sins, they are so without all legality (if I may phrase it so) they flow from the soul so freely, so tenderly, so feelingly, so abundantly; I think that a man never wept more bitterly, nor ever condemned himself more freely, nor ever was more ashamed of himself and sinning's, than at that time when God gave him his full discharge and pardon under the seal and witness of his own Spirit. Ezek. 16:61,63. Ashamed and confounded when God was pacified towards them. The Prophet expresseth the quality and the quantity of their mourning, in Zach. 12:10.

**Object. I but it should rather produce joy!**

Sol. So it doth at the same time (which is strange) the greatest joy, and the deepest sorrow.

Thirdly, If it be the very assurance from the Spirit of God, the heart thereupon becomes so humble, and so lowly, and so nothing; the nearer that God draws to his people, the more humble they are; for when God's Spirit assures us, he doth cause us to see our own unworthiness, and the exceeding riches of God's grace. Mark the men most eminent for assurance in Scripture, of all men they were the most humble and lowly. There are three men most high in assurance.

First, Abraham was so: He was strong in faith, and he was fully persuaded; and he was a most humble man, Rom. 4:20,21. Behold I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes, Gen. 18:27.

Secondly, David also was so; Thou art my God, Thou hast forgiven my iniquities; and he also was a most humble man: Who am I O Lord God! And what is my fathers house! 2 Sam. 7:18.



Thirdly, And Paul was so; Who loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. 2:20, yet this man was a very humble and lowly man: The least of the Apostles; 1 Cor. 15:9. Less than the least of all Saints. Eph. 3:8, and not meet to be called an Apostle. O Christian, you who talk how much and how long you have been assured, where is this high love? Where is this deep sorrow? Where is this humble lowliness? Did your assurance ever produce these in you? If not, assuredly you have mocked your souls all this while with vain delusions.

Thirdly, You may know that your assurance is right, and comes from the very Spirit of God by these singular fruits and effects which (consequently) do flow from your assurance; I will mention six of them.

1. Quietation of heart.
2. More care to walk in all well-pleasing before the Lord.
3. More regard unto, and delight in the Word.
4. More zeal.
5. More fear.
6. More height of heart.

First, One effect which flows from a right assurance that our sins are forgiven, is a present quietation of heart; all storms cease upon one word spoken from the Spirit. There were many doubts, and many fears, and many disputes, and many reasonings, and many sad thoughts, and restless motions in the soul; but when assurance of forgiveness is given in by the Spirit of God to our spirits, all these do cease, and there ensues a gracious calm in the conscience, even an

excusing, delightful and joyful rest. When God lifted up the light of his countenance upon David, he lay down in peace, Psal. 4:6,8.

Now this quietation differs much from that. Stupidity in a man deluded with a false assurance; for

First, This stupidity is not the quieting of a troubled soul, but so is this.

Secondly, Their quietness is the effect rather of ignorance, because they do not know their miserable condition, than of assurance, that they do certainly know their pardoned condition.

Thirdly, Their quietness is from a seared conscience, but not from an assured and pacified conscience.

Fourthly, It is a passive silence, but in this conscience doth witness, and the heart rejoiceth. Well then, spiritual and joyful rest or quietation is the proper fruit of true assurance; and verily it cannot but be so; for assurance (in the very nature of it) doth so satisfy the mind, and prevail upon it, as to exclude all actual doubting's and fears at that time; and it is a clear manifestation of God's love and pardoning mercy, with our propriety in them in particular, and therefore necessarily doth quietation of heart flow from it.

Secondly, More carefulness to walk in all well-pleasing before the Lord; assurance breeds two excellent properties about holy walking and services.

1. One is more alacrity; O it is now no burden, but a delight to do the will of God. Psal. 40:8. I delight to do thy will, and thy commands are my delight, said David, I will run the way of thy Commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart, Ps. 119:32.

2. The other is more carefulness: Mark that place, Psal. 26:1. I have walked in mine integrity. Ver. 3. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes. Never were any more strict in paths of righteousness, than those who have tasted most of God's loving kindness: I am thy servant, &c. Psal. 116:16.

Thirdly, More delight in the Word, and greater appetite after it. 1 Pet. 2:2,3. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Fourthly, More zeal for God; What will not this assured Christian act and suffer? He will do any service for Christ; yea, the highest and greatest, (the love of Christ constrains him, 2 Cor. 14) nay, he will die for Christ; but to die for the Name of Christ, Acts 21:13. Who loved me, and gave himself for me, saith Paul: Gal. 2:20. What shall I render to the Lord? What shall I do for my God? Cant. 3:5. I charge you, stir not up, nor awake my love.

Fifthly, More fear to sin against God; let me tell you a truth, the assured person would even die presently in the Arms of Christ, that he might never sin against him anymore; but see Hosea 3:5. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

Sixthly, A height of heart; presently the heart is above all the world, the world is nothing, of no account when the Lord once gives in the assurance of his love in the pardon of our sins in the blood of Christ.

**Quest. 2. I now proceed to the second question, which is this, What those weak Christians and Believers should judge of their estate, who never yet could attain unto this particular assurance of the pardon of their sins, and what course they may take to enjoy the same.**

Sol. There are two things in this question to be spoken unto. 1. One respects the support. 2. The other respects the direction of such Christians as have not yet attained the assurance, &c.

1. For the support of those weak believers who are apt to judge heavily of themselves, and of their spiritual estate, because they never yet attained to the pardon of their sins, I would present these four Conclusions.

First, One may be in a justified or pardoned estate in the Court of heaven, who as yet is not in an assured estate in the Court of his own conscience; sins may be forgiven, when yet the sinner is not assured of the forgiveness of his sins. 2 Sam. 12:13. The Lord hath put away thy sins, and yet David prayed exceedingly to get the assurance thereof. Psal. 51:8. Make me to hear joy and gladness, &c. Joh. 14:20. At that day (after his Ascension) ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Ye shall know, &c. yet of these he saith, Joh. 15:5. I am the Vine, ye are the Branches. Job 13:24. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? Psal 88:14. Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? Ver. 15. Whiles I suffer thy terror, I am distracted. Ver. 16. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off. Isa. 64:8. But now O Lord thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou art the potter, and we all are the work of thine hand. Ver. 9. Be not wroth very sore O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever; behold, see we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Mark, though thou art our Father, and we are thy people, yet be not wroth, &c.

Secondly, If one doth truly believe in Christ, his condition is sure, although the person hath not assurance; true faith, (though weak, though compassed with doubts and fears) doth really

make Christ to be yours; and if Christ be yours, then your condition is sure. 1 Joh. 5:12. He that hath the Son, hath life. Joh. 10:27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. Ver. 28, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. Joh. 6:47. Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. Beloved, neither Christ nor salvation are settled upon assurance, but upon faith; it is not said that Christ dwells in our hearts by assurance, but by faith; nor is it said, Whosoever is assured shall be saved, nor Whosoever is assured shall receive remission of sins, but Whosoever believeth. The weakest true faith is enough to make Christ to be yours, and consequently it is enough to give you an interest in his Redemption, and to free you from condemnation, and to bring you to that purchased inheritance of life; see then, this is another comfort; though you have not assurance, yet the condition of life is sure if ye be true believers, &c.

Thirdly, A third support is this, Though you have not the assurance of the forgiveness of your sins, yet you are laboring and striving for it; there are degrees of assurance; some are weaker, some are stronger; some are more permanent, some are transient. Beloved, though a man be not in heaven, yet it is a great comfort if he be walking towards heaven; though a man be not in Christ, yet it is good when he is crying out for Christ; and so though a man hath not as yet the assurance that his sins are pardoned, it is a good sign when he is found in the ways for assurance.

**Object. But what comfort is there in this, that one is laboring for assurance, when as yet he never had it?**

Sol. There is in this four comforts to them that labor for assurance.

First, The comfort of obedience, that you are (according to God's commands) giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1:10, and proving and trying yourselves, whether Christ be in you of a truth, 2 Cor. 13:5, and working out your salvation, Phil. 2:12.

Secondly, The comfort of sincerity, that you are on the way to be assured, not resting in the want of assurance, nor in idle complaints, but as you pretend, an opinion and judgment, rightly valuing it, and that your hearts are set upon it, so your souls are indeed drawn forth to the ways of enjoyment.

Thirdly, The comfort of God's presence; for it is from the Spirit of God that your hearts do thus prize, and thus long for, and thus labor for assurance; he begets those thoughts, and those desires, and those prayers; you have the presence of the Spirit, though not the assurance of the Spirit.

Fourthly, The comfort of hope, that at length you shall see the God of gods in Zion, that you shall see his face with joy, that he will create peace and assurance in your hearts; for he never fills the soul and stirs and draws it unto himself for his gracious favor, but at length he doth make his loving kindness known unto that soul; and he doth thus prepare the heart, because he will incline his ear.

Fourthly, A fourth support unto you is this, although you have not this assurance in your own hearts, yet you have it in God's promise, who assures you that he will sprinkle it upon you, and faithful is he who hath promised, who will also do it.

Secondly, But now I come unto the Direction which I would commend to weak believers for the attaining of their assurance, and they are these.

First, Diligent attendance upon the Word of God; that this is a good means to attain assurance, may appear by three particulars.

1. God hath instituted or ordained his Word, not only for the conversion, but also for the consolation of his people, and the assuring of them. Rom. 15:4 Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 1 Joh. 1:4. These things write we unto you that your joy may be full. 1 Joh. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that ye have eternal life. Mark, written for our comfort, written that our joy may be full, written that believers may know they have eternal life; why then unquestionably the Word is a means to attain assurance, &c.

2. The people of God have attended the Word for this very end, to gain assurance. Psal. 48:9. We have thought of thy loving kindness O God in the midst of thy Temple. Psal. 85:8. I will hearken what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people.

3. They have found assurance upon the attending on the Word. Psal. 63:1. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee. Ver. 2. To see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary. Ver. 3. Because thy loving kindness is better than life. He had seen experimentally the power and the glory of God in the Sanctuary; (i.e.) the mercy and the loving kindness of God in Christ, the assurance and feeling of it in the use of the Word, &c. Eph. 1:13. In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of

truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise.

Secondly, Fervent prayer unto the Lord, this is also a means to obtain assurance. Ps. 119:58. I entreated thy favor with my whole heart; and two things demonstrate this unto us.

1. Some special promises to this purpose; viz. Isa. 56:7. Even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and will make them joyful in my house of prayer, &c. What is that which makes the heart of the people of God joyful? David tells you in Psal. 4:6. Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; and Ver. 7. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, &c. and where is this joyfulness promised? By what means? I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Joh. 16:24. Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Ver. 22. Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Here is a fullness of joy, (and that certainly is in assurance) and that fullness of joy is promised upon prayer.

2. Some particular experiences. Psal. 30:10. Hear O Lord, and have mercy upon me, &c. Ver. 11. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

**Object. But will some say, We have heard the Word a long time, and we have prayed and sought the Lord a long time, and yet we cannot attain to this assurance of forgiveness.**

Sol. Therefore be sure to take in three things when you pray for this assurance.



1. A pious valuation of it; Thy favor is life, Psal. 30:5. Thy loving kindness is better than life, Psal. 63:3. O visit me with thy salvation, Psal. 106:4.

2. A believing persuasion that God will hear you in this Luke 11:13. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him? And that Spirit is the Spirit of Adoption, that witnesseth with our spirits that we are the children of God, Rom. 8:16. David hath a singular passage in Psal. 119:147. I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, I hoped in thy Word; where observe three things. 1. The earliness of his prayer, (I prevented the dawning of the morning) he could not sleep, but must arise and pray. 2. The earnestness of his prayer, (I cried) he was solemn, serious and fervent. 3. The faith with his prayer, (and I hoped in thy Word) in one of these our prayers do fail, and so we get not our assurance.

3. A patient expectation, a continuance in prayer, still importuning the Lord, and waiting on him for this great testimony of his pardoning mercy. Isa. 30:18. Blessed are all they that wait for him. Psal. 85:8. I will hearken what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace, &c. These Ingredients are still to be remembered, and taken in, if you would prevail for the assurance, &c.

Thirdly, A conscientious care in all our ways to walk before God in all well-pleasing. A godly walking brings most glory to God, and most comfort to our own consciences; there are two excellent places for this purpose. Isa. 32:17. The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. Joh. 14:21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, is he that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father,

and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. I beseech you to remember five passages.

1. That men who make no conscience of their ways, but walk licentiously and dissolutely, they can never come to their assurance. Isa. 59:8. The way of peace they know not. Isa. 57:21. There is no peace saith my God, to the wicked. Psal. 119:155. Salvation is far from the wicked, for they seek not thy statutes.

2. That the people of God for particular failings in a conscientious and careful walking, have forfeited their assurance; David did so, Psal. 51:8,11,12.

3. That assurance is frequently promised to an upright, conscientious, careful walking. Psal. 11:7. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright. Psal. 50:23. To him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God.

4. That such persons have found abundance of joy and comfort. 2 Cor. 1:12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with flesh wisdom, but by the grace of God, we had our Conversation. Psal. 119:165. Great peace have they which love thy Law.

5. That all persons that do thus walk, and continue so to do, (although for some space of time they may not find this assurance yet) they shall at length enjoy it. Psal. 97:11, Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. The seed which is sown lies for a while underground, but at length it appears; therefore you who desire to enjoy the pardon of your sins, this do:

1. Keep up a mourning heart for your sins.

2. Enter into, and keep on in the paths of righteousness; follow on to know the Lord, and ye shall know him. Hosea 6:3. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.

Fourthly, A humble dependence upon the Lord, graciously to work this comfortable assurance in our hearts, although we be utterly unworthy thereof. Psal 33:21. Our hearts shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy Name. As you can plead no worthiness of pardoning mercy, so neither of the assurance thereof, but only in Christ; and therefore you must depend upon God, (who loveth freely, and receiveth graciously) that he according to his promise, and for his Christ's sake, will make his face to shine upon you; Go in peace, your sins are forgiven you.

Doth the Lord promise to sprinkle clean water upon his people? Then do you (whose hearts the Lord hath sprinkled with the assurance of the pardon of your sins) remember and heed a few things which do especially concern you.

First, Be you exceedingly thankful; indeed you cannot but be so, if God hath thus sprinkled your consciences, to bring you into Covenant, and to assure you that you are so; to bring you into Covenant, and to assure you that you are Christ's; to forgive you all your sins, and to assure you thereof; O how great, how sweet is this goodness! Mercy, and the assurance of mercy; love, and the assurance of love; a good estate, and a comfortable estate; life, and the assurance of life; heaven, and the assurance of heaven; this was the first desire of the Church. Cant. 1:2. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine; and this was the last desire of the Church: Cant. 8:13. Cause me to hear thy voice. Assurance is the top of all our comfortable mercies, and the top of all our desires.

Secondly, Be more cheerful in your spiritual course; when God gives you assurance, he doth (as it were) take the ring off his own finger, and put it upon yours; saith David Psal. 105:3. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. How joyful then should the hearts of them be that find the Lord! When Simeon got Christ into his arms, he rejoiced: The possession of Christ, and the evident fruition of pardon, are matter of great joy; walk like pardoned men, and like a people assured of a reconciled God in Christ.

Thirdly Be very watchful; no mercy must make us secure; assurance itself must make us the more vigilant, Christ was tempted after that voice came from heaven, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: And Paul's temptations were very strong after that he had been wrapped up into the third heaven. Let me tell you two things (and they may serve to make you watchful) after your sweetest assurances.

1. One is, that still much of sinful corruption dwells in you; though assurance doth (for the present) clear the mind of all doubts, yet it doth not cleanse the heart of all sins.
2. Another is, that temptations usually attend assurances, (Satan is an enemy to our comforts as well as our graces) and sometimes they prevail over us if they find us careless.

Fourthly, Be very faithful and steadfast: He will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints; but let them not turn again to folly, Psal. 85:8. Sin should be most odious, when mercy hath been most gracious; O do not for a taste of sinful pleasures, lose all the taste of most sweetest assurance; sinning's do most provoke God and prove most bitter to us after the greatest experiences of God's loving kindnesses.

Fifthly, Be very fruitful; the assured Christian (of all others) should be the tallest Cedar, the brightest Sun, and most fruitful Vine. Who should abound more in duty, than he who hath found God most abounding to him in mercy? I will say no more but this; thy assurance was never right, if it hath not made thee a more zealous friend for God, and a more diligent servant to Christ, and a more deadly enemy to sin.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. - Ezek. 36:26.

## **CHAP. VII.**

Sanctification promised as well as Justification.

As the former words contained the promise of Justification in the forgiveness of all the sins of all the people of God, so these words do contain the promise of Sanctification in the renewing of all the hearts of all the people of God.

In them there are three things very observable.

First, The Connection of this promise with the former in that particle (also) also a new heart will I give unto you.

Secondly, The Author or undertaker of the particular good promised, viz. God himself (I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you.)

Thirdly, The very blessing here distinctly promised by God unto his people, (a new heart, and a new spirit.)

From these Parts there are three Propositions which I would briefly discourse upon.

I. That Sanctification is promised unto the people of God as well as Justification.

II. That God himself doth undertake to sanctify, or to renew the hearts of his people.

III. That a new heart, and a new spirit God will give unto all his people in Covenant.

#### SECT. I.

Doct. 1. That Sanctification is promised unto the people of God as well as Justification, or with Justification: God doth promise not only to pardon the sins of his people, but also to sanctify and renew the hearts of his people (a new heart also will I give you.)

For the opening of this precious Truth, I will show unto you

1. The distinction or difference between Justification and Sanctification; for the word (also) imports as much.
2. The Connection between them both.
3. The Reasons why God promiseth the one with the other.

First, The distinction or difference 'twixt Justification and Sanctification; for they are promised as two distinct or several gifts (I

will also, &c.) which could not be spoken if they were both of them one and the same thing.

They differ thus,

First, There is in Justification a change of the state; he who was in the state of death, and wrath, being justified, is in the state of life and love (he is passed from death to life) but in Sanctification of the heart, he who was unholy, is now made holy, his heart is changed.

Secondly, Justification looks at the guilt of sin, and frees us from condemnation (There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. 8:1) But Sanctification looks at the filth of sin, and frees us from the dominion of sin: Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law but under grace, Rom. 6:14.

Thirdly, In Justification there is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, for which God accounts us righteous; but in Sanctification there is grace infused into us, by which we are made conformable unto the image of Christ; that depends upon the merit of Christ, and this depends upon the Spirit of Christ.

Fourthly, The matter of sanctification is perfect, and without any defect and exception (the justice of God cannot find any want in the obedience of Christ which was full and complete, and perfectly satisfied the Law of God) but the matter of our sanctification is imperfect, and weak, and we cannot stand before God's Judgment-seat with it.

Fifthly, All who are justified, are justified alike; there is no difference amongst believers as to their Justification; one is not

more justified than another (for every justified person hath a plenary Remission of his sins, and the same righteousness of Christ imputed) but in Sanctification there is difference amongst believers; everyone is not sanctified alike, but some are stronger and higher, and some are weaker and lower in grace.

Sixthly, In Justification there is nothing of sin remaining, which hath any contrariety to the justified estate; but in Sanctification there is something of sin remaining in the sanctified person, which is contrary to that grace which is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit; Gal. 5:17. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, &c.

2ly. The Connection of Sanctification with Justification. You may read in Scripture of a four-fold conjunction of these two great gifts of God unto his people.

First, In the promises of the Covenant, they join hand in hand, come forth like twins out of the womb of grace; Jer. 33:8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquity whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned and whereby they have transgressed against me. Here you see them both expressed together in the same deed: I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, there is our sanctification promised: And I will pardon all their iniquities, there is justification promised: Mich. 7:19. He will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Here you find them again in promise: He will subdue our iniquities, this is sanctifying; and he will cast all, &c. there is justifying: Heb. 8:10. I will put my Laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; (there is the promise of



sanctification? Ver. 12. And I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more (there is the promise of justification.) Rev. 2:17. I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, &c.

Secondly, In people of the Covenant: All who are effectually called and brought into Covenant, they are justified, and they are sanctified, they partake of mercy, and they partake of grace: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17. He is made holy; so 1 Cor. 6:11. Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. And in 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye all in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Righteousness, and Sanctification. So Ephes. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, Chap. 2:1. And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Thirdly, In the desires of the people of the Covenant: Their hearts are drawn forth with the desires of both; Psal. 51:1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions: Here is earnest prayer for mercy to pardon sin. Ver. 10. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me; here is earnest prayer for grace to sanctify.

Fourthly, In the Mediator of the Covenant, who is the Head of his Church, as well as the Savior of his body, Ephes. 5:23. And gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. Ver. 26, as well as to wash it from its sins in his own blood. Rev. 1:5. And gave himself for us that

he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Tit. 2:19. And bare our iniquities in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto Righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed: 1 Pet. 2:24. He was anointed not only to be our Priest to take away our sins by his body, but also to be a Prophet to reveal unto us the whole will of God: (And this is the will of God, even our sanctification, 1 Thes. 4:3.)

3ly. The Reasons why God doth promise these two great Gifts of holiness and forgiveness; to sanctify his people as well as to justify them. There may be these Reasons for their Connection.

First, Both of them have a necessary respect to the salvation of the people of God: A man must be justified if he will be saved; and a man must be sanctified if he will be saved; he cannot be saved without both; he cannot be saved unless he be justified: Rom. 8:30. Whom he called, them also he justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified: None are justified: but such as are called, and none are glorified but such as are justified: Mar. 16:16. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned: He cannot be saved unless he be sanctified: Joh. 3:5. Jesus answered. Verily, very, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: Heb. 12:14. And holiness without which no man shall see the Lord: Here you see a necessity of both of them in reference to salvation; we many times think that if our sins are pardoned, there needed no more to save us, but we are deceived; for as forgiveness is necessary, so is holiness necessary to our salvation; as no unpardoned person, so no unsanctified person shall be saved.

Secondly, The people of God do stand in need of them both; neither can they be restored or repaired without both; for the sins which are in them, are

1. Guilty obligations; they bind them over to wrath and curse.
2. Filthy pollutions; they do stain and defile them, and make them odious in the eyes of God: Under the first notion they are a debt; and under the other notion they are a disease; and under both they render us needy of mercy and of grace. Pardoning mercy alone doth not answer the sinful condition of man, for that is a remedy only against the guilt of sin; sanctifying mercy is also required to be a recovery from the filthy pollution of sin: As if one be a sick Malefactor, this man hath a double need; he needs a pardon as he is a Malefactor, and he needs a healing medicine and plaster as he is sick. Now the Covenant of grace is a full remedy to the sinner, and it is a full recovery: Ergo, God promiseth to sanctify as well as to justify.

Thirdly, God doth intend an everlasting communion twixt his people and himself in the Covenant; a communion in this life, and a communion in the other life; and indeed the people of God, their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: 1 Joh. 1:3. They are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and have access unto him: But they must be sanctified as well as justified for the enjoying of that communion; because two things are opposite to our communion with God.

1. One is enmity.
2. The other is inconformity. Whiles God and we are enemies, how can there be communion between us? Therefore in justification that enmity is removed and slain by the blood of

Christ; and whiles God is holy, and we remain unholy, there is such a dissimilitude, and inconformity of our natures, that there can be no communion neither; and therefore God doth sanctify our hearts by his Spirit, that we partaking of the Divine Nature by way of similitude, may have fellowship and communion with him: Pardon of sins only, makes not sufficient way for this communion; for notwithstanding that pardoning mercy, the heart of man is so sinful, that God cannot endure us, being of purer eyes than to behold sin: Put away your iniquities from before mine eyes, and then come and let us reason together, &c. Isa. 1.

Fourthly, We cannot glorify God, unless he sanctify us: Beloved, the people of God are formed by him to show forth his praise; they are the only people that do glorify him, and honor him: But this cannot be unless he were pleased to sanctify them; God indeed can glorify himself towards us, though we be not holy; but we cannot glorify him until we are made holy; we cannot glorify him in our hearts; for what glory can God have by an unbelieving, impenitent, hardened, sensual, ignorant, proud, ungodly heart? Nor in our actions; for they are as our hearts are; the fruit is as the tree is, &c. What can a dead or a sick man do for service?

Fifthly, we should have small comfort and peace, if the Lord did not sanctify as well as justify us; to have sinful lusts still reigning, and ruling, and breaking out, this would make our life uncomfortable.

Sixthly, Are not the people of the Covenant his children? And would you have the holy Father to be the Father of unholy children? Is this to be born of the Spirit? Whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh; and whatsoever is born of the Spirit is Spirit, Joh. 3.

Use 1. This serves to reprove those men who divide those things which God hath joined together; who are altogether for Justification, but nothing at all for Sanctification: They exalt the Righteousness of Christ, but they cry down the holiness of Christ: They would have men to be believers of Christ, but they would not have men to be holy; and why not holiness as well as Faith? Because (say they) holiness cannot justify us: But this is both an Erroneous and Ridiculous Opinion; as if Christians had nothing to look after but Justification; and as if the gracious works of the Spirit must therefore be rejected, because they are not able to justify us! Luther arguing upon this Point, saith, that we must give unto everything that which is proper unto it: would you (saith he) conclude that because your money, and lands, and eyes and hands, do not justify you, therefore you must reject all these? So because holiness doth not justify you, will you conclude that you must reject it! As the Righteousness of Christ hath its proper excellency to justify us, so hath holiness its proper excellency to renew us, to conform us unto Christ; and to make us to walk as becometh men in Christ: Besides, would God have made Christ to be our Sanctification as well as our Righteousness, if holiness did not concern us as well as faith? And would he have joined Remission of sins with the sanctifying of our hearts, if that alone were all that concerned us! Nay, Faith is said to sanctify us, as well as to justify us.

Use 2. It also reproves the general presumption of men, who think of nothing in order to their salvation but God's mercy; they talk much of mercy, and sometimes seem affectionate for mercy to pardon their sins, and never mind holiness, nor how to get their hearts to be sanctified? Nay, they oppose holiness, and scoff, and scorn at holiness. These men will lose their souls, because both of these which God hath promised, are necessary for salvation; you must have your

sins pardoned, or else you cannot be saved; and so you must have your hearts sanctified, or else you cannot be saved.

**Quest. 1. But you may say unto me, why do men look only after mercy, and not also after holiness, seeing God hath joined them together in his promise, and both must be in persons which will be saved?**

The Reasons may be these:

First, Holiness is more contrary to man's sinful nature than mercy: Mercy indeed relieves the sinner in a more easy and delightful way; but holiness though it doth relieve the sinner, yet it doth it in a way more cross to our sinful love, for it fights against our sins, and doth purge, and work them out from our hearts, and will not suffer sin to bear Rule there.

Secondly, Though holiness be the way to heaven, yet sinful men do not look on it as so; but they look on it as the way of trouble and reproach, as a way that is contradicted, and exposing them to crosses, losses, and contempt's, and which is too severe against their carnal liberties, and pleasures, and wills, and therefore they like it not. No man reproacheth another because he is justified, but because he is sanctified; for sanctification is a reproach and condemnation to the evil ways of men.

Use 3. Doth God promise to sanctify his people as well as to justify them? Then be not content with the one without the other, but join them in your prayers, which God hath joined in his promises: Be not satisfied that your sins are pardoned; neither be satisfied that your hearts be sanctified; as he cried out, Domine! De penitentiam & da indulgentiam; so do you, Lord give me grace, and Lord give me mercy. God is a holy God as well as a merciful God; and Jesus Christ

came by water and blood, 1 Joh. 5:6. Let your hearts be earnestly carried out for both; To this end remember six Conclusions.

First, Though your Right and Title to heaven lies in Justification, yet your meetness and fitness for heaven lies in your Sanctification: Col. 1:12. Giving thanks unto God the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Acts 20:32. I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. Is it meet or fit that an ungodly person should be in heavenly glory! The Leper had a right to his house, yet was not fit to dwell in it until he was cleansed.

Secondly, When you look at the pardon of your sins, you seem to look more at yourselves (your own safety, your own peace, your own deliverance from wrath and hell) but when you look after sanctification, you rather look more at God's glory how you may be enabled to honor him more: 1 Pet. 2:9. Yea are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Thirdly, We should be complete in Christ, Col. 2:10. And in all the will of God, Chap. 4:12. How can this be, if Christ be not your sanctification, as well as Righteousness, if you be not partakers of his Spirit, as well as of his merit! If you do not die and live with him.

Fourthly, It is a sign of a naughty heart; when mercy alone is desired, and that only will satisfy: In an exigence the most wicked man will cry out for mercy, but he never cries for sanctity. Pharaoh put Moses upon it to pray that God would forgive his sin, but never that God would heal his hardness.

Fifthly, As God promiseth the one as well as the other, so he will never give the one without the other: If he justifies you, he likewise sanctifies you; and if you are not sanctified, assuredly you are not justified: when you are by Faith united to Christ, your communion immediately falls in for sanctification as well for Righteousness: And it is impossible that Christ should be yours, but you must have the Spirit of Christ; (Rom. 8:9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his) and that Spirit quickening us with a new life, and mortifies our lusts: Some hold that sanctification is an inseparable effect of justification, but unquestionably it is a companion of it, and a lively testimony of it.

Sixthly, Because he promiseth both, therefore seek for both; Consider,

1. God promiseth nothing that is superfluous, or useless; but it is good, and for our good.
2. He promiseth no good, which he 1. Is not able to perform: And 2ly, willing to perform.

Holiness is an excellent good; it is the image of God, it is the glory of God, it is called glory, 2 Cor. 10, it is the glory and excellency (an unholy person is but vile and base) the Saints are the excellent on the earth; Psal. 16:2. It is our perfection, it is the highest elevation of our names here on earth, and hereafter in heaven; it is the prime work of the Spirit, it is the scope of election; he hath chosen us that we should be holy. Ephes. 1:4. It is the scope of vocation; God calls us unto holiness, 1 Thes. 4:7. And this God hath promised to give, &c.

But I shall speak no more at present of this general Observation; I will touch a little also upon the next general Proposition, and then I will come to the principal matter in the Text.



## SECT. II.

Doct. 2. That God himself undertakes in promise to sanctify the hearts of his people (I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you) Levite. 20:8. I am the Lord that sanctifieth thee. Luke 11:13. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him! Joh. 17:17. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth. 1 Thes. 5:23. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.

### **Quest. Why God undertakes it?**

First, Else it were impossible to be effected. Consider;

First, That no creature can make itself holy; it cannot change itself, no man can change his own sinful heart, Who can say I have made my heart clean? Prov. 20:9. And this will appear by two particulars.

1. No sinful man hath any supernatural power in him to produce any supernatural work in himself; he is without all strength; without me (saith Christ) ye can do nothing, Joh. 15:5. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, saith the Apostle in 2 Cor. 3:5. And we are dead in trespasses and sins, Ephes. 2:1.

Secondly, There is in every natural man a resistance, a contrariety and opposition to the work of holiness: Rom. 8:7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. Ephes. 4:18. Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them. Jer. 13:27. Woe unto thee O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean?

Secondly, That no creature can make another holy; we may wish holiness to others, and we may pray the Lord to sanctify others, and we may direct others to the ways of holiness, but make them holy we cannot. For

1. No man can impart any of his own grace unto another; he cannot divide the grace which he hath, as he can the earthly estate which he hath amongst his children: The actings of his grace may extend to others; but the habit or quality of his grace he can no more impart to others, than he can his own soul or life.

2. All that we can do for others (to work grace in them) is but in a moral way of counsel, and exhortation, and entreaty, and reasoning; but we cannot open their ears to hear that counsel, nor their hearts to receive that grace unto which they are by us exhorted; nor can we expect that our exhortations should have more power to prevail with men than God's exhortations; yet these alone were not sufficient to change any sinner without some inward workings of his Spirit, upon the spirits of men.

3. Besides, to change the heart of a sinner by grace, is a work proportionable with Creation, and with the resurrection of the dead (so the Scripture stiles our conversion or sanctification) for which Omnipotency must put forth itself, to sanctify us.

Secondly, God can sanctify, or graciously change the heart of a sinner; which may thus appear.

1. He hath dominion and power over the heart; he can turn, and command, and rule it as he pleaseth.

2. He hath dominion over all grace; he can give it, and work it in the heart of men by his Almighty Spirit and Power. If he will say to the dead, Live, the dead shall live; if he will say to the blind, See, the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and they shall see: If he will say to the deaf, Hear, the ears of the deaf shall be opened, and they shall hear. If he will say to the most wicked heart, Be thou changed, it shall be changed and healed; for by his Spirit he can infuse that grace into the heart, and with that power, and with that efficacy, as shall be sufficient to beat down and subdue all the resistances of sin, and to renew and alter the whole soul.

Thirdly, God doth undertake this sanctifying work in promise for his people;

1. That they may know that he alone is the Original and Author of all their Spiritual good: No Fountain of mercy, but their God of mercy; and no Fountain of grace, but their God of grace; no Fountain of peace, and salvation, and comfort, but their God of peace, but their God of salvation, but their God of comfort.

2. That their hearts might be supported under the sense of their sinfulness, and under the sense of their want of holiness, and under the sense of their own insufficiency, and inability to give themselves any holiness. Though they cannot, though no creature can help their hearts to holiness; yet their God can and will; for he hath promised it to them, and he is able to perform what he hath promised, and is also able, and will do it.

3. That he might have the glory, that we may glory in him, and not in ourselves; for what have we that we have not received?

1. Use. Doth God himself undertake to sanctify the hearts of his people? Then let none take upon him this work upon a confidence of

his own will, and power, and sufficiency: will you take the work of God out of his hand! When Rachel said to Jacob, Give me children or else I die? He said, Am I in God's stead! Gen. 30:1,2. So when the King of Syria sent Naaman to the King of Israel to heal him of his leprosy, said he, Am I God, to kill, and make alive, that this man doth send to me to recover a man of his leprosy! 2 Kin. 5:7. So, will you be in God's stead! Will you be God's to yourselves, that you take on you to change and sanctify your own hearts! And yet men are frequently presumptuous in this, they will change their hearts, and they will become new men. Is not this a presumptuous, nay is it not an impossible work? Will you create, will you quicken the dead?

**Object. But doth not God bid us? Make unto yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit? Ezek. 18:31.**

Sol. The Precepts of God in this kind,

1. Show our impotency, and convince us thereof; they do not imply our power.
  2. He commands us this, for this very end, that we should seek unto him to work this.
  3. That we might apply ourselves to the means through which he will work this.
2. Use. In the sense of want of holiness, be not discouraged, give not up the work as impossible; say not I shall never see a change in my heart, my sins are so strong, and my power is nothing; but go to God, remember that he hath undertaken to sanctify; Master, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, said the poor Leper; said Christ, I will, be thou clean;

Remember five things in this that God himself undertakes to give grace or holiness by promise.

First, He intends to give what he promiseth in any Particular.

Secondly, He is able to work it; nothing is able to stand against his promise; nothing can hinder it; all the power of hell, and of thy sinful heart cannot hinder him from the healing and sanctifying according to promise.

Thirdly, He doth put thee but upon coming, and asking, and trusting: He will give his holy Spirit to them that ask, Luke 11:13. Believe only and thou shalt be saved, and thou shalt see his power.

Fourthly, You cannot put up a request that doth more concern his own glory; Lord let me not dishonor thee anymore, grieve thee anymore; sanctify and change my heart that I may bring thee glory.

Fifthly, He never denied any heart that was serious and fixed in desires of holiness.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, &c. - Ezek. 36:26.

I Now come to the principal matter (here) distinctly promised by God unto his people, viz. A new heart, and a new spirit. -

## CHAP. VIII.

God gives a new heart and a new spirit to his people in Covenant.

Doct. 1. That a new heart, and a new spirit God will give unto all his people in Covenant [A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit, &c.]

### SECT. I.

For the opening of this great and necessary Truth, I will speak unto a few Questions.

#### **Quest. 1. What is meant by heart and spirit?**

Sol. The word (heart) is taken;

Sometimes Physically, for that noble and vital part of man, which is the seat of the soul, and life in man: Thus it is not looked on in this place. Sometimes it is taken for the soul of man which hath its principal residence in the heart: Gen. 6:5. God saw that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually (of man's heart (i.e.) of man's soul) Prov. 23:26. My Son, give me thy heart; (i.e.) thy soul, thy will, thy affections; thus it is taken in this place.

Secondly, That word (Spirit) is in Scripture taken sometimes in opposition to the body of man, as in Eccles. 12:7. Then shall the dust (i.e.) the body of man return to the earth as it was; and the spirit (i.e.) the soul shall return to God who gave it.

Sometime it is put in a direct distinction from the soul, as in 1 Thes. 5:23. I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless, &c. Here the Spirit denotes the intellectual part, and the soul denotes the will and affections. And so I humbly conceive the word (Spirit) is taken in the Text: Namely for the mind and judgment (called the intellectual part of man) and the word (Heart) is taken for the will and affections; and by both is meant all the soul, the whole soul in all the faculties of it.

**2. Quest. What is meant by the newness of heart, and by the newness of spirit? For this is the thing promised.**

Sol. A thing may be said to be new, either in respect of substance, or in respect of qualities.

First, There is a substantial newness, where all the materials are so; as an house is new, and a garment is new, and a ship is new, being all made of new materials: under this notion God doth not give a new heart, and a new spirit unto his people; (i.e.) he doth not give unto them another soul for substance from what formerly they had; they have one and the same substantial soul still, &c. all the same essential faculties of the soul still, the same faculty of understanding, the same will, the same affections still.

Secondly, There is an accidental newness, where the substance remains the same, yet the qualities supervenient, or super-added to the substance are new: As when a Garment is cut into a new fashion; or a piece of Plate is melted and purged of its dross, and made clean and pure, we call those new, though not for substance, yet for qualities: Naaman was the same man when he was a Leper, and when he was cured, the cure was accidental. In this respect God gives a new heart, and a new spirit, (i.e.) he doth (as it were) new shape the

heart and spirit; he puts into them such gracious qualities which are opposite to the wicked or sinful qualities in them before.

And these are called new, not in opposition to our Creation (for God made us holy and righteous) but in opposition to our degeneration; for by the fall we lost all our excellencies, and corrupted our hearts, and filled them with all unrighteousness, with sinful corruptions: when God doth purge out of our hearts, and infuseth into them the graces of his Spirit, then are our hearts said to be new, and our spirits are said to be renewed. This only in the general: Now I shall more particularly discover unto you what this newness of heart is which God doth promise unto his people.

It is that great and eminent change wrought in all the soul by the Spirit of Christ, infusing a new principle of grace, which inclines and conforms the heart to the whole will of God, and opposeth and mortifieth all the old sinful lust formerly residing and prevailing in the heart.

There are many particulars in this description which I shall in order unfold unto you.

First, A new heart is a changed heart; Newness (in the very nature of it) implies an alteration; for whatsoever is altogether the same that it was, cannot be said to be new. If the heart was ignorant, and so remains still; if it was proud, and vain, and filthy, and earthly, and so remains still; this heart is an old heart still, there is no newness, because no change. Newness of heart peremptorily implies a change of the heart; therefore it is (in Scripture) called a new birth; (Joh 3:3. Except a man be born again.) And a quickening from the dead; (Luke 15:24 This my son was dead, and is alive again.) And a turning from darkness to light; (Act. 26:18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.) And



a transformation; (Rom. 12:2. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.) And a translation; (2 Cor. 5:17. Old things are passed away, all things are become new.) And a washing, and a cleansing, and a refining; 1 Cor. 6:11, 2 Cor. 7:1, Mal. 3:2,3.

Secondly, When the heart is made new, there is a great and eminent change made in it: There are three great changes of man's heart.

1. One was by sin; when man being in honor abode not, but fell by transgression, and became like the beasts that perish. This was a woeful change, like that of the apostatizing Angels from heaven to hell.
2. Another is by grace, wherein we are changed into the very image of God.
3. A third is by glory, when we shall be like God himself; For we shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3:2.

The change which makes newness of heart is a great and eminent change, reckoned therefore amongst the wonders of God, called a Creation, and a Resurrection, and the opening of the eyes of the blind, and unstopping the ears of the deaf, Isa. 35:5. And loosing the tongue of the dumb. It is such a change that others beholding it, stand amazed at, as they did when they saw Paul appear another man at Damascus from what he was at Jerusalem, Acts 19:21. Yea the very Angels are affected with it, and rejoice: I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, Luke 15:10. I call it an eminent and great change, because it surpasseth all other changes which may be found in men who yet have no newness of heart.

There may be a change;

1. From rudeness of life to civility of conversation.
2. From profaneness of walking, to formality in Religion.
3. From ignorance and blindness of mind to knowledge.
4. From the practice of sin to a forbearance of sin.
5. From quietness of Conscience to perplexity and trouble of Conscience; and yet no newness of heart: The change which constitutes a new heart, is a very deep change, it makes man to be a new creature, it doth quite alter the frame and estate of a man's heart and Spirit.

Thirdly, When the heart is made new, there is a change made in the soul, and in the whole soul.

1. It is a change in the soul: It is one thing to plaster an old house, and it is another thing to build a new house: It is one thing to adorn a dead man, and it is another thing to inform or enliven a dead man. Newness of life doth principally respect the root and spring The work of renewing grace begins where sin begins; it begins the Reformation where sin begins the deformation; it begins to change and cleanse where sin begins to corrupt, and defile, and that is in the soul: Outward Reformation is one thing, and inward Reformation is another thing: The Pharisees made clean the outside of the cup, and they were painted Sepulchers, which within were full of rotten bones. Hypocrisy can make a new garb of visible actions, but it can never make a new heart; it never changes and alters the soul; that still remains under the love and power of sin: But when the heart is made new, there is some inward work of grace by which the soul is changed from death to life, from unholiness to holiness.

2. It is a change in the whole soul; when the heart is made new, all the soul is divinely changed: Therefore this newness or Renewingness is compared to the light which disperseth itself into the whole body of the Air, so that there is not any one part of the Air which is not enlightened: To the ointment which fills the whole room with sweet Odor: To leaven, which diffuseth itself over the whole lump. As it is with Original sin, it is an universal defilement, it infects all the soul, there is not one faculty of the soul but it is defiled by it: So it is with Renewing grace, or newness of heart, it is an universal alteration or change; it alters all the soul, and all the faculties of the soul; when a new heart is given, there is a change made.

1. In the mind or understanding, which now is freed from darkness, and enjoys a heavenly light to know the things of God, and to discern things that are excellent; and the mysteries of Christ and salvation appear in their glory. We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, &c. 2 Cor. 3:18.

2. In the Judgment, which is now freed from mistakes, and Errors, and high imaginations, and carnal reasonings and disputes, and is now captivated to the Truth, and approves of what is good, and condemneth what is evil: It counts sin the greatest evil, and Christ the most incomparable happiness, and the enjoyment of God the only portion: I count all things but dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, said Paul, Phil. 3:8. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee? Saith David, Psal. 73:25.

Thirdly, In the Will, which was proud, and stubborn, and unwilling, and averse, and perverse; nothing would persuade it to hearken to Christ, to yield, to receive, to obey, all the arguments of mercy and glory would not effect and take it: Ye will not come unto me that ye

might have life, Joh. 5:40. But when the heart is made new, the Will also is changed; now it falls down before Christ, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do, Acts 9:6. Draw me, and I will run after thee! Cant. 1.

4. In all the affections of the soul: Never was there such a change, such a newness! How they fall out with one another; Grief falls out with Love, and Love with hatred; nay, they seem to be changed one into another: Joy into Grief, and Love into Hatred, and Hatred into Love: what a man did love, he now hates, and what a man did hate, he now loves: and what a man desired, he now fears; and what a man delighted in, he now grieves at it! Nay, look on them distinctly in their several motion. The desires were, Who will show us any good? Now the desires are, What shall we do to be saved? The delights were in sin, in sensualities, in vanities, in vain societies; now they are in the favor of God, in Christ, in pardoning mercy, in holy and heavenly society in doing the will of God: The like may be said for love, for grief, for fear, &c.

Fourthly, This change (which constitutes newness of heart) is wrought by the Spirit of Christ: Therefore our Sanctification (which is the same with the giving of a new heart) is called the Sanctification of the Spirit, 1. Pet. 1:2. And our change into the image of glory, from glory to glory, is by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3:18. And the newness of heart is the work of the Spirit of Christ; no man changeth or renews his own heart, but the Spirit doth all: And therefore he is called the Spirit

1. Of Knowledge, because he illuminates and gives knowledge and light, 1 Cor. 12:8.

2. Of Grace, and holiness, because he makes us holy, Ephes. 4:30.

3. Of Faith, because he causeth our hearts to believe, 2 Cor. 4:13.

4. Of Love and joy, because he worketh these in our hearts. All saving good comes from the Father as the Fountain, and through the Son as the Mediator, and is wrought in us by the Spirit. As in the Creation the Spirit moved upon the waters, and so did as it were brood and frame all the Creatures; So in Regeneration, the Spirit descends upon the hearts, and by his vigor doth form all the newness and spiritual change in it.

Fifthly, The Spirit works this change in the heart by infusing a new Principle or quality of grace; A new Principle is necessary to make a new heart, there must be something put into the heart to change the heart; in all alterations thus it is. If you would have the cold removed from the water, heat must come in; and if you would have darkness removed from the Air, the light must come in; and if you would have sickness removed, health must come in: For all change amongst qualities is made by contrary qualities: And so it is when God changeth the heart (when of old he makes it new.) He doth this by infusing a new Quality into the heart contrary to the old quality of the heart; which quality is Regenerating or Renewing grace, and is called sometimes holiness, sometimes the New man, sometimes the Inward man, sometimes the Law of the mind, sometimes the Spirit, sometimes Christ, sometimes the Anointing, sometimes the seed of God; and according to the several ways of working, it hath several names; v.g. As it is the forming of a heavenly being in the soul, it is called Regeneration. As it is the turning of the heart, it is called Conversion. As it is the humbling of the heart, it is called godly sorrow. As it is the turning of us from sin, it is called Repentance. As it is the bringing of the heart in to Christ, it is called Faith, &c. As it is the abasing of the heart, it is called Humility. As it is the gentle tempering of the heart, it is called Meekness. As it is a submitting of

the heart to God in sufferings, it is called Patience; and as it is the raising of the heart to the allowance of God, it is called Contentment and Self-denial, &c.

Sixthly, Into the Elect and Called of God] Renewing grace is peculiar and proper to the Elect people of God; the Papists and Arminians do hold that Reprobates and Apostates may have the same truly renewing and sanctifying grace which the Elect of God have; and that the grace in the one, and in the other, differ not quantum ad essentiam, (as to truth) but only quantum ad permanentiam, as to continuance.

But this opinion we reject as unsound and dangerous; for although we do grant unto some Reprobates and Apostates the common gifts and works of the Spirit; as

1. Illumination; whereby they may know the revealed will of God, and assent unto the truth of the Word; which appears by the Parable of the stony ground, and in Simon Magus, &c.

2. And some transient working on their affections, as upon hearing the Word, to receive it with joy (Herod heard John the Baptist gladly, and the temporary believers took in the Word with joy) and with fear as Felix did, and with humbling as Ahab did.

3. And some kind of external Emendation or Reformation, as Herod did many things, Matth. 6:20. Nevertheless no Reprobate attained unto the state of Renovation or Adoption, or Justification; they were never renewed intensively by the Holy Ghost, never had a new heart given unto them; because

First, The state of Renovation is founded in God's Election. He hath chosen us that we should be holy, Eph. 1:4, therefore none

but the Elect are renewed.

Secondly, This Renovation flows from union with Christ. 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Thirdly, All renewed persons are in special Covenant with God; he is their God, and they are his people; and he will put his fear into their hearts, that they shall never depart from him.

Seventhly and lastly, Newness of heart arising from grace infused by the Spirit of Christ, consists,

1. In a Rectitude of Inclination.
2. In a powerful mortification.

First, A Rectitude of Inclination; every faculty of the soul is now brought into its due place and order, and inclines and conforms unto God, whereas before it was turned from him; now we approve the will of God, and choose the way of God. Newness is the conformity of our nature with God's nature, 2 Pet. 1:4, and of our inclinations and actions to God's will; what God likes, we like; what God disallows, we disallow; what God sets up, we set up; what God would have done, we would have done; and in what God takes delight, in that do we also take delight; and in that manner that God would have it done, we love with simplicity, we pray with fervency, and we hear with reverence, and we give with cheerfulness, and we walk with sincerity.

Secondly, In a mortification of old lusts; this is called a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor, 7:1, and a crucifying of the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5:24, and a putting off the Old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, Ephes. 4:22, and a dying unto sin, Rom 6:2, and a not suffering sin to reign,

that we should obey it in the lusts thereof, Rom. 6:12. Beloved, this is most certain, that newness of heart is

1. A universal contrariety to all our sinful corruptions; and therefore where newness of heart is, there is a constant hatred of sin, and a continual conflict or combat with it.
2. A real predominancy; renewing grace is stronger than remaining sin, and will never suffer it to rule the heart, and sway as in former times.

**Quest. 3. Why God will give unto all the people of his Covenant a new heart, or a heart renewed by grace?**

Sol. The Reasons may be these.

First, God predestinates them unto the means as well as unto the end: God's predestination in the aim or end of it, respects the glorifying of his people, (who are therefore called Vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory, Rom. 9:23, and are said to be chosen, and called to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thes. 2:14) and God's predestination in the means tending to that glory, is his eternal will and purpose to communicate effectually to his people all that is requisite to bring to the participation of that glory; therefore saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:29. Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate to be conformable to the Image of his Son. Ver. 30. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified: Mark, predestination hath a respect to the means as well as to the end; to calling and justifying as well as to glorifying; (and calling is to holiness as well as to happiness) to conformity to the Image of his Son, as well as unto an inheritance by his Son, and what is that being conformed to the Image of his Son, but (amongst other



things) to be changed into his Image? 2 Cor. 3:18. And what is that but to have our heart renewed by the Spirit of grace?

Secondly, God will give unto his people all that Jesus Christ hath purchased for them, and which was the very design of his death: Now Jesus Christ did by his death make a threefold purchase.

1. Of the Persons of all the Elect; he bought them with a price: Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, 1 Cor. 19:20.

2. Of all the Services of the Elect: He hath delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness, Luk. 1:74,75. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2:14.

3. Of all Graces for the Elect: the donation of the Spirit (as to all the effects of grace) is the fruit of his death and purchase; not only eternal glory, but renewing grace is purchased by Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, The Lord doth put several duties and services upon his people, which are impossible for them to perform, unless he did give them a new heart, a heart changed and renewed by grace. They must deny themselves, they must love the Lord their God with all their soul, and all their might. They must hate every evil way. They must walk uprightly. They must be contented in all conditions. They must resist temptations, and wrestle against principalities, and against Rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. They must overcome evil with good. They must love their enemies, bless them that curse them, and do good to them that hate them. They must be ready to do every good work. They must take up the Cross, and suffer reproaches and losses; they must

persevere to the end. It is impossible for a natural heart to perform these: Is there not then a necessity of renewing grace to enable the heart for these?

Fourthly, Again, The people in Covenant, they have a new and choice relation, and must have natures suitable to it: No people have such a relation as they, and unless they were renewed by grace, they could never hold that relation. God is their God, and their Father, and they are his children, they are his sons and daughters, 2 Cor. 2:18. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, (saith the Lord Almighty) and Ver. 16. Ye are the Temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; this is their relation, but then mark what he infers from this, in Ver. 17. Wherefore come from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. q.d. Holiness is necessary for this relation, you must be separate, you must be renewed, you must have no communion with sin, you must be another kind of people, you cannot hold communion with me, nor will I own you for my people and children if you do so, &c.

And Christ is their head, and they are his body, this is another relation, (Colos. 1:18. He is the head of the body, the Church) Now is Christ the head of profane and ungodly men? Is he the head of the dead, or of the living? Do not the head and the body agree in the same kind of nature and life? Are not they who are joined to the Lord one spirit? 1 Cor. 6:17. Certainly as all who come from the first Adam do bear his image, so all who are of the second Adam do bear his image. Ergo. They must be a redeemed and sanctified people.

Fifthly, I will add one reason more why God will give unto all his people a new heart, and it is this, The congruity of it for that

conversation which they are to have amongst men, both good and bad.

First, For good men, they are to have society and communion with them in all holy things, and in all holy duties, their hearts should be knit unto them in love, their delight should be in them, as in the excellent of the earth; and you know the mutual comforting's and edifying's, and strengthening's, and spiritual supporting's which believers should be to one another: But this requires a new heart, until that be given, there can never be that love, that delight, &c.

Secondly, For wicked men, the people of God are to shine amongst them as lights, Phil. 2:15, and to win them by their godly walking, at least to stop their mouths, and make them ashamed that falsely accuse their good Conversation in Christ; they are to convince them, and reprove them, &c. But all these things would fail, they could not be, if God did not renew and change the heart of his people by grace, &c.

## SECT. II.

Use 1. Doth God promise to give unto all his people a new heart and a new spirit? Here it follows that many people are not the people of God in Covenant, because they have not a new heart given unto them; but they have still their old hearts, and old spirits, their old corrupt lusts, which they obey and serve, and which they will hold fast, and will not forsake: For the managing of this Use, I will briefly show you two things.

1. The infallible Characters of an old and unclean heart.

2. The woeful miseries of people still retaining those old hearts.

1. The Characters of an old or unrenewed heart.

The Scripture gives us five Characters of an old heart; (i.e.) of a heart never yet changed or renewed by grace.

First, Ignorance; generally the sinful estate is set out by ignorance. 1 Pet. 1:14. Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance. Eph. 4:18. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them. Acts 17:30. The times of this ignorance God winked at.

There are three things, of which if a man be ignorant, he is unquestionably in an old sinful estate.

1. Himself; if he knows not what a wicked, wretched, vile and miserable heart is within him, and how accursed he is by reason of it.

2. Jesus Christ, and the mystery of salvation in and by Christ.

3. The excellency and necessity of the new creature, of Regeneration and renewing grace; this man is still in his sins, he is in the gall of bitterness, he is dead, &c. The first work of the Spirit is, to open the eyes, and to turn men from darkness to light, Acts 26:18. And to give knowledge of salvation, Luk. 1:77. To enlighten the understanding, Eph 1:18. There begins the first change and dawning of Christ and grace; therefore if that be not done, the old heart remains.

Secondly, Carnal security and quietness, a perpetual silence and rest, (Luk. 11:21. When a strong man armed keepeth his Palace, his goods are in peace) where sin reigneth, and still keeps possession, all is

quiet; the man feels not his burden, nor wounds, nor wants, nor spiritual trouble; no conflict is to be found in his heart. What lack I yet? Said that deluded covetous young man in the Gospel. And I was alive once without the Law, said Paul, Rom. 7. And I stand in need of nothing, said Laodicea, Rev. 3 All is well, and all is safe, and all is quiet; sin is no enemy to itself: Cold doth not contend with cold, nor darkness with darkness; all contention or conflict ariseth from contrariety; and the flesh is not contrary to the flesh; it is the Spirit which is contrary to the flesh, &c.

Thirdly, Enmity to godliness in the power of it, and to grace in the life of it, and holiness in the practice of it. Rom. 8:7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. Eph. 4:18. Being alienated from the life of God. Joh. 3:20. Everyone that doth evil, hateth the light. Prov. 29:27. He that is upright in his way, is abomination to the wicked. Amos 5:10. They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly. Psal. 2:3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. This is an evident sign of a wicked heart, of a heart far from renewing grace: Thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, said Paul to Elymas, Acts 13:10, and Cain hated his brother, &c. Why do you not love such a child as well as the other? And countenance such a servant as well as the other? And regard such a one of your Kindred as well as another? And why do you not speak evil of such a neighbor, rather than of another? Live they not as peaceably and as inoffensively? And deal they not as justly and squarely? O but he is godly, he is religious, he will not run with us to the same excess of Riot, he will not Swear and Drink, and play the Good-fellow, &c.

Fourthly, Bondage unto sinful lust; spiritual slavery is a real testimony of an old heart; when a man is held fast with the cords of

his sins, when he is a servant to sin, obeys it in the lusts thereof, hath an heart that cannot cease to do evil, doth project for sin, and is at the commands of it, and will not forsake it, but takes pleasure in unrighteousness; his heart and sin are joined and matched together as it were by Covenant; he will reject Christ, and renounce mercy, and be contented to forfeit salvation, and venture to damn his own soul, rather than he will forsake his sin, and come under the power of changing and renewing grace.

Fifthly, Unchangedness of Conversation; when the Leopards spots continue, and the Blackmores skin remains, and the scum of a vain, graceless life departs not, but a person walks still in the paths of unrighteousness and ungodliness; what he was, that he is; as he hath lived, so he dieth, and so he will live and die; hates to be Reformed, scorns to be a Changeling, is Proud still, is a Drunkard still, a Whoremonger still, a Sabbath breaker still, a Swearer still, a Scoffer still, &c.

2. The woeful misery of persons continuing in their old sinful condition.

I will but mention the sum of their misery.

First, Certainly they are out of Covenant, and therefore God is none of theirs, he neither doth nor will own them for his; and if God will not own them, then mercy will not own them.

Secondly, They belong not to Christ at all; for in 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. O how cursed is the sinner who hath not Christ to redeem him from the curse.

Thirdly, They shall never be saved; for Hebr. 12:14. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Fourthly, They shall certainly be damned. 2 Thes. 2:12. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

### SECT. III.

Use 2. Doth God promise to give unto all his people in Covenant a new heart and a new spirit? Then let us search our hearts, and look what newness God hath wrought there? We find new fashions upon the backs of persons; and we find new opinions in the heads of persons; and we find new changes in the Civil State; and we find new afflictions upon our persons; and we find new fears in the hearts of men; and we find new and strange dispensations of God's Providence; but where is this new heart? One looks after a new place, and another after new preferment, and another after new pleasures, and another after new friendship, and another after new safety; but who looks after the old truths, the good Christ, and the new heart; who of us can say in a spiritual sense, what he spake in a corporal sense, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see, Joh. 9:25. May it be affirmed of us, what Paul spake of the Ephesians, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord, Eph 5:8. Or what he spake of some of the Corinthians, Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, &c. 2 Cor. 6:6. And what he spake of the Romans, Ye were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from your heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Rom. 6:17. And being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness, Ver. 18.

**Object. But will some reply, we are much deceived if that we have not new hearts and changed spirits?**

Sol. I answer, ye may be deceived, and in nothing sooner than in your own hearts; the Prophet saith, that the heart is desperately wicked, and withal he saith, it is deceitful above all things, Jer. 17:9. Nothing so wicked, and nothing so deceitful as man's heart, and as in many other things it may deceive us, so especially in this one thing of newness, it may make us believe that it is changed and renewed by grace, when indeed there is no such matter, which may arise, 1. Partly from the Ignorance in us, what newness of heart is. 2. Partly from Self-love and self-flattery; we are apt to make the most of what makes the most for us, as we are apt to make the least of what makes against us. 3. Partly from a slothfulness of spirit, to take pains, to search and try the truth of our spiritual conditions. 4. Partly from the partial resemblances which some things have with that which is called newness of heart or renewing grace, and yet they differ from it, toto coelo. Now because this is one of the greatest and commonest grounds by which persons do deceive themselves, I shall therefore insist the more fully upon it.

There are four things which have a resemblance (lesser and greater) with renewing grace, and yet renewing grace is quite another different thing from them.

1. Civil Righteousness, especially if joined with the true Religion.
2. Restraining grace, in the forbearance of sins, especially notorious and flagitious.
3. The presence of common gifts, which man had not before.
4. The powerful effect of an awakened conscience.

1. Civil Righteousness, especially if conjoined with Profession of true Religion.



What do men (generally) repute for renewing grace, and for godliness, but this; if they be no Papists, if they hold no Errors, if they keep their Church, and deal fairly and justly with their neighbors, why, they conclude their hearts are good, and their estate is sure, and what can men have more.

But now give me leave to say two things unto this.

First, Civil Righteousness is good, and so is external profession of the true Religion; God requires that and this: Matth. 7:12. All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Mich. 6:8. He hath showed thee O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? To do justly is one of the things required. The like may be said for external profession; as we must believe with the heart, so we must confess with the mouth, Rom. 10:11. And we must hold forth the word of life, Phil. 2:16.

Secondly, Nevertheless, newness of heart (or renewing grace) is a quite different quality from their civil Righteousness; and one may be civilly righteous, and honest, who never had his heart renewed by grace, nay whose heart doth extremely loath and oppose it.

Now civil righteousness, and heavenly newness of heart doth differ in six things.

First, Civil Righteousness is of a low and inferior birth or original; there are three things which may be sufficient to make a man civilly righteous.

1. One is the light of nature, which hath some notions and principles of common equity and honesty.

2. A second is the power of edification; Parents and Tutors may so represent the honor of just dealing, and the forbid unworthiness of unrighteous dealing, that young and tender natures may take in a savor, and taste of them all their days, though they never act upon any knowledge that God enjoins them.

3. A third is the influence of example, beholding such a course and way of Righteousness in Parents, and Superiors, in Friends, whose examples we are ready to imitate, because their persons we do love and reverence. But newness of heart, or renewing grace is wrought by a higher hand than the dictates of nature, or counsels of friends, or examples of men; it is the birth of the Spirit of God (every regenerate or renewed person is born of the Spirit) the immediate power of the holy Ghost is put forth in the creating of a new heart.

Secondly, Civil Righteousness either totally confines us to the duties of the second Table (as if we had none to eye and please but our neighbor) or if it gives way to the duties of the first Table, it is but to a formal and superficial observance. The civil righteous man though he is strict in duties to man, yet is irreligious in all his religious performances: He saith a Prayer, but he knows not how to pray in the Spirit, and with Faith; and he hears a Sermon, but it is as if he heard it not, sleeping and waking, with running and roving distracted thoughts on the world; he talks of a Sabbath, but he knows not how to keep a Sabbath, and is weary of it, and counts the strict observance of it a Jewish burden: But renewing grace brings in the heart to all the will of God, it enables to give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's; to be righteous with good men, and to be upright with God, to serve him with love and fear.

Thirdly, Civil Righteousness may look at some outward, easy, ordinary actions of Religion, but it leaves the heart destitute of the great inward actings of Religion. When did you ever see a person only civilly righteous lay the Axe to the root of the tree? Searching of his heart, and judging the corruptions of his heart, and humbly mourning and lamenting under the sense of his wicked heart, and hungering after Jesus Christ, and importunately wrestling for grace and mercy, striving to crucify the lusts of his heart. He is so far from these, that he thinks them either superfluous, or impossible. But renewing grace doth chiefly act upon the heart, there it sets up the Throne, and gives the Law, and exerciseth Authority and Rule, &c.

Fourthly, Civil Righteousness rests mostly in negatives (I am not as other men, said he) if the civilly righteous man doth not swear, this is enough although he should likewise fear an Oath: if he doth not take away the life of another, if he doth not do wrong, that's enough, although he ought also to do good. But renewing grace comes off to Positives as well as Negatives; it teacheth us to cease to do evil, and it learns us also to do good: Isa. 1:16,17. It teacheth us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts. And also to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. 2:12.

Fifthly, Civil Righteousness it will allow such things which renewing grace will not; It will allow us

1. To associate ourselves in a way of familiarity with the enemies of God and holiness, and rather with these than those that are good.
2. To omit many personal and family duties.
3. To defer repentance, and making peace with God.

4. To misspend his time day after day, week after week, year after year in vain pleasures, and sports, dicing's, cardings, &c.

5. To conform and fashion ourselves to the world, and perfidiously to flatter persons in their sins only to keep up a correspondency and interest, it must have indulgence in sinful thoughts, vile affections, petty Oaths. But renewing grace makes the heart to tremble at these things, and to loathe and abhor them.

Sixthly, Civil Righteousness alters not one sinful quality in the heart, nor gives it any new spiritual ability; notwithstanding it the heart is as ignorant, and malicious, and unbelieving, and impenitent, and hardened, and earthly, and vain, and proud as ever, and cannot deny itself in any delightful way of wickedness, &c.

II. Restraining grace, by which a person forbears many sinful act, especially such, as are scandalous and dangerous in the opinion of men.

With this do many men sit down and bless themselves for renewed and changed persons, for they are not as other men, neither whore nor thief, and dare not commit such and such sins!

But Beloved! There is a vast difference between restraining grace, and renewing grace; they differ in six particulars.

First, Restraining grace is only an impediment to sinful actions; but renewing grace is an amendment of our sinful inclinations. When a man is only restrained from sin, it is with him as with a thief in prison, who doth not commit any thievish act, yet even then he doth retain his thievish heart; or as with a dog that is chained up, and cannot tear and devour, but yet the same cursed and revenging

nature remains in him. So when a man is only restrained from sin, although he forbears any visible acts of sin, yet his heart is as wicked as ever, and his sinful inclinations and affections the same as before: But this it is not when the heart is renewed by grace; for renewing grace is not only a cord to with-hold, but it is likewise a plaster to heal and change, as it is a preservative against sinful actions and works, so it is a spiritual salve to cure our sinful natures; the renewed Christian doth not only forbear sin, but he doth also hate sin; a restrained sinner at sometimes cannot sin; a renewed sinner at no time would sin: the one doth not commit the sin which yet he still loves; but the other doth sometimes do the sin which yet his soul still hates.

Secondly, when a man forbears sin by the sole power of restraining grace, it is involuntary; There is a secret regretting or rising of the heart against this restraining power: The heart looks on it as under a force, or extremely burdened or oppressed; it is discontented and impatient, like a horse that is kept in by a bridle, or like water which is stopped, it riseth and swelleth the more; and the sinner counts it a great part of his misery that such aweing and restraining circumstances are upon him; but when a person is renewed by grace, it is no grief or burden of heart to him, that he may not sin, but he prays earnestly to be kept from sin; (Keep thy servant, &c. So David, Psal. 19:13) and he heartily blesses God for being kept from sin: (Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, &c. 1 Sam. 25:32) and is more troubled, and discontented, and burdened that he carries within himself a body of sin, which rebels against the law of his mind, than that he is hindered and kept from sin.

Thirdly, A person acting only under the strength of restraining grace, though a while he may hold off from gross sins, yet he will not strive seriously to mortify the lusts from which those sins do arise, but he

will give his heart leave to a delightful contemplation of them, and to secret desires after them, and will venture very near to the commission of them: But when the heart is renewed by grace, the person flies from sin, yea from all appearances of evil, and is so far from sparing of any sin, that he lays the Axe to the root of the Tree, and endeavors (in good earnest) the mortifying and crucifying of sin.

Fourthly, when a person hath only that grace which we call restraining, his sinful corruptions (upon the removing of those restraints (do break out with more rage and violence, if once it recover its liberty) the course of it now is with more strength and fury: Take you any child, or servant, or any other person loving of sin, yet not daring to commit sin of their fear of those under whom they live; if these once get but their liberty, none prove more insolently and outrageously wicked: But where the heart is renewed by grace, it hath a constant tenderness, and habitual fear, a fixed contrariety and detestation of sin: Though Parents be dead, though Governors be absent, though Friends be departed, it is all one, God still lives, and God still sees; and therefore how can the renewed person commit any wickedness and sin against God? And the longer he lives, the more he hates sin.

Fifthly, Though men acting by restraining grace, may, and do sometimes forbear to sin, yet it is upon other grounds, than those do who abstain from sin, from renewing grace. In restriction men abstain from sin for fear of outward shame, or of outward loss, or for fear of God's wrath, or for fear of terror of conscience, which hath formerly befallen them for sinning: But in Renovation men abstain from sin, out of a love to God, and out of a hatred of the filthiness of sin, because it will offend and grieve their God, and defile and pollute their souls.

Sixthly, Lastly, though by restraining grace, there is some temporary cessation from sinful evil, yet there is no settled inclination unto, nor delight in spiritual good, no heart to prize God or Christ, or holiness, or the ways or works of new obedience: But where God gives renewing grace to the heart, as there is more than a mere ceasing to sin; So there is another heart given inclining to God, to know his Will, to love his Commands, to walk in his Paths, to delight to do his Will; I delight in the Law of God after the inner man, said Paul. Rom. 7:22. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes, Psal. 119:5. And ver. 112. I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always to the end.

### III. The presence of common gifts.

I call then those gifts common gifts, which the Spirit of God doth give, though not to every man, yet unto men who are really bad and unconverted, as well as to men who are really good and converted; of which some do respect,

First, The mind, in light or knowledge of the Scripture in general; and of Christ and the way of salvation by him in particular, 1 Cor. 12:8,9,10.

Secondly, The judgment, in a credence or assent unto what God reveals in his Word as true: King Agrippa believest thou the Prophets, I know that thou believest? Acts 26:27.

Thirdly, The heart; as those tastes you read of in Heb. 6:4. The tasting of the heavenly gift. Ver. 5. The tasting of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come.

Fourthly, The Conscience, unto which may be given a deep sense of sin, and extreme trouble for it; as you read in Ahab and Judas, &c.

Fifthly, The affections, in which there may be found some joys at the hearing of the Word, as in Herod, and in the third sort of ground, and delight in approaching unto God, Isa. 58:2.

Sixthly, The conversation, in reforming of some sins which the Apostle calls an Escaping the pollutions of the world, 2 Pet. 2:20, and in conscience to some duties, as Herod heard John the Baptist, and did many things, Mar. 6:20.

**Object. But will some of you say, doth not the presence of all these things certainly conclude the presence of newness of heart, or of an heart renewed by grace?**

Sol. All these gifts of them (alone) do not conclude it, the effects which may appear unto you in these four Conclusions.

First, A man may attain to all these, and yet be a very notorious wicked man: Most of these did Herod attain unto (if not unto all of them) yet the man was very vile and wicked; and three things did manifestly declare him to be so; 1. He kept Herodias his brothers wife, Mar. 6:17. 2ly. He took away the life of John the Baptist, Mar. 6:27. 3ly. He set Jesus Christ at naught, and rejected him, Luke 23:11. That man who will live in a known notorious sin, and who will unjustly murder the messenger of God, and mock and reject Jesus Christ, as vile, is a very wicked man; but all this did Herod who knew much, and heard much, and did much, and had some temporary affections. Ergo,

Secondly, No Hypocrites heart was ever renewed by grace (if it were so, he were no Hypocrite) but an Hypocrite may attain unto all these. Knowledge he may have, none doubts of it; he may excel in it: The Pharisees knew the Law, yea and knew Christ: Faith of assent he may have, this they had who believed for a season, and this had Simon



Magus. Some taste and affections he may have, such had they in Isa. 58:2,3, and in Heb. 6. Trouble in Conscience he may have for sin committed, this had Judas: And outward Reformation he may have so far as to seem righteous in the sight of men, &c.

Thirdly, Apostates never had truth of Renewing grace (for Renewing grace, it is a living spring, immortal and abiding seed, a gift of God without repentance, the earnest of our glorious inheritance) but Apostates may attain unto all common gifts whatsoever; see at leisure, Heb. 6:4,5,6.

4. Renewing grace hath the power in the heart, which no common gifts have, v.g.

1. It separates the heart from the love of all sin.
2. It sets the heart upon the mortification of all sin.
3. It brings in the whole heart to God.
4. It sets out such a new obedience with Spiritual Ingredients and affections, and with such a sole entire respect to God's glory, that no common gift doth or can.

IV. The strange and powerful effects of an awakened and troubled Conscience.

I hardly know any such nearness to the work of renewing grace, as that arises from Conscience awakened and troubled for a person in this condition.

First, Hath a clear sight, and an exquisite sense of his sin, not only present, but long since committed, they seem to be set in order before his eyes.

Secondly, His very soul is troubled and distressed, so that he would give all the world that he had never sinned so and so.

Thirdly, he cannot hold, but he must confess his sins before God, and sometimes before men, with surpassing lamentations, and tears, and severe accusing's, and condemning's of himself.

Fourthly, He puts away all visible sin, and resolves, and protests against it, yea and binds his soul with solemn vows never to return to folly more.

Fifthly, He cries out for Christ, and how he may get Christ to make his peace.

Sixthly, There is no visible duty, but he doth set upon, and in such a manner as he never did before; prays most earnestly for mercy, hears attentively for any hope of mercy, and perhaps associates himself with the people of God, and begs their counsel, their prayers, their pity, and their comfort.

Seventhly, He will not (in this anguish of conscience) come near the occasions of sin, but doth withstand temptations from wicked company, and cries out against them as the seducers of his soul.

Eighthly, He sets up a kind of Reformation in his Family, which before had (perhaps) no face of Religion in it; but now all notorious profaneness is banished, and the neglect of God's worship is redressed, and Prayer is set up in the Family, morning and evening, and the reading of the Scriptures, &c.

**Object. Surely will some men say, this man's heart is changed, and all this could never be, unless the heart were renewed by grace (and some of us never went so far as this)**

**can you show any difference 'twixt those effects of an awakened and troubling conscience, and those flowing from renewing grace?**

Sol. These effects (I confess) are high, and with them (for the present) many do deceive themselves, looking on them as the fruits of renewing grace; but there are manifest differences between them.

First, In the Cause or Grounds, when they come only from an awakened and troubling Conscience; the cause of them is only the sense of God's dreadful wrath which is such an unsufferable evil that it breaks and tears the senses, the sinner will (in that condition) do anything, and comply with any course. How conformable was Pharaoh when the hand of God was heavy upon him; and unto what confession, and restitution, and repentance was Judas wrought, when the wrath of God fell upon his Conscience! But now when the heart is renewed by grace, the man is sensible of his sinning, and mourns for his sins, and puts away his sins, and sets up a course of new obedience, not from the mere sense of wrath, but from another Cause, even from a love to God, and an apprehension of God's love to him, which raiseth in him a loathing of all which God loathes, and a liking of all that God likes, and a desire in all things to walk in all well-pleasing before the Lord.

Secondly, In the secret Principle which sets the sinner thus awork; In the troubled sinner it is self-love; a poor wretch now plainly sees that he must be damned if he doth not leave and change his sinful course; and if he slights Christ and holy duties, as formerly he hath done, there is in him (in this condition) an horrible fear of death, and of God's eternal vengeance, and he would not fall into the consuming fire; (no creature likes its own destruction, much less an eternal damnation) and therefore this troubled sinner will set upon duties,

and will make much moan for Christ, and all that moves him unto this, is his self-love, he loves his life, and he loves his safety; but yet all this while doth not love Christ for Christ, nor holy Duties as ways to glorify God; but where renewing grace is in a man, the principle which sets him a work for Christ, is faith, and which draws him out, is a love of godliness, and a love of the glory of God, &c.

Thirdly, In the end or aim, which in works done upon the sole account of a troubling conscience, is only self-ease and quietness, and calmness of conscience, as the distemper lies only in trouble, so the remedy lies only in ease. Oh if the wrath of God were off in the feeling of it; but the poor wretch doth not think of removing the wrath of God in the state of it; and O if the painful terrors of conscience were off, that and this he aims at directly; if he thinks of Christ, if he prays, if he hears, if he confers, if he reforms, all tends to this, viz. the removing of sensible evil, of penal evil, of terrors and troubles, and that his conscience may be quiet, and hold its peace, and speak bitterly no more unto him; but where the heart is renewed by grace, the conscience should trouble, yet it is not that only, nor that principally which the person looks at to be removed; but it is the cause of that trouble; O Lord, take away iniquity; O Lord, heal my soul; O Lord, subdue my sin; O be thou my sanctifying God as well as my pardoning God; my sins trouble my soul, O let me no more trouble thee by my sins, &c.

Fourthly, In the event or issue: Let the troubled sinner (who appears now with such a great change) let him I say, be taken off the Rack, let him get respite, let him get deliverance from his fears, and from his terrors, and from his distresses: There are four things which will appear in him.

1. He will quickly abate, and grow remiss in all these duties; will not be so serious, so earnest, so constant.
2. He will give way to contemplative evil, and will be venturing upon the occasion of sin again.
3. He will return in love to his sinful practices, and with the dog will return again to his vomit, 2 Pet. 2:22.
4. His latter end is worse; his conscience from being a troubled conscience, will now become a hardened conscience, and seared. 2 Pet. 2:20. But thus it never is with a heart renewed by grace, which turns us from evil to good, and from good to better; and still increaseth in the soul a greater hatred of sin, and fear to sin; and the more that renewing grace abounds in the soul, the more is tenderness abounding in the conscience.

Thus have you heard (by way of Use) 1. A conviction that many persons are still in their old sinful conditions, and never had this new heart given them. 2. That there is a possibility to be deceived about the fruition of this newness of heart, and wherein that deceit may be.

#### SECT. IV.

Use 3. I shall now proceed to a Use of Discovery, wherein I will propound unto you some Characters by which you may know whether God hath indeed bestowed upon you this new heart and new spirit which he hath promised to give unto all his people in Covenant.

The Signs and Characters are these ten.

1. A New Sight and Feeling.

2. A New Judgment and Opinion.

3. New Cares and Requests.

4. New Principles.

5. A New Combat and Conflict.

6. New Abilities and Powers.

7. New Works and Obedience.

8. New Delights and Satisfactions.

9. New Society.

10. New Rules.

First, To whomsoever God doth give a new heart, unto him he doth give a new sight and feeling of their spiritual condition; before the Lord renews the heart by grace, there were two qualities predominant in it.

One was ignorance or blindness; an unregenerate man is a dead man, Ephes. 2:1, and an ignorant man, he understands not, he knows not what he is, nor what he doth, nor what his condition of soul is: We were never in bondage, said they in Joh. 8:33. The way of wickedness is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble, said Solomon, Prov. 4:19.

Another was hardness and unsensibleness; a wicked man hath a wicked heart, but he is not sensible of it; and his heart is desperately wicked, but he is not sensible of it: He is ignorant and proud, and impenitent, and malicious, and serving divers lusts, and under the

curse and wrath of God, but he is not sensible of it: His sin abounds in heart and life, and rules, and bears sway, and he is a slave unto them, but he is not sensible of this; but when the Lord renews the heart by grace, there is (presently) a spiritual life, and presently a spiritual sense; the man sees that in himself, which he never saw before, and experimentally feels that in himself which he never felt before: Alas saith he, What a wretched creature am I? And what a sinful heart is here? Full of wickedness, desperately evil; here is no good dwelling in me; here is that sinfulness abounding in me; here is that ignorant, vain, worldly, stubborn, sensual, rebellious, unbelieving, hardened heart, of which the Lord speaks, and which the Lord threatens, and the man groans under this burden of his sinful heart and life: Psal. 38:4, and exceedingly complains of it: Rom. 7:24, and now loathes himself in his own eyes: Ezek. 36:31, and bewails his condition with trouble of heart.

Secondly, To whomsoever the Lord gives a new heart, he doth give unto them a new judgment and opinion; before the Lord renews a man's heart, he hath a corrupt and false judgment:

Partly of himself, in respect

1. Of his estate; that he is alive, that he is righteous, that he needs no Repentance, that he stands in need of nothing.
2. Of his own ways; that they are the wisest for safety, and best for delight and profit.

Partly of God's commands and ways; that of all other they are most unequal, and most burdensome, and most undelightful, and for the most part needless; what needs a man to trouble himself so much for his sins, and what needs a man presently to set upon the practice of Repentance, and what needs a man to make so sure of Christ and

mercy, and grace, and heaven: But when the Lord gives a man a new heart, his judgment is rectified, and he hath now another opinion than formerly he had, his judgment is divers from what it was, in respect of himself and his ways. As the Apostle spake, I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died, Rom. 7. So before renewing grace came into the heart, a man thinks high thoughts of himself, and of his ways; but when that comes, then he judgeth of himself as he is, and of his ways as indeed they are, and have been. Psal. 73:22. So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a Beast before thee, 1 Tim. 1:15. To save sinners, of whom I am chief; and for his ways, he now looks on them as ways of death, and paths of hell, in which who so walks, shall find no rest nor peace.

In respect of God and his ways: God is now looked upon as an only happiness, and could I enjoy him for my God in Christ, I were blessed forever; and his ways are righteous, and good, and holy, and most pleasant, and only safe; the way of Repentance, the way of faith, the way of holiness, the way of a godly Conversation; how excellent, how beautiful, how desirable are all of them to an heart renewed by grace, which yet in former times were judged with scorn and contempt, and hatred.

Thirdly, Where the Lord gives a new heart, there he gives new cares and requests: Before the Lord renews the heart by grace, a sinner is very careful, and very careless.

He is very careful for two things.

One is for the world; What shall I eat? And what shall I drink? And wherewith shall I be clothed? Matth. 6. His heart is set on the world, and he minds earthly things, and his heart goes after his



covetousness, and who will show us any good? His affections are set on things below.

The other is for his fleshly lusts: They that are after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh, Rom. 8:5. And they make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, Rom. 13:14. But he is very careless about his soul, therefore he is said to despise his soul, and not to know the day of his visitation, nor the things which concern his peace, and to make light of the invitations of Christ. But when the Lord begins to renew the heart by grace, there are new cares and new desires: O how the soul is taken with the soul, and for the soul: Lord, What will become of my poor soul? And what shall I do for my poor soul? If I get not Christ, my soul is lost; and if I get not mercy, I am undone: Take the world who will, and take sinful pleasures who will, but O Lord be merciful to me a sinner, and O Lord be thou reconciled to my soul, and lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me: Every new heart hath new thoughts, and cares, and desires: What shall we do, said they to John the Baptist? Matth. 3. And What shall we do, said they to Peter? Acts 2:37. And What shall we do to be saved, said he to Paul and Silas? Acts 16:30.

Fourthly, If a new heart be given, there will then be found in you the presence of all new principles, which are contrary to all the old principles in the old sinful heart; there is not any one spiritual and heavenly principle respecting salvation, but they may be found in you; v.g.

1. Ignorance, that is one principle of an old heart, the contrary unto it; viz. Knowledge is given when you come to partake of a new heart. Colos. 3:10. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge. Eph. 5:8. Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.

2. Carnal wisdom, that is another principle of the old heart; the contrary unto that, is given to a person when God renews his heart; viz. Spiritual and heavenly wisdom, a wisdom for salvation. 2 Tim. 3:15. A wisdom unto that which is good. Rom. 16:9. A wisdom to approve the things that are excellent. Phil. 1:10. A wisdom to know the times or seasons of grace, and to embrace and improve them: Hebr. 3.

3. Vanity of spirit, that is another old principle in the old heart; an old heart is a vain heart, and an old mind is a vain mind; but when the Lord gives a new heart, he then gives a spiritual seriousness unto the heart, To work out its salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2:12. And to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, Hebr. 12:28. And to give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure, 2 Pet. 1:10. And taking heed of neglecting so great salvation, Hebr. 2:1,3.

4. Hardness, this is another principle in an old heart; the heart is a stony heart, Ezek. 36:26, and a heart of Adamant, Zach. 7:11,12. But when God gives a new heart, there is a principle contrary unto this put into the heart, namely a soft and tender, and mournful heart. Josiah had a tender heart, 2 Chron. 34:27. God maketh my heart soft, Job 23:16. They shall mourn, as one mourneth for his only son, Zach. 12:10

5. Pride, this is another old principle of the old heart. Mark 7:22, so Psal. 73:6. Pride compasseth them about as with a chain: So Jer. 48:29. We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart: So Rom. 1:30. Deceitful, proud boasters: But when the Lord gives a new heart, there is a principle of humility given, which is contrary unto that pride of

heart. Deut. 33:3. All his Saints are in thine hand, they sit down at thy feet, everyone shall receive of thy words. Psal. 131:1. Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, &c. Ver. 2. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child. Acts 20:19. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind.

6. Stubbornness of resistance and unyieldingness, this is another principle of an old heart, an old heart is a stubborn heart; as for the Word which thou hast spoken in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, said they to Jeremiah, Jer. 44:16. Ye always resist the Holy Ghost, ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart, said Stephen unto them in Acts 7:51. But when God gives a new heart, there is given a contrary principle unto this, even a yielding and obedient spirit to the Word and Will of God: Acts 9:6. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts 10:33. We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Isa. 66:2. To him that trembleth at my Word. Psal. 119:161. My heart standeth in awe of thy Word. Rom. 6:17. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine which was delivered you.

7. Hypocrisy, this is another principle in the old heart; an old heart is a hypocritical heart; it is full of guilt and deceit. Jer. 17:9. Deceitful above all things: But when the Lord gives a new heart, he gives a principle contrary to this; viz. sincerity and uprightness of heart, and a true heart. John 1:47. Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. 2 Cor. 1:12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our Conversation in the world.

8. Unbelief, discontentment, impatience, discord and variance, these are other principles of the old heart; but when the Lord gives a new heart, then he works in us contrary principles unto these; viz. faith: Phil. 1:29. Unto you it is given to believe; Repentance. Acts 11:18. God hath granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life. Contentment: Phil. 4:11. I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. Patience: 1 Cor. 4:12. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it. Love: 1 Thes. 4:9. Ye are taught of God to love one another. I could name many more such heavenly principles and qualities contrary to the old sinful principles and qualities which are certainly found (though not in the same measure or degree, yet in truth) in every man whom the Lord doth give a new heart.

Fifthly, Whensoever the Lord gives a man a new heart, there is presently a new combat and conflict: Gal. 5:17. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, and they are contrary the one to the other, &c. Rom. 7:23. But I see another Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind. The flesh (which is our corrupt heart or nature, the old man, the Law in our members) and the Spirit (which is our new heart, or renewed nature, the new man, the Law of our mind) these are both in the same regenerate person, and they are dispersed over every faculty of the soul, and they are contrary the one to the other, and do war one against another; and that war is from the first moment that renewing grace enters into the heart, to the last moment that the soul leaves the body.

**Object.** Now here it may be objected, that this cannot be a true and real sign of newness of heart, because in a natural and unregenerate man, there is many times a combat and

**conflict between their judgment, and their affections, and between their conscience, and their temptations unto sin?**

Sol. That there are such combats and conflicts in unregenerate men, I grant; but then they are of another nature, different from those in a renewed or regenerate person.

First, In their Principles: The conflict in the one ariseth from servile fear; the conflict in the other ariseth from spiritual hatred. A natural Conscience may see the danger of sinning, and thereupon oppose the affections inclining to sin; but a renewed heart sees the baseness of sin, and thereupon inclines the heart to hate it: As sin a coal of fire, there is the fire which burneth, and there is the coal which defileth; so in sin, there is considerable, the wrath unto which it doth expose, and the filthiness whereby it doth pollute the soul: The fear of burning wrath, this makes the unregenerate conscience to hold off, and to argue against the temptations to sin: but it is the defilement and pollution by sin which makes the renewed heart to abhor and contest with it: Not only or principally the evil by sin, but the evil of sin which is so extremely contrary to God in his Nature, and Will, and Glory, which we entirely love, &c.

Secondly, In the Seat and place of combat; The combat in unregenerate men, is like that between Soldiers in several Forts; and that in renewed persons is like the fight of Soldiers in the same Fort where every ones sword is against everyone: The conflict or combat in the unregenerate, is only 'twixt one faculty and another distinct faculty; the affections go one way, and the judgment and conscience another way: But when a man's heart is renewed by grace, there now ariseth a war and combat within every faculty: The judgment is divided against the judgment; and the will is divided against the will; and the affection against the affection: The reason whereof is this;

because there is flesh and Spirit, sin and grace co-existent, and co-habiting in every faculty of the soul; sin is not driven up to one faculty, whilst grace possesseth the other faculties: but renewing grace is in every faculty; and remaining corruption is also in every faculty: Like Jacob and Esau struggling in the same womb; or like heat and cold in the same water, and in every part of it.

Thirdly, In the Extent of the combat; that in unregenerate persons is only with some gross, scandalous, and infamous sins; but for secret sins, or other sins which the world applauds, these are still favored and harbored; the natural man can go no farther than his light, which in him cannot make a clear and full discovery of sins; nor will he quarrel with his sins further than he needs must, to save his ease in Conscience, and credit with men: But when the heart is renewed by grace, there the combat is against all known sin, the reason whereof is this, because the ground of opposition is not accidental and particular, but natural and universal: the newness of the heart is not an humor, but a contrary nature to that of sin, and therefore the heat doth conflict with all that is cold, because it is naturally contrary unto it; so doth renewing grace combat with all sin, because it is a nature contrary to sin as sin; not as little or great, secret, or open, &c. but as sin.

4. In the event: In regenerate men the issue of the conflict is either a plain giving up to the will of lust in the affections (the man being tired and vexed with the violent solicitations of them, as Samson was with Delilah's importunities) or in case that natural conscience doth prevail, it is not to the mortifying of any sin, but only to a temporary repressing and restraining of sin; but the combat ends otherwise where the heart is renewed by grace; for it makes a more constant and resolute resistance, and at the last (though perhaps after some foils) it gets the victory over sin, and wins the field: Thus you see that

the new spiritual combat or conflict, is a true character of a heart indeed renewed by grace: It is not a sign of true grace that a man hath no sin, but that his heart is conflicting with all sin,

Sixthly, Whensoever a new heart is given by God unto any person, then are there given new abilities unto that person.

Beloved, two things I take for granted.

1. That renewing grace is in itself a very powerful quality: There is a Spirit of power and might in it, and going along with it; if it were not so, it could never change the heart of a sinner, nor unthrone sin, nor maintain conflict with all the powers of sin and Satan; nor send out such high works of services as it doth.

2. That it doth confer an ability or power on the soul; to what end else is it given unto us, if by it we have no more power than what we had before in our natural condition? When we are renewed by grace, we are said to be quickened who were dead; which necessarily implies that there is a power imprinted in us when we are renewed.

Now there is a twofold power given when renewing grace is given.

1. One is to do such things which no natural or unregenerate person ever did, or could do.

2. Another is to do such things which we ourselves were not able to do, before God did renew our hearts by grace.

First, take me the bravest Heathen that ever was, or the most accomplished Hypocrite that ever was, and consider what they have done, how far they have gone; if you are not able to go beyond them in doing some things which they could not rise

unto, assuredly your hearts were never renewed by grace: As Christ spake, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven, Matth. 5:20. So say I, except you be able to do more than the choicest Heathen, or exquisite Hypocrite, or any unregenerate person in the world, your hearts were never changed by renewing grace.

**Object. Will some say unto me, what do you mean, for many unregenerate men have gone very far, and so high, that it is a question whether some of the people of God have risen so high?**

Sol. First, Let them go as far as unregenerate men may or can go; yet every regenerate or renewed person goes far beyond them, and the demonstration of it is this: renewing grace is the highest elevation and perfection of man's nature; common gifts (with which alone unregenerate men are possessed) are far below, and behind it in excellency, and abilities.

Secondly, But plainly to open my mind unto you; there are six things unto which renewing grace doth enable a man, and unto which no unregenerate person could ever attain.

1. Self-denial in a man's opinion and affections, and worth, and ways, and ends.
2. Sincere love of Jesus Christ, and of all that do belong to Christ.
3. A cordial compliance with the whole revealed will of God.
4. A submission of the whole heart to Christ in all his offices, and with all his conditions.



5. An unfeigned hatred of every sin.

6. To live by faith upon the promises of God in all the contingencies and occurrences of the world. No unregenerate person ever did or could (in that estate) rise unto any one of these things, and every renewed person doth attain unto them in the truth of them; therefore if you find a power to do those things, assuredly your hearts are renewed by grace.

Secondly, Moreover, you may discern the presence of renewing grace, by that power and ability to do such works as you yourselves were never able to do before. Heretofore you were not able to shed a tear for sin, to forsake any one beloved sin, to send up an affectionate prayer to God, to prize Christ above all, and to thirst after him; to take any delight in God, to suffer any reproach for Christ: But now ye are able to mourn for your sins, and to abhor them. 2 Cor. 10:4. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. To forsake the dearest lusts, and to cry mightily to God, and to take delight in him, and in his will and ways, and to prize Christ above all, and to hunger and thirst after him as the only chiefest good and happiness, and you can do for Christ, and you can suffer for Christ, &c. Do you find it thus with you? Then are your hearts renewed by grace.

Seventhly, You may know whether God hath given a new heart, by the new works, and the new means of working: We say, that *ut res se habent in essendo, sic se habent in operando*: All works and operations are answerable to the nature in us; the old nature finds out old works, and the new nature finds out new works. Before the Prophet healed and seasoned the spring of water, it did send out bitter and unwholesome water, but afterward the waters (the spring

being healed) were sweet and wholesome, 2 Kings 2:21,22. So before the Lord doth heal our old hearts, the works flowing from them are bitter, corrupt, vile, abominable, (that which is born of the flesh is flesh, Joh. 3) but when he heals the heart by renewing grace, there are new works of holiness and righteousness answerable to a renewed heart, (whatsoever is born of the Spirit is Spirit.)

Now then take a survey of your former Works, and of your former Conversation, and compare them with the present works and course of life, and be yourselves the Judges what newness you find in them. Have you left your former works of uncleanness, of drunkenness, of profaning the Sabbath, of scoffing at holiness, of misspending your precious time in gaming's, and in vain pleasures: Are you not still to be found in the same paths and ways, and works of wickedness? Are there not still the same fruits growing out of the old root? And the same stream flowing out of the same corrupt spring? How can ye say that you have new hearts, when still you live old lives, and go on in the old course of sin? Beloved, this is most true, that a new life ever attends a new heart; if the heart be changed, the life will be changed; newness of heart will appear in newness of Conversation. Did Paul, did Mary Magdalene, did Zacchaeus, did any (of whose Conversion you read in Scripture) lead such lives as formerly? Did they not put off concerning the former Conversation, the Old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts? Eph. 4:22. Have they not had their fruit unto holiness? Rom. 6:22. Therefore let no man deceive himself, saying, though I walk as in former times, and live still as I have lived, yet my heart is as good as the best; thou dost but delude and destroy thyself in this vain boasting, for the Tree is known by his fruits; it is impossible that thy heart should be a new heart, as long as thy Conversation remains a wicked Conversation.

**Object. But you may say, Do you not see that hypocrites do appear in good works, and yet they are wicked persons; and good men sometimes appear in evil works and actions, and yet they are not wicked: Ergo. This appearance in new works cannot be a sure sign of a new heart:**

Sol. To this I answer.

First, Whatsoever the good works may be which a wicked man may do, I shall not at this time dispute; but this may suffice you, that where there is no newness of life, there is no newness of heart.

Secondly, It is not this or that particular passage in the life which denominatively declares the estate of the heart either way; one particular good action may be done by him whose heart is naught; and one particular ill action may be done by him whose heart is good, and truly renewed by grace. As the new heart brings forth new works, so it doth act them after a new manner of working; it is possible that an unregenerate man may do many works which are morally good, but then he doth not perform those works in such a manner as that man doth, whose heart is renewed by grace.

There are four qualifications as to the manner of working, or performance of duties which are found in the renewed person, and in no other man.

1. He performs them in the strength of Christ, by virtue of union and communion with him, as the members of the body do act by virtue of their union and communion with the head: I can do all things (said Paul) through Christ that strengthens me, Phil. 4:13. And as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me, Joh. 15:4.

2. He performs them as with love; the love of Christ constraineth me, said Paul, 2 Cor. 5:14. If a man love me, he will keep my Word, said Christ, Joh. 14:23. Now when a man doth works of obedience out of love, he is ready and willing to do them; the work is written in his heart, he takes delight in the doing of them: I delight to do thy Will O God, Psal. 40:8. And make me to go in the paths of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight, Psal. 119:35. It is a man's meat and drink to do the will of God, Joh. 4:34. The yoke is easy, and the Commandments are not grievous, 1 Joh. 5.

3. He performs them with fervency of spirit, not coldly, and carelessly, and indifferently, but closely, and seriously, with a fervent spirit. (Rom. 12:11. Fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord) he seeks the Lord with his whole heart; a heavenly impetus & aestus, and vigor, &c.

4. He performs them with integrity of intention; looks not at himself, but the glory of God in Christ, &c.

Eighthly, You may know that God hath given you a new heart, if you find new delights and satisfactions. There is not a man in the world but the frame of his heart may be known by that which he takes delight, and contentment, and satisfaction in. If one hath a proud heart, the vanities, and fashions, and dresses, and braveries of the world are his delight and satisfaction. If one hath an ambitious heart, the honors and applauses, and dignities, and preferments, and powers of the world are his delight and satisfaction. If one hath a covetous heart, the riches and profits, and treasures of the world are his delight and satisfaction. If one hath a sensual and unclean heart, the filthiness and actings of lusts are his delight and satisfaction: And there is no unregenerate person, but either some worldly object, or

some sinful object is his delight and satisfaction; might he have wealth enough, or honor enough, or pleasure enough, he would desire no more, here he would rest, and with this he would be contented and satisfied: But now when the Lord changeth and reneweth the heart by grace, that which delights and contents, and satisfies other men, will not delight and satisfy him; nay, those very objects which formerly satisfied himself, will not now by any means satisfy him; but he hath new objects, and new ways of delight and satisfaction: If the Lord should say unto a regenerate and renewed person, I will give thee all the world, this would not satisfy him or delight him, though heretofore a little of it would have gone far, and have done much. The renewed person sees what a vanity of vanities the world is, and what a hell of hells sin is; and his delights and satisfactions are now in objects suitable to his new nature, the highest and best objects, these are suitable with the highest and best heart. A God, a reconciled God, the favor of God, the knowledge of him as so, the fruition of him as so, the meditations on him as so, the communions with him as so, the manifestations of him to the soul as so, the hopes of the future and eternal enjoyment of him as so, Psal. 73:25. These, these are the delights, the contentment's and satisfactions of a heart (indeed) renewed by grace. The excellent glories of Christ, a near relation unto Christ, the life of Christ, the peace by Christ, the comforts of Christ, the enjoyments of and by Christ, the love of Christ, the powers of Christ, the presence of Christ, and fellowship with Christ, these are the new delights, the new contentment's, and the only satisfactions of a new heart; these are food and raiment, these are houses and lands, these are parents and friends, these are treasures and pleasures to a renewed heart; these are the rest of it, and the heaven to it; one sight of God in Christ, one smile of his love, one word of peace and joy from Christ, delights and satisfies a renewed heart more than all which the world can afford.

Ninthly, Another sign of a new heart, is new society; when God gives a man a new heart, that man hath a new Master, and new work, and new friends, and society. Psal. 119:63. I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts. 1 Joh. 3:14. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren. 2 Cor. 6:14. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? Psal. 139:21. Do not I hate them O Lord that hate thee? O what a burden is it to a good heart to be in ungodly company? Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar, Psal. 120:5. And what a delight is it to a renewed person to be in the company of renewed persons. Psal. 16:3. To the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight. Psal. 42:4. I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise. Holy society is the only society for persons of holy hearts; and in that society can no man take delight, until God renews his heart by grace.

Tenthly, Lastly, When God gives a man a new heart, he doth presently set up a new rule of life to walk by; and according to that is his course ordered all the days of his life; and what is that rule? Not our own judgment, not revelations, not our own will, not our own lusts, not our own affections, not the opinion of men, not the customs of the world, not the applauses of the world, not the ways of worldly advancements and advantages: But the rule which a renewed heart sets up to guide and prescribe him, is none other but that which God himself sets up for his people to walk by, and that is his written Word. Psal. 119:105. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Ver. 133. Order my steps in thy Word. This rule he sets up for all matters of faith, and for all matters of fact; this I must believe, because God reveals it and commands me to believe it; this I receive for truth, because God delivers it for truth; and that I reject as erroneous, because the Word of God condemns it as

contrary to the truth: And this work I do, and that way I walk in, because God sets it out in his Word for me; and that I do not do, and so and so I dare not walk, for I have no Word of God for it; nay, the Word of God is against it; why? Man's heart is right indeed, it is renewed by grace; but if a man will walk contrary to this rule, if he will not speak and live, according to this Word, it is because there is no light in him, Isa. 8:20.

## SECT. V.

Use 4. Doth God promise to give unto all his people in Covenant with him a new heart and a new spirit? Then there is comfort and joy to all those who find the new heart given unto them; it is true, that when the Lord doth renew the heart of any by his grace, and separate them from the world unto himself, that;

1. They shall meet with many troubles and scoffs, and reproaches, and persecutions from the world: All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecutions, 2 Tim. 3.
2. They shall meet with many temptations and oppositions from Satan; if he cannot hinder grace, and conquer grace, yet he will molest and disquiet grace.
3. They shall meet with many conflicts and warring's within their own hearts, and with many weaknesses and failings, and trials; nevertheless their condition is a very happy and comfortable condition, and there are eight choice comforts which are proper to every renewed person, and which may cheer up his heart all his days; v.g.

1. Newness of heart is a sure and infallible testimony of the best, and of the greatest matters which can concern the soul.
2. This newness of heart is an unquestionable effect of our union with Christ.
3. It is the noblest and highest elevation of the soul here on earth, and the clear evidence of the presence of the Spirit of Christ.
4. It enables you for all heavenly communion and serviceableness to Divine glory.
5. God will own and accept of it, and the fruits of it, though but little and weak.
6. He will strengthen and uphold, and perfect it unto the day of Christ.
7. He will pour upon every person who enjoys it, all necessary blessings for this life, and will take special notice of him, and care for him in the days of adversity.
8. Renewing grace shall (without all doubt) bring us at the last to eternal happiness.

First, Newness of heart is a sure and infallible testimony of the best, and of the greatest matters which can concern the soul.

There are six things which do concern the soul as nearly I think as any can, and of every one of them is renewing grace a sure testimony.

1. The love of God.



2. The election of God.
3. A relation to God.
4. A change from death to life.
5. The pardon of sin.
6. The hope of glory.

1. Of the love of God, that the Lord doth indeed set his special love, his very heart upon a person. 1 Joh. 3:1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Psal. 146:8. The Lord loveth the righteous; for any to be made the sons of God, this is an effect or fruit of the love of God; now all the sons of God are new born, they are born again of the Spirit, Joh. 3:5. Ephes. 2:4. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Ver. 5, even when we were dead in sins and trespasses, hath quickened us together with Christ. As it is one of the greatest testimonies of God's hatred and wrath, for any to be left to his old sinful heart and lusts, and ways; so it is one of the greatest testimonies of God's love, when he pities them in their sinful condition, and delivers them out of it, and gives his Spirit to enliven and renew them by grace.

2. Of the Election of God; for this see two places: 1 Thes. 1:4. Knowing (Brethren, Beloved) your Election of God. Ver. 5. For our Gospel came unto you not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost. Eph. 1:4. He hath chosen us in him that we should be holy. Holiness (or renewing grace) it is (as one speaketh) the counterpane of God's decree of Election; God by his own eternal prescience knows whom he intends for

salvation, and we by that work of renewing grace in our hearts, come to know that eternal purpose of his grace concerning us, it being given unto us an effect flowing from his Election, and in order unto that happiness unto which he hath chosen us.

3. Of our Relation to God as our God and our Father; as none but his people and children are holy, so all his people and his children are holy. Isa. 63:18. The people of thy holiness; they are, 1 Pet. 2:9, a holy Nation, and a peculiar people. 2 Cor. 6:17. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch no unclean thing. Ver. 18. And I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

4. Of our translation from life to death; See Isa. 4:3. He that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem. Ezek. 16:6. When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live. Luk. 15:32. This my son was dead, and is alive again. Rom 6:11. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God. Renewing grace is one of the strictest differences between men of death, and men of life; not any man hath it, but he who is made alive by Christ, and is in the state of life; no profane person hath it, nor doth any hypocrite partake of it.

5. Of the pardon of our sins; if any man fancieth that his sins are pardoned, and yet his sinful heart remains, he deceiveth himself; for when God pardons sins, he changeth the sinner. Jer. 33:8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, and will pardon all their iniquities. Mal. 4:2. The Son of righteousness shall arise with

healing in his wings. 1 Cor. 6:11. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.

6. Of the hope of glory; Christ is the hope of glory, as a meritorious cause: Colos. 1:27. And renewing grace is the hope of glory as a testifying means: 1 Pet. 1:3. Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope. Ver. 4. To an inheritance incorruptible, &c. 1 Joh. 3:2. We know that when he appeareth we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Ver. 3. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.

Secondly, Newness of heart is an unquestionable effect of our union with Christ; Is it no comfort to you that you belong to Christ, that Christ is yours, that you are in him of a truth! Hear what the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 1:30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, &c. 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man he in Christ, he is a new creature. Beloved, this is most certain, that unction flows from union; you are not first sanctified and renewed, and then brought into Christ; but you are first brought into Christ, and so are you sanctified and renewed by the Spirit of Christ, partaking of him, you do partake of life; none have their hearts renewed by grace, but such as are in Christ; and all that are in Christ have their hearts renewed by grace: Joh. 1:16. Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Thirdly, Newness of heart is the noblest and highest elevation of our hearts, As the degenerate and corrupt nature is of all other the worst and basest (for there is nothing more vile than that which is most sinful) so the renewed nature which is directly opposite unto it, is of all other the most excellent and raising; it is therefore called, the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. The image of God, Col. 3:10. The image of his glory, 2 Cor. 3:18.

There are three things which may convince any Christian, that renewing grace or newness of heart is our highest elevation and perfection.

1. One, because it is the nearest resemblance of that nature which is in God himself; when you are renewed by grace, then you are like unto God himself: 1 Pet. 1:16 Be ye holy, for I am holy.

2. Another, because it is the choicest work or effect of the Spirit of God, who though he produceth many other works, yet this is the chiefest of them, herein is his Arm revealed; and in this doth his glory most appear, and shine.

3. A third is, because it is our nearest conformity to Christ our Head, in whom the image of God doth most appear. The image of God doth consist in knowledge, holiness, and righteousness, as you may see if you compare Col. 3, with Ephes. 4, and this image was perfect in Christ who was the image of his Father; and unto this are we conformed (in our proportion) when we are renewed by grace; for we are then changed into the same image, 2 Cor. 3:18. And upon this one account are they said to be one Spirit with him who are joined with him, 1 Cor. 6:17.

Fourthly, Newness of heart enables you for all heavenly communion, and serviceableness to Divine glory. Now you may approach, and come near, and stand in the presence of your God, and he will take delight in you, and impart himself unto you; when you call, he will answer you, and say, Here I am; and when you hear his Word, he will meet you, and teach, and guide, and rejoice your heart. When God renews our hearts, he doth then set us apart for himself, owns us as his jewels, looks on us as his Hephziba and Beulah, as his beloved, as such in whom he delights, as his friends, as his favorites; you may

open all your wants, and desires, and conditions unto him, and he will open all his goodness, and kindness, and mercies unto you: Your hearts are now become his temples in which he will dwell, and walk, and appear with glorious manifestations of his love, and grace, and help. Besides this newness of heart makes you serviceable unto his glory; you can glorify him in your hearts by believing on him; in your lives by heavenly, upright, humble, obedient faithful walking.

Fifthly, God will own and accept of it, and the fruit of it, though but little and weak; As the least degree of newness doth denominate the condition, so the weakest expressions of it are accepted; He will not despise the day of small things, Zach. 4:10. The bruised reed he will not break, nor will he quench the smoking flax, Matth. 12:20. But he will spare his people as a man spareth his son that serveth him, Mal. 3:17.

Sixthly, Nay he will stand by it, and uphold it, and strengthen it, and perfect it: When you are under spiritual conflicts with your corruptions and temptations, he will be present with you; he will put forth his strong hand upon your weak hand; he will make his power to appear in your weakness, he will strengthen what he hath wrought, and finish what he hath begun.

Seventhly, Certain blessings, and special cares are for all whose hearts are renewed by grace: No people on earth have such a title to earth, nor such a sure revenue, nor such tender care for them, as renewed and regenerate persons. The Lord is near unto them, he is round about them, he is in the midst of them, he will do them good, he will surely bless them, no good thing shall be wanting to them, he will never leave them nor forsake them, he will be a present help unto them in the time of trouble, he will know their souls in adversity, and will contend against all who do contend against them.

Eighthly, Renewing grace will at the last bring you to the enjoyment of eternal happiness: Matth. 5:8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Rom. 6:22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Why! It is the first fruits of the Spirit; the earnest of the Spirit; the seal of the Spirit; holiness is happiness begun; grace is glory begun already, &c.

## SECT. VI.

Use 5. Doth God promise to give a new heart? Then let the next Use be for Exhortation to use the means by which everyone of us may at length enjoy it.

For the managing of this Use, there are three things I will offer unto you.

1. Motives to persuade you to strive after a new heart.
  2. Cautions what to avoid if you would get the new heart.
  3. Scripture-information's what the ways are, which if you take, will certainly bring you to the enjoyment of a new heart.
1. The Motives to persuade us to look and strive after this new heart.

They are these three.

1. The misery of an old heart.
2. The necessity of a new heart.

3. The possibility to be delivered from that, and to be possessed of this.

1. The misery of an old heart: It is such a heart that (remaining under the power of it) you cannot please God; Rom. 8:8. Nay, you cannot but displease God, you cannot but still sin against him, cannot cease from sin, 2 Pet. 2:14.

But more particularly, the old heart,

First, Is a fleshly and corrupt heart (the old man which is corrupt, Eph. 4:22. It is called the plague of the heart, 1 King. 8:38. It corrupts all your thoughts, and all your affections, and all your speeches, and all your actions.

Secondly, Is an abominable heart; the Lord loathes and abhors it, as the defacing of his image, as the workmanship of the Devil, as that which is most contrary to his Nature, to his Will, and to his Glory.

Thirdly, Is a debasing heart; it makes us more vile than the vilest of creatures, it makes us like the Devil, it makes us his children, his slaves, his captives and bondmen.

Fourthly, A prejudicing heart, it keeps us off from God, from Christ, from all heavenly communion, from all ability to do good, or to receive good; it holds up our distance from mercy, from blessings, from heaven, and from all hopes thereof: Ephes. 2:12. Without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Fifthly, It is a deceitful heart: Jer. 17:9. It tempts you, and deceives you; it promiseth one thing, and pays you another thing; it pretends but to a little more sinning, and yet it is insatiable: It tells you that it will bring you off from sinning, and yet still it engageth you to farther

sinning: It makes you to believe that you shall have mercy, and yet it continues you in a course of sinning which will lose you mercy; it saith that you shall at last repent, and yet it makes your heart more hardened and impenitent; it gives you vain pleasures, and so cheats you of all true joy; it feeds you with some empty profits, and thereby deprives you of all true riches; it brings in (sometimes) a little of earth, but then it makes you to lose Christ and your own souls.

Sixthly, Is a dreadful heart: It is the root of gall and wormwood, and the fruits of it are terror, and wrath, and death, and hell. All the terrors of conscience spring from it; all the wrath of God breaks out upon you by reason of it; all the bitter feelings, and all the dreadful fears and expectations depend upon it; you cannot know peace whiles you live under the power of it: Neither God, nor Christ, nor his Spirit, nor his Word, nor Conscience will speak peace unto you in that condition. But on the contrary, the Law of God threatens and condemns you, and the Gospel doth as much and more, and God and Conscience are all in arms against you; and every judgment of God (which respects your soul and body for this life and the next) doth await but one word and commission from the just God to fall on you, and to torment and destroy you.

2ly. The necessity of a new heart.

You know there is a twofold necessity.

One is absolute, without which a thing cannot be at all, as the union of the soul with the body to make a man. Another is Hypothetical; if one would be in a well-being, then such or such a thing is necessary: Now you can never be in a well-being, unless the Lord give you a new heart; renewing grace is necessary as to that. Our well-being respects either this present, or that future life; and newness of heart necessarily concerns both.



1. For this life; we cannot be well whiles we are under the curse for sin, and under the power of sin; to deliver us from the first of these, it is necessary to get Christ, and to be justified; and to deliver us from the last of these, it is as necessary to get renewing grace, and to be sanctified.

2. For the future life of blessedness, it is also necessary, forasmuch as there cannot be a fruition of that, without an antecedent fruition of this: Joh. 3:5. Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Heb. 12:14. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

3ly. The Possibility of getting this new heart.

I confess, that though newness of heart be necessary, yet if it be impossible to be attained, it were in vain to put you upon the seeking for it; but as it is necessary to enjoy it, so it is possible to find it; and three things may convince us of that.

First, One is the power of God, to whom nothing is hard or impossible: 'It is true, that an Almighty power must be put forth to make a Creature, and to make a new creature: But God is able to quicken the dead, and to restore his own image, and to slay and subdue the power of our sins, and to create in us a new heart, and to put another spirit within us; whatsoever he doth command and require, he is able to give and work.

Secondly, The second is the promise of God; you see here that he promiseth to give a new heart, and upon this condition, if men will inquire of him for it, as he likewise upon the same terms promiseth to give his holy Spirit to them that ask it, Luke 11:13. Now the promise of God as it includes his power to perform what he hath

promised, so it doth express his intention and will to give what he promiseth to give, if we seek unto him, and rely upon him.

The third is the work of God: He hath according to his Word of promise given this new heart to many thousands in the world; we find large Records of this in the Scripture, Act. 2:4, and we see manifold instances amongst ourselves what changes he makes in the hearts and lives of men, and many times of such as have been very wicked, and utterly unworthy.

2ly. The Cautions what to avoid if we would get a new heart.

If ever you would seek for, and obtain a new heart, then remember these five Cautions.

First, Beware of a self-deceiving opinion that you have it already; and that you (for your part) stand not under the want and need of it. This is that which undoth many hearers, when we press Christ and faith upon them, O they have believed on him: And when we press repentance, why, they need no repentance, they have repented long ago; and when we tell them they must be converted, they must be new creatures, they must get new hearts, O they need them not, their hearts are as good as the best, and they have very good natures and dispositions: With this the Pharisees deceived themselves; they were righteous and needed no repentance, and so they rejected Christ; and with this, Laodicea deceived herself; She was rich and increased, and stood in need of nothing; and yet she was blind, and wretched, and naked, and poor.

Secondly, Beware that you hearken not to the exceptions and prejudices of your old and corrupt hearts, which are blind and cannot see the excellency of renewing grace, and which also are averse, and have a natural antipathy unto it. You would not imagine

(until you come to the trial) what exceptions and oppositions there are in our hearts against their Conversion and Renovation; Sometimes we look on it as a melancholy and troubling humor; sometimes we look on it as a needless and vain preciseness; sometimes we look on it as a proud and unsociable quality; sometimes we look on it as too low and mean a state and practice for persons of our greatness; sometimes we look on it as that which will expose us to the contempt's, and scoffs, and reproaches of men; sometimes we look on it as the grave of all our delights and profits; sometimes we look on it as a business utterly impossible for any man on earth: Now if any of these prejudices, or if any other besides these prevail with us, we will then sit quiet and contented with our old heart, and will never be persuaded to look out for new hearts; therefore beseech the Lord to deliver you from the lying vanities and prejudices of the old heart.

Thirdly, Beware of consulting with worldly men, or setting up the favors or frowns of them: O if I should become a new man, and lead a new life; if I should regard holiness, and live godly, I should lose favor, and hopes; how would my Parents look on me? What would my friends and acquaintance think of me! What opposition would befall me! How would men scoff and jeer at me! And what reports and reproaches would they raise of me! Let me tell thee plainly and faithfully, that if the Lord doth not in much mercy mortify and subdue this weakness (that I say not wickedness) of spirit in thee, that thou art contented rather to enjoy thy old heart and courses with the applauses of the world, than to yield in thy heart to Christ, and be willing and resolute to get thy heart renewed by the Spirit of grace, although for this thou mayest meet with all sorts of afflictions and reproaches from the world, thy poor soul will be forever lost.

First, Beware that you rest not on your own strength and sufficiency, to renew or change your hearts; if you do, two fruits there will be of it.

1. You will either not seek to the Lord at all, or if you do, you will then seek him in a careless and unbelieving way.

2. Another is, you will but labor in vain, you will never be successful; for you have no strength and sufficiency of your own: Without me, saith Christ, ye can do nothing, Joh. 15:5. And it is God (saith the Apostle) that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Fifthly, Beware that you neither delay, nor dally in using the means to get this new heart: Do not say tomorrow, the next year, when I am sick, when I am old; these may be too late, and these may provoke the Lord to turn away his mercy, and to deny his Spirit, because you put him off, he may therefore justly put you off: Neither dally in the use of means, one while attending, another while neglecting; one while being fervent, and another while being remiss; one week going forward, and then for a year to fall backward, but resolve to seek this new heart with all your heart, and with all your pains, following on, and pressing forward, and running till you enjoy this new heart, which God hath promised to give unto them that seek it.

3ly. The ways or means to get a new heart.

First, Strive to be willing that God should make your hearts new, that he should change and renew them by grace; Pars est sanitatis velle sanari; Jer. 13:27. O Jerusalem, wilt thou be made clean? Joh. 5:6. Jesus said unto him, wilt thou be made whole? O that we could get thus far, O Lord, I am weary of my old sinful heart, I am willing that thou shouldest heal it, and reform it: If the unclean person were

willing that God should cleanse him from his filthiness; and the proud person were willing that God should make him humble, this would be a fair step to newness of heart.

Secondly, Express this willingness in earnest Prayers to God, who only is able to give a new heart: Jer. 17:14. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, O Lord, and I shall be saved. Psal. 51:10. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

And let your Prayers have three Ingredients or Concomitants.

1. Sincerity; let them come from your very hearts, let them be the desires of your souls: My soul follows hard after thee, Psal. 63:8. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early, Isa. 26:9. That the Lord may see that in very deed you would have your hearts changed, and nothing will satisfy you till he grant you that request.

2. Faith; give up your earnest request for this in Faith, 1. Of Credence, that he can give it. 2. Of Reliance, that for his Christ's sake, and for his promise sake he will do it: Lord! It is thy promise to give a new heart, and all thy promises in Christ are Yea and Amen; none doth need the new heart more than I do, and none can give that heart but thyself; and thou hast promised to give it unto them that ask; I come unto thee in the Name of Christ, and do beseech thee for his sake to answer me according to thy Word; thou art able and faithful, thou wilt give what thou promisest to give to them that seek thee; I believe all this, Lord help my unbelief, &c.

3. Perseverance; hold on this request; and against all the rebellious workings of your old heart, and against all the fears,

and disputes, and discouragements of your old hearts, yet lift up one Prayer more, and one Prayer more; you shall certainly prevail if you can persevere in Prayer.

There are three Requests which a poor broken-heart is sure to speed in, if he will pray always, and not faint; One is for a Christ, and another is for pardoning mercy, and a third is for a new heart.

Thirdly, Diligently and patiently attend the Word, by which God converts, and changeth, and renews the heart: Psal. 19:7. The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting souls. Jam. 1:18. Of his own Will begat he us with the Word of Truth. Ephes. 5:26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. How many old sinful hearts hath God convinced and converted by his Word, that have come unto it with ignorance, and been sent from it with knowledge! That have come to it with hardness, and have been sent from it with tenderness! That have come to it with pride, and have been sent from it with humility! That have come to it with all manner of profaneness, and have been sent from it with all manner of holiness, with the Love of God, and fear of God, and hatred of sin, and real purpose to walk with God in newness of obedience; O therefore attend the Word of the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, and therefore the power of God to Renovation, &c.

Fourthly, Lastly, beseech the Lord to give you the uniting faith; that faith which will unite your hearts to Jesus Christ, which will effectually bring you into relation with him, as Members of the Body of which he is the head; as Branches of himself the true Vine.

**Object. Why, what will this do, may some of you say?**

Sol. I will tell you what it will do; it will infallibly bring in renewing grace to your hearts: You can never be changed and renewed

Creatures, unless you be in Christ, 2 Cor 5:17. For our spiritual life is in and from him; he is the Author of life unto us, as Adam was the author of death unto us: And he was anointed with the Spirit, that we from him might be Anointed with the Spirit: And if once you be united by Faith unto him, you partake of his Spirit to sanctify and renew, and conform you unto himself; He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, 1 Cor. 6:17.

And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. - Ezek. 36:26.

These words are yet a further Declaration of the gracious will and intention of God towards the people of his Covenant: Two things already hath God promised unto them; one was to justify them, to pardon all their sins; another was to sanctify them, to renew all their hearts.

And there are two more choice mercies and blessings which he doth graciously undertake to bestow upon them.

First, One is, to take away the stony heart out of their flesh.

Secondly, The other is, to give them an heart of flesh: O what a mercy is it to be rid of the stone in the body which puts us to such exquisite pain and torment! Your mercy is infinitely greater, to be delivered from the stone in the heart, which is the depth of sin, and the height of judgment.

There are three Propositions which these words do hold forth unto us; viz.

First, There is a stony heart, or an heart of stone in every man.

Secondly, That God will take away the stony heart from his people.

Thirdly, He will not only take away from them the heart of stone, but he will also give them an heart of flesh.

## **CHAP. IX.**

A heart of stone in every man.

Doctr. 1. That there is a stony heart in every man, (I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh) there it was, else it could not be taken away; the natural heart is a stony heart; not Physically so, as if it were so indeed; but Metaphorically so it is like the stone, it is a hard heart, spiritually hard, that is meant by the stony heart. Zach. 7:12. They have made their hearts as an Adamant stone. Isa. 48:4. Thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass. q.d. Thy heart is exceeding hard like Iron, which will not bow; and like brass, which will not change; both which are explained in the first words of the verse, (Thou art obstinate.)

For the opening of this Point, I will show unto you:

1. Why the hard heart (which is in every man) is called a stony heart.
2. What stoniness or hardness of heart is to be found in man.
3. Several Demonstrations or Convictions that the heart of every man (naturally) is a hard or stony heart.

### **SECT. I.**



### **Quest. 1. Why is the hard heart called a stony heart?**

It is so called, for the resemblance which it hath with a stone; and in five particulars.

1. Unsensibleness.
2. Unflexibleness.
3. Resistingness.
4. Heaviness.
5. Unfruitfulness.

First, Because it is an unsensible heart: What sense is there in a Rock? In a Stone? In the Adamant? In Ephes. 4:18,19, hardened sinners are said to be past feeling; and that expression, past feeling, seems to be taken from the hands of laboring men, which are so thickened, and hardened by pains, that they can grasp nettles and thorns, and yet not feel the sharpness nor sting; the natural heart is in this respect a stony heart, (i.e.) unsensible. Though he hath as many sins upon the soul which makes the very Creation to groan, and to travail in pain: Rom. 8:22, yet he neither complains nor feels, he goes on from day to day, and adds drunkenness to thirst, and drinks up iniquity as water, yet he saith, What evil have I done? And there is no iniquity in my doings; though the judgments of God be very near him, and the tokens do abundantly appear, yet like Ephraim, when gray hairs were here and there upon him, he perceived them not, Hosea 7:9. Yea, though the anger of the Lord be poured upon him, and sets him on fire round about, yet he knows it not; nay, though it burn him, yet he lays it not to heart, Isa. 42:25. Such a gross stupidity is there in the natural and stony heart. What

one spake of himself in a humble way; *Erubescenda video nec erubesco, dolenda intueor nec doleo, peccata inspicio nec geno*; This, and much more may be said of him that hath the hard and stony heart; he blushes not, he grieves not, he sighs not for his sins; nay, he rejoiceth and boasteth, and makes but a mock of sin, so utterly unsensible is he of sin.

Secondly, Because it is an unflexible heart; you may bow a stick, and melt the brass, and bend the very iron; but you cannot bow nor bend the stone; the stone may be broken in pieces, yet you can never so mollify it as to make it to bow, it is naturally hard, and naturally unyielding. Thus it is with the heart which is hard, it is unflexible and unyielding; it will be what it hath been: Ezek. 3:7. It will not hearken, it will not obey, it will receive no instruction, advice, counsel; let God speak, and do what he will; let men speak, and do what they can, yet a hard heart fears not God, nor regards man. God sends Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh with a command to let Israel go; he rejects this command, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? &c. Then they show wonders before him, yet he will not yield; then God sends plagues upon the fruit and corn, and cattle, and servants, yet he will not yield nor obey. Thus when the Israelites fell sick of the stone, I mean, when their hearts became hardened, then they became unflexible and unyielding. 2 Chron. 36:15,16. The Lord sent Prophets to them early and late, but they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Word, and misused his Prophets: You may read in Amos the 4th, how God dealt with them in manifold ways of judgment, yet there was no yielding; in ver. 6. He sends them cleanness of teeth, and want of bread, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord; in ver. 7. He withheld rain from them, yet ver. 8, have ye not returned unto me; in ver. 9. He smites them with blasting and mildew; yet have ye not returned unto me; in ver. 10. He sent the pestilence among them after the manner of Egypt, yet have ye not

returned; in ver. 11. He overthrew some of them, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rest were as a fire-brand plucked out of the fire, yet have ye not returned: O this is the hard heart, which when God speaks, it will not hear; when God calls, it will not yield; though God entreats it by mercies, yet it will not yield to leave sin; though God threatens it with wrath for continuing in sin, yet it will not forsake sin; though God plucks away mercies after mercies; though God lets down judgment after judgment; though he wounds the conscience; though he throws it into hell, yet it will not yield to obey the voice of the Lord, to turn from sin.

Thirdly, Because it is a resisting heart; the hard stone doth not only not receive impression, but it resists and turns back the strokes; even so when the heart is hard, it doth not only not admit the Word, but instead of yielding, it opposeth the Word, and resists the Spirit of God. Jer. 44:16. As for the Word which thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. Ver. 17, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth. Zach. 7:11. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears that they should not hear. Ver. 12. And made their hearts as an Adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law. Acts 7:51. Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. Hence it is that sinners of hard hearts are said to make light of the Word, to despise it, to reject it, to mock at it, to contradict it, to blaspheme, and speak against it, as the Pharisees and the Jews, &c.

Fourthly, Because it is an heavy heart; the stone is naturally heavy, descending and inclining downward; if you will find it, you must look for it in the earth; and if you throw it up, it will fall down again to the earth; that is its center, thither it inclines, and there it resteth: So the hard heart, it is an heavy heart; not only heavy in a way of

indisposition and untowardliness to what is good, (no mind to pray or hear, or repent, &c.) but also heavy in a way of inclination; it is an heart which inclines downward to worldly lusts, and sinful lusts; in them it delights and rests as in its center. Although sometimes in an exigence of outward trouble, and inward anguish of conscience it seems to be lifted up, yet upon the cessation of their working, it returns again to its old love and practice of sin.

Fifthly, Lastly, The hard heart is called a stony heart, because it is a barren and unfruitful heart: What fruit is to be gathered from the stone or rock? Cast the seed on it, let the rain come down from heaven upon it; let the Sun shine with its beams upon it, yet the stone is a stone still, a barren and unfruitful lump of earth: And thus is it with an hard heart; though the man lives under many precious means of grace, and manifold helps, and daily opportunities; and though others are wrought upon by the Word, the Word brings forth in them the fruits of knowledge, of godly sorrow, of repentance, of faith, of love, of newness of heart and life, &c. yet in him it is unfruitful; though he lives under it many years, yet his heart is ignorant still, and proud still, and earthly still, and filthy still, he is not humbled nor changed, nor reformed at all.

Thus you have some Reasons why the hard heart is called a stony heart: Now in the next place lets inquire:

**Quest. 2. What kinds of stoniness or hardness of heart is to be found in man? That so we may the more admire at the greatness of God's mercy, who promiseth to take it away out of our natures.**

Sol. For this, know, that there is a threefold hardness incident to the heart of man.

1. One is Natural.
2. The second is Habitual or Contracted.
3. The third is Judicial or Penal.

First, Natural hardness of heart, (is that Tomb-stone of sin and death) it is one part of that wretched nature conveyed unto us by the fall of Adam, by which our hearts are made dark and unsensible of our sins, and untoward, and disobedient, and gain-saying, and unyielding, and refractory, and obstinately set against the commands and ways of God, and the strivings of his Spirit, and all his dealings, either in ways of mercy, or in ways of judgment. This natural hardness, as it is in every man by nature, so it is in every part of man, in every faculty of his soul. In his understanding there is a wonderful incapacity and stupidity, and inapprehensiveness of them, though distinctly opened, and often revealed truths and ways of God. In his memory there is such a hardness, that all the heavenly delivery of the mind of God in things pertaining to salvation, fall away as waters from the Rock, are forgotten, and they slip away; they stay not sometimes one minute, though other discourses are held fast. In his judgment there is such a hardness that raiseth enmity and resistance, and affords a world of carnal reasonings to oppose and put by the truth in his will there is such a hardness of obstinacy and perverseness, that when all is said that can be said by Law or Gospel, yet men will not hear, Joh. 5:40, though they may be saved; nor will they hear, though therefore they shall be damned. In his affections there is such a hardness, that men sin without fear, and without all compunction and sorrow of heart; and though the glorious things of Christ are revealed and offered, and pressed upon them, yet no delight, no love, no desire at all can be raised in them, &c. In his conscience, which under all the threats of God, and terrors of God

revealed, remains quiet, unstirred, scared, and careless, as if these were fables, and impertinent notions.

Secondly, The Contracted hardness is that which we bring upon our sinful hearts (and add unto them) by the frequency of our sinning actions or practices, or by a voluntary opposing of all the means which do tend to the softening our heart. And by the way let me tell you, that there are three kinds of sinning which do extremely super add to the hardening of man's heart.

One is the sinning against clear light.

The second is the sinning with delight.

The third is the customary way of sinning; long going in a path, often beating the anvil.

Thirdly, The Judicial hardness, which is that unto which God gives the stubborn sinner up for not hearkening unto him, but still continuing and persisting in a sinful course; and therefore he leaves him unto himself, and to his own lusts, and his Spirit shall no more strive with him; and hereupon the sinful heart being left unto itself, breaks forth into all manner of wickedness, and so doth exceedingly obdurate itself; it becomes more unsensible, and more fearless, and more enraged against all that is good, &c.

Now the stony heart, or hard heart spoken of here in the Text, is principally that which is natural; and I will not deny that the Contracted hardness may be meant, but not the Judicial.

**Quest. 3. But how then may it be demonstrated that naturally every man's heart is a stony or hard heart?**

Sol. There are six things which may convince us that it is so.

First, The forwardness in men to sin; every natural heart is ready to sinful acts, and easy unto them: Ephes. 4:19. If temptations present themselves, the natural heart presently entertains them, and complies with them; and if no temptations from Satan and the world present themselves, the natural heart will tempt itself; why this is a conviction that the heart is hard; for if it be a good sign of a tender and soft heart, when it is afraid to sin: How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God, said Joseph? Gen. 39:9. Then surely it is a sign of a hard heart when it is forward to sin, and greedy to sin, and easily and willingly lets out itself to sin, and fears not at all to sin; but every man's heart (naturally) is so forward and bent to sin, that it cannot, and it will not be restrained from sin. Gen. 11:6. Nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Zeph. 3:5. The unjust know no shame.

Secondly, The silence and quietness in conscience under all sinning's: Men neglect all holy duties, and swear, and lie, and deceive, and are drunken, and commit adultery, &c. and conscience saith nothing to them. Assuredly this is a strong conviction, that their hearts are hard; for where there is any softness of heart, there conscience is alive, and hath some power to warn and check, and oppose before sinning; and likewise to accuse and condemn, and trouble after sinning: But now natural men (generally) find it thus, that conscience is dead, and takes no notice, or it is weak, and can do nothing with them; before sinning it appears not, and after sinning it troubles not. Ergo, their hearts are hard.

Thirdly, The security of heart: Taken me any one broken-hearted sinner; why under the sense of any one transgression he goes heavy all the day long, and he weeps bitterly, and he waters his couch with his tears, and he is afraid of the Lord whom he hath provoked, and he makes in earnestly for reconciliation and peace with God; and

why doth he so? Because his heart is soft and tender. But on the contrary, the natural man he sins, and is confident; exposes himself to wrath, and yet is secure; and though God saith he is offended and displeased with him; and though God threatens him with wrath; and though he knows that God hath destroyed some for the same sin of which he is guilty, yet the man goes on in his sinful practices, and makes no account of this. And what is the cause of it? It is this, his heart is hard, and hardened: Were not the man under a reprobate sense, infinitely stupid and seared, he could not rest so secure.

Fourthly, The absence of all penitential works: Whensoever the Lord gives a soft heart (which is opposite to this stony heart) then ariseth presently;

1. A sight and solemn consideration of sin.
2. A humble mourning and lamenting for sin.
3. A self-judging confession of sin.
4. A cordial aversation from sin.
5. Importunate supplication for pardoning mercy and grace.
6. A serious application of the heart to Christ.

And on the contrary, where the heart is hard, there are none of these; no hard heart considers of its ways, saying, What have I done? No man smites on his thigh, and is humbled; no man repents; no man seeks after the Lord; no man cries out for mercy, or for grace, or for Christ. Certainly so much as there is of impenitency, so much there is of hardness of heart; but naturally every man's heart is impenitent, and he is not only a stranger to these penitential works, but also he is an enemy unto them: Ergo.



Fifthly, The inefficacy of the Word; the Word of God is compared sometimes

1. To the Sun, which enlightens and quickens.
2. To water, which softens and cleanseth.
3. To the hammer, which bruises and breaks.
4. To fire, which heats and melts, and refines; but on the natural heart either it hath no efficacy at all, or it is a long time before it can make any impression, and yet a longer time before it make any saving impression; either the heart will not suffer us to hear the voice of the Word, or it will not suffer us to acknowledge the truth of the Word; or it is so hard, that it will not suffer us to do anything according to the Word; indeed the heart is so hard, that unless the Lord himself be pleased to put out his Almighty power, it will never yield unto any saving operation of the Word.

Sixthly, I will add one Demonstration more of the hardness of man's heart, which is this, the unsensibleness of that hardness of heart; naturally the heart is so hard, that it doth not, and cannot perceive its own hardness indeed; when grace comes into the heart, then a spiritual sensation comes into the heart, then we can feel our sins, and feel our hardness, and complain of the one, and bewail the other: O Lord, why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear? Isa. 63:17.

But while men are in this natural, sinful condition, they are not sensible of their sinful burdens, nor are they sensible of the unsensibleness of their stupidity and hardness of their hearts. They are sensible of this loss, and of that want, and can complain of this, and take on for that; but when did you ever hear a natural man

complain of his hard heart? O I have such a heart so full of sin, and yet I cannot mourn for sin; so unteachable, so intractable, so resisting, so opposing the Word of God, and ways of God! What shall I do? Whether shall I go? O it is a burden that I cannot bear, &c. Why, this unsensibleness that our hearts are hard, it is a demonstrative conviction that they are hard; and indeed no heart is more hard than that heart which is not sensible that it is hard.

Now I come to the useful Application of this unto ourselves.

## SECT. II.

Is there a stony heart in every man? Is the heart of every man (naturally) a hard heart? Then wonder not to see so little good done upon men; wonder not

1. That our own private instructions, and counsels, and entreaties, and reproofs usually come to nothing. How often do we find parents abounding in cares and watching's, and teachings, and advising, and checking, and correcting's of their children! And when they have said and done all they can, they fall a weeping and a sobbing, and sighing; why what's the matter? O nothing will work on my child! And what's the reason of it? Thy child hath a hard heart, and a hard heart is an unteachable and an intractable heart.

2. Wonder not that the public pains and labors in the Ministry of the Gospel of Christ, many times proves but like rain that falls upon the house top, or upon the rocks; little or no fruit comes of studies, of prayers, of doctrines, of exhortations, of reproofs; but people remain still what they were, as proud, as vain, as profane, as impudent in sins as before. And Ministers are apt to be discouraged, and

complain that they spend their strength in vain, and labor for naught, Isa. 49:4. And some imagine, if other Ministers came into their room, the matter would be much mended; and other Ministers do come, and then awhile they fall a weeping and complaining, What a people are these, that no part of the Word of God will work on? And no kind of delivery of the same will take hold of them; if we entreat them, they slight us; and if we plainly reprove them, they grow worse: Now I say, wonder not at this; Christ himself met with such kinds of people, when he preached here on earth, and he did hit upon the right cause of all this untowardliness and averseness, and that was the hardness of men's hearts: I have heard some preach that if Ministers would use clear convictions in their preaching, that their hearers would be taken, for they were reasonable creatures; alas, that they should proclaim their own ignorance; that men are rational creatures, a Philosopher can teach us; but that men are sinful creatures, and have hard hearts, the Scriptures teach us; and all the convictions and demonstrations of the will of God will never make impression, unless the Lord take away the stony heart out of them.

3. Wonder not that all the Providential Dispensations of God work not better amongst men; you see many times that personal affections do no good at all, though one loseth husband, wife, children, estate, he fears not, he returns not, he mends not; wonder not at this, for the man hath an hard heart. You find many times public judgments in a Nation, and God pouring contempt and wrath upon it, and on all sorts of men; and yet the Inhabitants thereof do learn no righteousness, but he that was ignorant, is ignorant still; and he that was filthy, is filthy still; and he that was proud, is proud still; and men grow more wicked under the judgments and plagues of God upon them; wonder not at this, for their hearts are hard hearts, and nothing whatsoever will or can effectually work as long as the heart continues hard. Thou mayst pity and pray, and weep, and fear; but

persons of hard hearts will do none of these, until God take away the stony heart from them.

Is there a stony heart in every man? Then let us make a stand, and wonder at the exceeding patience of the Lord, and his longsuffering; that he can bear so much, and forbear, and hold in his wrath, and not make an end of sinners, and utterly destroy them. You cannot possibly comprehend what affronts and injuries the hard heart puts upon God; and what continued provocations that heart daily sends forth, and raiseth against him. O what careless neglects of his commanding will? What proud slighting's of his severe threatening's? What contemptuous refusals of his gracious offers of mercy? What audacious resistances of his Spirit? What desperate boldness in sinning? What an obstinate course and progress in offending of him? What unteachableness and barrenness after all the pains that God takes with it, all the cost that he is at to work upon it for good, and yet the Lord is patient towards it, and renews offers of grace, and sends early and late, and there is line upon line, and precept upon precept, and yet he doth not leave the sinner for all this, but for a long time stands at the door and knocks, and waits that he may be gracious, and gives him time, and expects him when he will consider and hearken, and return! Truly the hardness of man's heart is wonderful, which will not bow after so many gracious dealings of God, and the patience of God is more wonderful, who will bear so many, and so long affronts from a proud and hard heart. If the Husbandman hath a piece of ground, which (after all his Tillage) still bears briars and thorns, he will cast it off. If the School-Master hath a Scholar, which (after long teaching and instructing) continues dull and uncapable, he will meddle no more with him; Sir, I can do no good on your child. If a Master hath a Servant or an Apprentice, who (after all his care and pains to instruct him in his Trade) yet remains unapprehensive and stupid, and perhaps vicious, he longs to

be rid of him. If a Parent hath a child that is naught and stubborn, and will not hearken, nor be reclaimed, the Parent is weary of him, and casts him out of doors, or sends him into another Country.

Thus none but God will bear with a hard and stubborn heart; God I say, who is most provoked by it; therefore unquestionably his patience is exceeding great, it is wonderful towards sinners.

Is there a stony heart in every man? This may then inform us of three things.

First, That the conversion of a sinner is even a miraculous work: We wonder that so few persons are converted by the Word; nay, but we should rather wonder that any person is converted by it; because there is such a stony and hard heart in every person, which is so unsensible of its own miserable condition, which is so incapable to be taught the knowledge of the matters of salvation, which is so opposite and averse, and unyielding, and resisting as to all the means and ways of grace; where there is a blind and proud judgment that will not be persuaded, wherein there is such a stubborn will that will not be made willing; and wherein there are so many vile affections which will not be tamed and awed, and subdued. It is matter of greater wonder that any one sinner is brought in by grace, than if all sinners should fall into hell.

Secondly, That it is from grace, and from that alone, if any sinner be converted; it is from the freeness of God's grace, and from the power of God's grace, not from anything at all in the person converted: And my reason is this, because the heart of every sinner is (naturally) a stony heart, a hard heart; and a stony heart is not only an impotent heart, but also a resisting heart to grace: Verily the best man may, and must confess that it is only of the Lord's mercy that he was not consumed; and that his present life and estate in grace was never of

himself who is called, but only from the favor and power of the grace of God who did call him: What I am, I am by the grace of God, said Paul, 1 Cor. 15:10. Our hearts were hard hearts, and therefore contradicting and opposing, until beaten down and conquered by the love and might of divine grace.

Thirdly, That God is most righteous in all his judgments here on earth, and in all those future and eternal punishments of sinners in hell; for sinners have hard and hardened hearts: Why if sinners will not hearken to God; if they will not obey his voice; if they will stop their ears, and withdraw their shoulders; if they will not receive his Laws; if they will not receive instruction, and take warning; if they will not know the day of their visitation; if they will not know the things which concern their peace, but harden their hearts; it is righteous with God to reject them who do reject him; to cast them off who do cast him off; to abhor them who abhor him; to punish and plague, and destroy them who harden their hearts against him.

**Object. We have many amongst us who do wonder at God's judgments abroad in the world, and at all the changes and miseries which they have seen, and perhaps felt.**

Sol. And why do ye wonder at them? Rather wonder at the hardness of your own hearts, which under all the judgments of God continue so proud, and so scorning at holiness, and so hating to be reformed, and so manifestly irreligious and profane; it is righteous with God to punish hard-hearted sinners. Who ever hardened his heart against him, and prospered? Job 9:4. If we will never be instructed to repent, God will certainly destroy us: Prov. 29:1.

### SECT. III.

Is the heart of every man a stony or hard heart? Then let every man as he loves his soul, Strive all that he can to be cured of the stone in the heart: (i.e.) to use all spiritual means to be delivered from hardness of heart.

And for this let me propound unto you, 1. Some Motives which possibly may work on you. Secondly, Some means for the cure of it.

1. The Motives to look after the cure of a stony or hard heart, are these.

First, The Consideration of those sins which are included in this one sin of hardness of heart, which make it to be exceeding sinful; What sins will you say? There are three sins in this sin.

1. Stupidity and senselessness of spirit; O how dangerous! There are three very dangerous qualities.

A Seared Conscience, this is the worst of all Consciences.

A Reprobate Mind, this is the worst of all Minds.

A Senseless Heart, this is the worst of all Hearts; tanto pejior, quanto insensibilior. This is to be at the farthest distance and hope of conversion; Vicinior saluti dolor poenitentis quam stupor non sentientis, saith Austin. This is a condition worse than that of Judas, who was sensible, and cried out, I have sinned; nay, (in some respect) worse than that of the Devils, who do believe and tremble. Isa. 6:9. Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see you indeed, but perceive not. Ver. 10. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed.

2. Contempt of God: O what a child is he who will not hearken to his father? And what a sinner is he who will not hearken to his God? Yet every hard heart refuseth to hearken unto God; and what is this but to displease the Lord, and scornfully to set him at naught? Q.d. What tell you me of God, or of his will? I care not for him; what care I what he saith? I will follow mine own hearts lusts, I will not be guided and commanded by him.

3. Desperate wickedness: I will be sinful still, and I will go on in my sinful ways, though I lose mercy and heaven; yea, though I shall be damned forever: O Lord, What a condition is this? Yet this is the condition of hardness of heart.

Secondly, The Consideration of the Losses unto which you will certainly expose yourselves, if you get not the cure of your hard and stony heart.

There are six losses which do and will befall you by it.

1. You lose the benefit of Christ; hardness and unbelief ever go together; the same word which we render hardness, doth signify unbelief many times; and the same word which we render unbelief, sometimes signifies hardness; but certainly hardness of heart keeps you from Christ; for it keeps you from the sense of your sins, and seeing a need of Christ; and it keeps up a rebellious and unyielding, and unsubmission to the voice of Christ. Hebr. 3:7. Therefore saith the Holy Ghost, Today if ye will hear his voice. Ver. 8. Harden not your hearts.

2. You lose the benefit of pardoning mercy; for hardness of heart and impenitency go together: Rom. 2:5. After thy hardness and impenitent heart; a hardened sinner is an impenitent sinner, and neither the one nor the other (remaining so) shall have



mercy. Prov. 28:13. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy. Ver. 14. But he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief.

3. You lose the hope of heaven; Read the Apostle, Rom. 2:5. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up wrath unto thyself against the day of wrath.

4. You lose the benefit of all the Ordinances of Christ, all of them are in vain unto you; the Word of the Gospel cannot profit you, and the Seals of the Gospel cannot comfort you; nay, you will pervert the one, and abuse the other; and will grow more wicked, and more hardened after them, as the Clay by the shining of the Sun, &c.

5 You will lose the benefit of all the Providences of God; if the Lord shines upon you with outward prosperity, you will sin the more, by how much the more he blesses you; and if the Lord visits you with afflictions, the more he strikes you and smites you, the more stubbornly and frowardly will you go on in your sinful ways.

6. You will lose all the benefit of the workings of the Spirit of God, whom by the hardness of your hearts you do resist, and despite, and grieve, and quench.

Thirdly, Consider the sad effects and fruits of a hard and hardening heart.

1. You grieve the Lord by it exceedingly, and cause him to complain of you bitterly: Psal. 95:10 speaking of the hardened Israelites, Ver. 8, he saith, Forty years long was I grieved with this generation. Mark 3:5. Christ was grieved at the hardness of

their hearts. As a father grieves at the continued course of wickedness in his child, Alas all my counsels and corrections are lost, they do no good, &c.

2. You provoke the Lord by it; the day of hardening the heart, is the day of provocation: Hebr. 3:15. Harden not your hearts as in the provocation; you do incense him to wrath against your own souls; Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly.

3. You will cause him to leave you, and forsake you, and to give you up to yourselves. Psal. 81:11. But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me. Ver. 12. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsel. What a sin is it for a sinner to forsake God? What a judgment is it for God to forsake a sinner? Woe unto them when I depart from them, Hosea 9:12. It is worse than if the Pilot forsakes the Ship, or if the Sun forsakes the world, &c.

4. You will cause him to punish you; the hard heart is like the barren ground, which is near to the curse, Hebr. 6:8. Now you shall find three sorts of punishments which God hath inflicted upon hard hearts.

First, Corporal: Pharaoh hardened his heart, and he was drowned: Exod. 15:17. The Jews hardened their hearts, and they were carried away captive: 2 Chron. 36:16. Nebuchadnezzar hardened his heart, and he was driven out amongst the beasts of the Field: Dan. 4:33, with 5:20. Jerusalem hardened her heart against Jesus Christ, and is a desolation to this day.

Secondly, Spiritual: God gives up the hard heart to a reprobate mind, Rom. 1:28. To vile affections, and unnatural lusts, Rom. 1:26. To the

efficacy of Satan's temptations: 2 Thes. 2:11. To delusions, to belief of lies, and frequently to final impenitency.

Thirdly, Eternal: 2 Thes. 1:8. The Lord Jesus shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel. Ver. 9. And to punish them with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; so true is that of Solomon, Prov. 29:1. He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2ly. The means to cure the hardness of heart.

Concerning this there are three questions unto which I desire to speak.

1. Whether stoniness or hardness of heart be a curable disease or no?
2. If any hardness of heart be curable, then What is the way of the cure of it?
3. How one may know that he is cured of the hardness or stoniness of his heart?

**Quest. 1. Whether stoniness or hardness of heart be a curable disease yea or no?**

Sol. For answer unto this, know that there are three sorts of hardened sinners.

First, Some are so hardened in their heart and ways, that they are obstinately resolved to walk in them, and are likewise desperately set against all counsel and reproof; they do not only decline and disregard them, but also do make a mock and scorn of them; they

stop the ear, and with-draw the shoulder, and refuse to hearken, and the Word of the Lord is a reproach unto them; they hold fast their iniquities, and refuse to return; and the more they are spoken unto, the more are their hearts enraged: We may say of this voluntary and malicious hardness of heart, what the Prophet spake, thy Wound is incurable. And there are five things which declare it to be so.

1. Such persons will put and keep themselves out of all ways of cure, (how then can the Patient be cured?) they will not come in public to hear the Word, and they will not in private call upon God, they forsake the Lord.

2. They do not only forsake the means of cure, but also do reject and despise them; the words and ways of God are abomination unto their souls.

3. They do continually strengthen themselves in the hardness of their hearts, by adding drunkenness to thirst, and iniquity unto iniquity; and by a willful progress in sinning, they do make their hearts more incapable, and more intractable, and more averse.

4. They do not only quench the Spirit of God in all his motions, (so that he will no longer strive with them) but also they do (by their daring presumptions) extinguish also all the light and power of conscience in them, so that conscience is stupefied and seared.

5. They are rejected of God, and judicially given up to their own heart's lusts; and having resisted and despised his grace and mercy, he will now never give grace, nor show mercy unto them. Ezek. 24:13. In thy filthiness is lewdness; because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness anymore, till I have caused my fury to rest upon

thee, Ver. 14. I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent, &c.

Secondly, There are some hardened sinners whose hearts still take delight in their sinful ways, and are extremely opposite to the Reformation of them; nevertheless they will present themselves unto the means; they will come to hear the Word, although they cannot comply with the Word which they do hear; but do secretly dislike and gain-say it, and go on in their wicked ways, which do harden their hearts: Now although this kind of darkness is very fearful, and in itself very damnable, and very difficult to be cured, yet it is not utterly incapable of cure; it is not impossible for that hardened sinner to be cured, who hath gone on in his wicked ways, contrary to the voice of the Word of God which he hath heard, and still doth hear; which may thus appear.

1. Whiles any sinner is in God's ways, he is not utterly incapable of God's blessings; if yet the sinner hath an ear to hear, who can tell but God may give him a heart to consider, and to repent? Indeed it is confessed, that neither this sinner, nor any other can convert or soften his own heart; to change the heart, and to mollify the heart, is the proper work of the Almighty God; and as God can do it, so he doth it by the Word, which is his Hammer to break, and his Furnace to melt; and therefore whiles the sinner will come and hear the Word, God may put out such a power of grace upon his heart, as may break down the pride of his heart, and may take away the hardness and resistance, and opposition of his heart.

2. All the sinners who have been converted by grace, they have been such hardened sinners, as they have been disobedient, and

have served divers lusts; they have opposed the Word, and they have gone on in wicked ways contrary unto the Word, and yet God did break in by the power of his grace, and overcome all the proud resistances of their hearts, and made them to yield and cry out, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts 9:6. And what shall I do to be saved? Acts 16:3.

3. Although it be true that there are many hardened sinners on whom God would never work, yet no particular hard heart may say that his cure is impossible, because that grace (by which hardness of heart is cured) is gracious and very free; it is given unto whom God will please to give it, and when he pleaseth to give it; sometimes to one, sometimes to another; sometimes to one whose heart hath been less hardened; sometimes to another whose heart hath been more hardened; sometimes to one who hath been sinning and hardening his heart twenty or thirty years; and sometimes to one who hath been hardening his heart forty or sixty years, &c.

Thirdly, There are some hardened sinners who have been a long time unyielding and disobedient to the Word, and no threats of wrath, nor offers of mercy, nor treaties of the Spirit, nor strokes of affliction could ever yet make their hearts to bow or yield; but still their base hearts would go on in their sins, and they would not hearken unto Christ, and nothing that God hath spoken or done hath made them to stoop; but on they would in their ways and works of sin which they had chosen and loved. But now they are sensible of all their hardness against God, and likewise of the present hardness which lies upon them; sensible how stout and refusing they have been, and sensible what resisting hearts still they have, and sensible what unsensible hearts they have of all their sins.

Now concerning those hardened sinners, there is (without all just dispute) a possibility of cure; because,

1. There is in them a sense of their disease of stoniness of heart, which is the beginning of the cure.
2. They are willing to use the means, and for this end, that they may be cured.
3. If any are under this promise of God to take away the stony heart, probably these are the men.

**Quest. 2. If this hardness of heart be curable, then what is the way, and what is the means for the cure of it?**

Sol. If indeed you would be cured of this stony and hard heart within you, then you must do as men who would be cured of the disease of the stone.

1. You must have a care to remove and forbear all which breeds and increaseth the stone.
2. You must take such Medicines as are proper to heal it.

First, You must have a special care to remove and forbear all those things which do breed and increase the stoniness or hardness of heart, or else you can never be cured.

There are six things which give being and strength to the hardness of man's heart.

First, One is ignorance of mind; you shall find in Ephes. 4:8, a conjunction 'twixt the darkness of the understanding, and alienation from the life of God, and hardness of heart; the word is there

rendered blindness of heart, but that is the original word; spiritual blindness breeds spiritual boldness, and boldness to sin will presently breed hardness of heart. O get off this ignorance, which knows not what it is to sin, nor what is the danger of sinning, and therefore leaves the heart to his own vile inclination, and unto Satan's temptations.

Secondly, Pride of heart; you read of Nebuchadnezzar, that his heart was lifted up, and his mind was hardened in pride, Dan. 5:20.

There are four cursed effects of pride.

1. One, It will not suffer the heart to obey the voice of God: Who is the Lord that I should let Israel go? Said proud Pharaoh; Exod. 5:2. As for the Word which thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, spake those proud men to Jeremiah, Jer. 44.

2. Another, It makes us Self-willed; we will have our will, and our own desires, and our own ways; and who is Lord over us? So those proud men, Psal. 12:3,4.

3. A third is, It makes the Lord to abhor a person, (Everyone that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 16:5) and to leave a person, as the Lord left Hezekiah, because his heart was lifted up, 2 Chron. 32:25,31.

4. A fourth is, It makes us self-confident, (as in Peter) and therefore watchless and careless, and open to the strength of temptations. And certainly all these will cause or occasion exceeding hardness of heart; therefore if you would be rid of a hard heart, beseech the Lord to cure you of a proud heart, which is above counsel, and without fear.



Thirdly, Unbelief of heart: Take heed (saith the Apostle, Hebr. 3:12) lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but (Ver. 13.) Exhorting one another daily, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. One said well, that Unbelief will in time make a man an Atheist; When a man believes not that there is a God, or that God is true in his threatening's, or in his promises, this man will not fear to sin, (where there is no faith, there is no fear) and where there is no fear of God, there is no fear to sin against God; and where there is no fear to sin, there the heart will let out itself to all wickedness; and who can now question but all this will cause exceeding hardness of heart?

Fourthly, Hypocrisy of heart, this likewise breeds and strengthens hardness of heart: When a man will dissemble with God and godliness, pretends love to them, and zeal to them, and yet secretly his soul loves sin, and keeps up a way of wickedness, and bears down the light and actings of conscience, this man doth woefully obdurate his own heart, and fears his conscience by speaking lies in hypocrisy.

Fifthly, Deceitfulness of sin. Hebr. 3:13. Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Bernard doth notably describe the degrees by which a man steps up unto hardness of heart!

1. Saith he, the man with much ado ventures to commit a sin, and this sinful act or work, it is importable; oh the terror and hell that it is unto him!
2. Then after a while, when the terror is off, he ventures to sin again, and now that which was importable, becomes grave, it is only a burden, but not a terror unto him.
3. Then after some little time he commits the sin again, and now that which was grave, becomes love; it is no such great matter,

vulnera non sentit, verbera non attendit.

4. After a lesser space he returns again to folly, and now leve becomes dulce; non solum non sentit, sed & placet; that sin which was light, is now become delight and pleasant.

5. And after this, Dulcedo becomes consuetudo; that which was pleasant to him, now becomes constant with him; it is no more to sin, than it is to eat and drink.

6. And at last, Consuetudo vertitur in naturam; whereas at the first it did almost seem impossible to draw him to commit the sin; now it proves more impossible to restrain him from sinning; sic itur in aversionem & duritiem cordis; thus the sinner makes way for the hardening of his own heart: Take heed of this, and keep far from this, and break off all progressive ways of sinning, or else you will never get off hardness of heart, but you will die and perish under it.

Sixthly, Wicked Society: From this you must be removed if ever you would have hardness of heart removed; wicked company will easily entice you to sin, and will cunningly lead you on to more sin, and will teach how to plead for sin and how to despise and reject the counsel of friends, and the commands of God to turn from sin.

2ly. You must take such Medicines (you must use such means) as are proper to cure the stoniness or hardness of your hearts.

Now these means I shall reduce unto, 1. Meditations. 2. Practical Actions.

1. The solemn and serious Meditations.

First, Consider and Meditate upon the multitude and greatness of our sins, which are

1. A separation from God. O what is this to be in such a condition, wherein a man's soul is separated from God and blessedness.
2. A vexing and a provocation of God: What is it to provoke the Lord to wrath, and to kindle his displeasure against you!
3. A rebellion against God, and trampling under feet his holy and righteous will.
4. A dishonoring of God; it had been better that thou hadst never been born, than that God should lose so much of his honor by thee.
5. An exposure to the curse of God, who may every moment damn thee for thy wickedness and transgression.
6. An unutterable madness, to set thy delight on that, and serve that, and take pains to accomplish that which only brings all misery and destruct on you.

Secondly, Consider and Meditate on the wonderful evil of a hard heart; by which

1. You are so unlike to God; he is tender, and thy heart is hard; he is sensible of thy sinning's, but thou art not sensible of them; he is troubled at thy sins, but thou art not troubled for thy sins; he cries out against them, but thou criest not out for them; forty years long was I grieved, &c.

2. You are unlike to Jesus Christ the Son of God; Christ did grieve at the hardness of man's heart, and yet thou dost not grieve at the hardness of thine own heart; he shed tears, and wept over the hardness of Jerusalem, and yet thou weepest not at the hardness of thine heart; he complained of this, yet thou complainest not of this.

3. You are unlike to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God; thy hard heart grieves him who hath moved so often, and striven so long with thee, yet thou grievest not, but rejoicest; thy hard heart vexes the Spirit of God, and yet thou art not sensible at all.

4. You are worse than the Devils who tremble, but thou fearest not by reason of any Word that God doth speak, nor of any wrath or judgment which God hath threatened.

5. You have been more brutish than the very beasts; they are teachable, and they are tractable, and they are sensible of love and anger; but nothing doth thee good, thou art unteachable and intractable, and unsensible, and stupid.

6. You maintain an enmity and contradiction to God, whom you are bound to obey as creatures, as redeemed, &c.

Thirdly, Meditate of the judgments upon hardened sinners; the judgments

1. Threatened by God against them: Job 9:4. They shall not prosper: Prov. 28:14. They shall fall into mischief: Rom. 2:5. They treasure up wrath against the day of wrath: Prov. 29:1. They shall be destroyed suddenly, and without remedy.

2. Executed; Pharaoh drowned in the red Sea; Saul falling and dying upon his own Sword; the King Zedekiah, his eyes put out, and bound with chains, and carried into Babylon; the Jews scattered over all the world; Jerusalem a desolation by the Romans; Julian killed with a dart; Spira longing for death rather than life, &c. if the Lord should let fall any of these judgments upon thee, what would become of thee!

Fourthly, Meditate on the patience of God, and on the goodness of God.

1. On the patience of God, who hath been so long provoked by thy hard heart, and yet hath spared thee, held off his hand from striking of thee, hath all this while born with thee, and forborne to judge thee.

2. On the goodness of God both to thy body and soul; thou (who hast so much hardened thy heart against him) hast yet every day tasted of his bounty and blessings; yea, and that he is treating with thy soul, sends Ministers, deals with thee in a Gospel way, calls on thee to repent, offers thee Christ and mercy, and heaven, and assures thee, if thou wilt yet hearken, thy soul shall live.

2ly. Practical Actions, and they are these.

First, Come and hear; 'It is true, a hard heart cares not to hear the Word, yet because thou hast a power to come and hear the Word, as well as to go to any other place or work, use thy power rather to come and hear the Word, and that Word which is most convincing, piercing, humbling. Moses rod made the waters to come out of the Rock: The Word of God is able to save a soul, and therefore certainly it is able to convert and soften the soul: The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live, Joh. 5:25. All who have got the cure of

hardness of heart, they have found it at the Word, and by the Word, which is the Sword of the Spirit, and the power of God.

Secondly, Go and pray, beseech the Lord himself to circumcise thy heart; he only can cure the stone in the heart, he only can take away the stony heart out of the flesh; nothing is too hard for him; Lord, Lord, leave me not to the hardness of my heart; Lord, open mine eyes, make me sensible, over-power my stiff and rebellious, and gain-saying heart.

**Object. O but my heart is so hard that I cannot pray?**

Sol. 1. Pray as thou mayst, at least grieve.

2. And sigh under the burden of thy hard heart; cry out, O that I were made sensible, and that I could pray to God to be cured!

3. And go to them that can pray, beseech them to beseech the Lord for thee: O Sirs, be sensible of one who is not sensible of himself; pray for me who cannot pray for myself.

Thirdly, Look a little on Jesus Christ, whom thou hast pierced, that thou mayst mourn: Zach. 12:10 Look on him, and what thy hard heart hath done unto him; thy hard heart it was which crucified him, which pierced him, which shed his precious blood. And now hearken what Jesus Christ saith unto thee, O hard-hearted sinner, thy sins have put my soul to grief, thy sins have drawn tears from mine eyes, and blood from my heart: Thou hast been very cruel to me, I will not be so to thee; lo, I offer myself unto thee, and my blood unto thee; it shall wash thee from all thy sins, it shall make thy peace, it shall save thy soul, if yet thou wilt no more harden thy heart, but forsake thy sins, and receive my offers: Methinks this cannot but bow and melt thee; if this doth not, what will? If the love of Christ, if the blood of

Christ will not, nothing will: They say that the blood of the Lamb is that which can soften the Adamant; if anything will work on, will melt a hard heart, it is the blood which came from the heart of Christ.

Fourthly, If at any time the power of God appear on thy heart (in meditation or hearing, or praying, or affections, or secret workings of his Spirit) that it begins to yield, to hearken, and consider, to relent, to soften:

1. Do not dash and quench these by sinning, by unbelief, or by wicked security.
2. But cherish them, work with these workings, keep them up, raise them up.

**Quest. 3. How may one know that he is cured of a stony and hard heart; at the least that the cure is beginning?**

Sol. The resolution of this question hath reference unto the second Proposition; viz. that God promiseth to take away the heart of stone from his people; but to speak unto the question as it now falls.

First, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, there is instantly wrought a spiritual sensation, such a sight, and such a feeling, as the poor sinner never had the like in all his life. As when a man is delivered from a deadly palsy, he begins to feel and complain of the benumbedness and heaviness of his limbs, saith he, What ails my arms, and my feet; I can hardly stir them, there is scarce life in them, nor sense, nor motion: So when the Lord is curing any sinner of the hardness of his heart, he begins to see and feel, and complain: O saith he, What a hard heart have I? What a sinful and wretched heart? I have heard of a proud and stout heart, of a careless and unbelieving heart, of a hard and rebellious heart, of an impenitent

and obstinate heart; alas, my heart hath been, and it is all this; O what an untoward heart do I feel in myself to any good? What an unyielding heart to anything which God commands? And an unwilling heart to part with sin; what a gain-saying heart to stoop to Christ? This my heart I now feel to be like the flint, the Iron, the Adamant; no man hath such an insensible hard heart as I.

This is the first evidence of the cure of a hard heart; viz. the sensibleness of the unsensibleness and hardness of the heart.

Secondly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then the sinner will judge of his sins, and of himself, so as he did never before. He looks on his sinful heart, as on a root of gall and wormwood; and he looks on his sinful ways and doings as vile, and cursed, and wonders at himself what he meant to be so forward to sin, and to be so obstinate in sinning, and to be so desperately profane as to contend with God in slighting the knowledge of him, in refusing to hearken unto him, in opposing of his Word, in rejecting all the gracious and saving offers of Christ. O my madness and folly! O my pride and misery! To forsake my mercies for lying vanities! To pitch on hell rather than heaven! To love darkness rather than light; O how just were it with God to reject me, who have rejected him! And never to hear me calling upon him, who have so often turned away my ears from hearing him when calling upon me! I am the chiefest of sinners, and unworthy of any mercy, Lord be merciful to me a sinner!

Thirdly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then conscience recovers itself in all its offices and operations; it was

1. Asleep before, but now it is awakened; it was;
2. Dead before, but now it is alive; it was;



3. Silent before, but now it speaks, and now it shows itself with wonderful authority and power.

First, Now it is an Accuser, These have been your sins.

Secondly, Now it is a witness in testifying against thee, that thou wast guilty at such a time, and in such a place, and in such company.

Thirdly, Now it is a Judge, and condemns the sinner; Wrath belongs to thee, from which thou shalt never escape unless thou get into Christ.

Fourthly, And now it wounds, and troubles the sinner for what he hath done; thou didst withstand such means of grace, and thou didst resist such strivings of God's Spirit, and thou didst scorn and mock at the Word of God, and thou didst hate instruction and reproof, and thou didst therefore harden thy heart, and wouldst commit such and such sins, because thy sins were discovered and reproved, &c.

Fourthly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then the sinner will not rest in the sense of his miserable condition, but out he goes for counsel to this Minister, and that Minister, and there he cries out with tears, O Sirs, what shall I do to be saved? Acts 16:30. I have slighted God, and I have despised you, and mocked at your counsel, (the good Lord forgive it me) I now see what I saw not before, and my heart is over-whelmed within me, I know not what to do, what way to take; for the Lord's sake show me the way of life and mercy, and peace.

Fifthly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then there is a special teachableness and tractableness fallen into the heart of a

sinner; the man can now hear reason, and he is content to receive the Law from the mouth of God; his slighting, mocking, despising spirit is departed from him, and now it is, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts 9:6, and now it is, Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk Psal. 143:8. Whiles hardness prevails upon the heart, no word of mercy, no work of affliction, no command of God, no counsel of man can do anything, but the sinner will hold on in his sinful way, come of it what will; but when hardness is off, then the heart becomes like a tender branch, you may bend it which way you will; or like the soft wax, which presently receives the impression. Speak but one word, Take heed, do not such a thing, it is evil; the heart presently flies off; Have a care, do such a work, the Lord requires it at your hands; presently the heart yields, it stands in awe of the Word.

Sixthly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then all the dealings of God will work kindly and effectually upon thee: When thou hearest the threatening's of God, thy heart will tremble and melt, as Josiah did; when thou seest the judgment of God, thy heart will lament and mourn, as David's did; when the Lord meets thee in a way of affliction, thy heart will humble itself, and bow before the Lord; when the Lord shows thee any mercy and blessings, thy heart will receive them with tears, O how good is God to me a sinner, when the Lord reveals himself in his Covenant and Promise, and sets out himself in the exceeding riches of his grace and love, and mercy; why, thy bowels are stirred within thee, and tears do trickle down thine eyes, and longings rise up in thy heart; O Lord, that thou wouldst be my portion!

Seventhly, When hardness of heart is cured, or curing, then the sinner will never be quiet until he hath Christ, and until he can see God to be at peace with him, and reconciled in Christ. There is no

hope with a broken and tender heart without a Christ, and without a reconciled God: Lord, give me Christ; and Lord, take away iniquity; and Lord, receive me graciously: O he is now sensible what a sinner he hath been, and what injuries God hath received from him, and what God may do against him, and what need he hath of a Christ to make peace for him, and therefore his soul is impatient, and strives, and wrestles for Christ, and the distressed man indeed is become willing to part with all, so that he may have his part in Christ, and God's reconciled favor.

Eighthly, What shall I say more? When hardness of heart is cured or curing, the sinner will find a singular aptitude to prayer, and his great delight will be to be with God, unto whom he can now open himself with enlarged confessions, and with floods of tears and grief, even for a heart to be given unto him to mourn and bewail his sins, and to obey, &c. and that he would never suffer his heart to harden itself anymore.

Ninthly, When hardness of heart is cured, or is curing, there will be then a singular fear to sin against God anymore; the man would not live and do as formerly for all the world: How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Gen. 39:9. How shall we live in sin any longer? Rom. 6:2.

And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh.- Ezek. 36:26.

You have heard something of the first Proposition, viz; That there is a stoniness, or hardness of heart in every man naturally. I now proceed to the second Proposition which is this.

## CHAP. X.

The stony heart taken away.

2. Doct. That God will take away that hardness of heart from his people. (I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh) you have the same promise in Ezek. 11:19. I will take the stony heart out of their flesh.

For the opening of this Point, I would speak unto these Particulars.

1. The manner how God takes away the hardness of heart from his people.
2. Why the Lord will do so?
3. How this can be affirmed, seeing there doth remain much hardness of heart in the people of God?

### SECT. I.

**Quest. 1. The manner how God takes away the hardness of heart from his people?**

Sol. For Answer unto this, remember that hardness of heart may be taken away,

1. Preparatively.
2. Effectually.
3. Successively.

#### 4. Perfectly and completely.

First, The Lord takes away the hardness of heart Preparatively, when he lets in such a powerful work of his Spirit, by the Law which doth both convince and break the heart of a sinner: The Spirit by the Law doth let in the sense of sin and wrath which is irresistible upon the Conscience, which is of that authority and force, that it rents the heart, and fills it with fear, and trembling, and astonishment. This is that which the Schoolmen call Attrition: And our Divines usually style Legal preparation, and the Scripture the spirit and bondage whereby all the powers, and presumptions, and confidences of the soul are shaken, and the heart is made so sensible of its transgressions, that it quakes, and trembles, and hath no rest nor peace, but is filled with bitterness, and terror, and cries out with woeful complaints, I have undone myself, I have sinned, I have sinned, and what will become of me! I feel the wrath of God, and what shall I do to be delivered! I cannot live thus, and I dare not die thus! If the Lord show me not mercy, I perish forever!

Secondly, The Lord takes away the hardness of the heart Effectually; and this he doth when he dissolves and melts the stoniness of the heart. It is one thing to break a stone into pieces, and it is another thing to melt a stone (as it were) into water: The Lord doth by the Law break the stony and stout heart of a sinner; but he melts and dissolves the heart by the Gospel, and on this wise he doth dissolve and melt it;

1. By revealing of mercy, and hope of mercy to the broken and distressed sinner; thus and thus hast thou sinned against me, and now thou seest and findest it to be an evil and bitter thing to slight my Word, and resist my Spirit, and to harden thy heart; thou art now fallen into the hands of the living God, and I can

make all my wrath to fall on thee, and to destroy thee at once for all thy rebellions; But I am the Lord, merciful and gracious; I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn and live. Lo! I have given mine own Son Jesus Christ to die for sinners, and I have said that whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16. Therefore go thou broken-hearted sinner, go thou unto him and be saved; accept of him, and thou shalt find mercy to pardon all that is past; he is able to save thee to the uttermost, and he is a merciful High Priest. O how this works on that sinner! But is it possible that there should be such a surpassing goodness in God? What, and to such a proud and stout-hearted sinner as I have been? What mercy to one who hath so often slighted mercy? And Christ for one who hath so often refused Christ? This begins to melt the hard heart of the sinner.

2. By the offer of mercy, and particular invitation of the broken-hearted sinner to lay hold on it: The Lord Jesus comes as it were to the very house of this sinner, and knocks at the door, and saith, Here dwells a broken-hearted sinner, and my Father hath sent me to him that I may save his poor soul: Come, come unto me, be not afraid, I myself do call thee to come unto me: And I do assure thee in the word of a Savior that I will not reject thee, but I will pity, and help, and refresh thee; I will answer for thy sins, and I will make thy peace; though thou hast been very wicked, I will not stand upon that; and though thou art utterly unworthy, yet I will not stand on that neither; only receive me, and I will be thine, and mercy and salvation shall be thine freely and assuredly.

3. By the collation of Faith which makes the sinner willingly and really to close with Christ: The Lord by his Spirit doth enable the

broken-hearted sinner to receive Jesus Christ, and to take livery and seizin of a reconciled, merciful, loving, blessing God in and by him. And now the apprehension and possession of all this rich mercy, and great love, and exceeding goodness of God in Christ melts and dissolves the stoniness of the heart, this works in him a tenderness, a mournfulness, a pliability, and all that is contrary to hardness of heart.

Thirdly, The Lord takes away the stony heart from his people, successively, or by degrees; indeed the dominion of it is taken away in an instant, as soon as ever the sinner is brought into Christ, as soon as he is called and converted, the reigning power of hardness is taken away, the man shall never have such a stubborn, opposing, resisting, base heart any longer.

But yet the grudging of the stone, the remaining gravel, the relics of hardness are taken away by degrees; the remaining hardness the Lord takes away

First, one while by Afflictions: Psal. 119:67. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy Word.

Secondly, Another while by mercies and kindnesses: Ezek. 16:60. I will remember my Covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, I will establish unto thee an everlasting Covenant. Ver. 61. Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed. So Hos. 3:5. Afterwards shall the Children return and seek the Lord, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

Thirdly, Sometimes by his Word and Ordinances, which are like Refining fire to melt and purge away our dross. How frequently do the people of God find the Word of God to be the power of God to melt away their carelessness, and their indisposition of

heart, and deadness of heart, and backwardness, and unruliness of heart!

Fourthly, The Lord takes away the stony heart from his people perfectly and completely, Root and Branch; so that no part of it, and no degree of it shall ever be found in their hearts anymore. This shall be done in the very moment of death; when we come to the dissolution of soul and body, we shall then come to the perfect dissolution of all hardness, and of all remaining sinfulness of heart.

**Quest. 2. Now to the second question, why the Lord will take away the stony heart from his people? And why he himself doth undertake it by promise?**

Sol. The Lord will take away the heart of stone from his people, That

First, They may be his people, and receive him for their God and Lord: Beloved, as long as hardness of heart prevails on any people, it is impossible that they should become the people of the Lord; they will not hearken to his voice, nor obey his voice, nor receive his Laws, nor fall in with his offers and entreaties; but will reject his Word, and despise his counsel, and will follow the lusts of their own hearts; and therefore of necessity the Lord must take away the hardness of heart; if he will have any people to be his people, he must break down the pride, and stoutness, and resistance, and rebellion of their hearts; there must be a mutual will, and consent, and agreement, which cannot be, till resistance in our hearts be removed, that so our hearts may be made willing to comply with him, and with his will, and with his ways, and with his works.

Secondly, That he may bring them all into union with Jesus Christ; his people are a people given unto Christ from all eternity (Thine



they were, and thou gavest them me, Joh. 17:6) And as they are given to Christ by an eternal compact; so they must be given in to Christ in time by effectual vocation in a way of believing: And for this reason also he will take away the hardness of their hearts, which is incompatible with closing with Christ; Heb. 3:7. Today if ye will hear his voice; ver. 8, harden not your hearts.

Thirdly, That he may enjoy communion with them, and they with him: This is one Reason why he makes us to be his people, that he might make known all his love and goodness unto us, and that our hearts might be taken up with him, and set on him in love, and fear, and desire, and joy and hope: None of which will or can be, unless the Lord were pleased to take away the heart of stone from his people, &c.

Fourthly, That he may bring upon them all the good which he hath promised unto to his people, viz. All the blessings of mercy, and peace, and comfort, and joy, of which they are not capable until the Lord take away the hardness of their hearts. Would you have the Lord to settle pardoning mercy on a hard heart! And to speak peace to a hard heart, and to revive with comfort and joy the soul of a hardened sinner, who will hold fast his iniquities, and who will not obey his voice, and will none of him, This is as it were a foundation-work for the other works of the Covenant.

Sol. 2. Again, the Lord himself doth again by promise undertake to take away the stony heart from his people, upon a twofold account.

First, On the impossibility of the work without his own Omnipotency: None but the Almighty can cure the stone of the heart; neither Angels, nor Men, nor Ministry, nor Self-power; for the hard heart is too hard for all means whatsoever; only the Lord is too hard for it; he can subdue all the powers of sin, and he can pull down all

high imaginations which do exalt themselves, and he can abase the pride of man, and he can circumcise all the stoutness of the heart, so that the rebellious shall submit themselves.

Secondly, The other, that his people (when they are made sensible of their hardness) may not despair, but may apply themselves unto him who is able to work all their work in and for them, and to heal all their diseases, and to subdue all their iniquities. Beloved, a Promise of God (in any kind) is a singular foundation for Faith and Prayer: And so it is in this business of hardness of heart; if the Lord promise to take it away, then the work is possible, it may be done, and it is likewise *de futuro*, it shall be done: As the Lord is able to perform whatsoever he promiseth to his people, so he is faithful and will perform the same. And both these are grounds for Faith and Prayer to go unto the Lord and beseech him, and trust upon him, that he will according to his word take away the hardness of our hearts.

**Quest. 3. How this can be affirmed for a truth, seeing that much hardness of heart remains in all the people of God, all the days of their lives?**

Sol. This hath been answered in part already, in the manner how God takes away the hardness of heart from his people: only I will add, that there is a vast difference 'twixt the hardness of heart remaining in the people of God, and that hardness of heart abiding in ungodly men, v.g.

First, Though hardness of heart (in some degrees) remains in the people of God, yet they are sensible of it as their great evil and burden, and do exceedingly bewail it, and complain to the Lord of it, and cry out, Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear? Isa. 63:17. But wicked men are unsensible of the hardness of their hearts, they are past feeling, and their consciences are seared as with a hot

iron, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Tim. 4:2. When a part of the body is feared with a hot iron, it becomes utterly stupid and unsensible, &c.

Secondly, The hardness of heart remaining in the people of God, it is still mortifying and decreasing; the more they feel it, the more they pray against it, and never give over till they have obtained more grace and strength against it, until they find their hearts more tender and pliable: But the hardness of heart in ungodly men, as it is reigning, so it is raging, it still increaseth unto more hardness; ungodly men sin more and more, and still oppose the means of softening their hearts; and the more they do sin, the more they do harden their hearts; and the more they do oppose the light and means of softening, the more they do augment their sins and hardness.

Thirdly, Though hardness of heart doth remain in the people of God, yet

1. They do not willingly and advisedly give up themselves to any ways and courses which tend to the hardening of their hearts; as to the neglect of the Ordinances, to the omission of holy duties, to the commission of sins against the light of the Word and of Conscience.

2. They do cordially use all the means to work off the hardness of their hearts, as frequent self-examinations, humble confessions, and self-judging's, earnest Prayer for more Faith, and fear, and tenderness of spirit, and the Lord doth graciously hear them in these Requests. But thus it is not with ungodly men whose hearts are hardened, they practice wickedness, and they sell themselves to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, 1 King. 21:25. And give themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness, Ephes. 4:19. And trample

under feet the light of the Word, and the actings of Conscience, and whatsoever stands in their way to restrain them from sinning, and are so far from improving any means for the removing of the hardness of their hearts, that they deride and scorn at them, and reject and abhor them. When did you ever see any ungodly hardened sinner judging himself for his hard heart, and begging of the Lord to heal it! Or willingly applying himself to a hard heart-breaking Ministry! &c.

## SECT. II.

Use 1. Doth the Lord promise that he will take away the stony heart from his people! And doth he really do so in his time! Hence it will follow;

First, Then they are none of the people of God, whose stony heart doth still abide in them, and completely reign in them; and then in what a woeful condition are many people (I fear) amongst ourselves! e.g. All those who are unsensible of their sinful estate! All those who incorrigibly go on in their sinful ways! All those who were never wrought on by the Word of Christ! All those who oppose, and reject, and slight the Word in the threatening's and precepts thereof! All those who do continue impenitent and unbelieving, notwithstanding all the offers and invitations of grace, &c.

Secondly, Then no marvel that the people of God are of another spirit, and of another temper than the common sort of people are! That they dare not run into the same excess of riot with others, nor live so as other men do live; that they are so much altered as to themselves: Heretofore they were frequent in

swearing, and now they fear an oath; heretofore they made nothing of great transgressions, and now a small sin (even a little neglect, carelessness, remissness) doth exceedingly disquiet and deject their hearts; heretofore they could neglect the Word as well as others, and scoff at it, and refuse to be ordered by it; but now they stand in awe of the Word, they are presently bound up by it, and wholly molded, and fashioned, and ruled by it. The reason of all this is, because God doth take away the hardness of our hearts, &c.

Thirdly, Then it is no sign of an evil estate to be troubled for our own sins, or for the sins of others: David did water his couch for his own sins, Psal. 6:6. And rivers of tears did fall from his eyes for the sins of other men, Psal. 119:136. When your former sins are your grief, and your present sins are your burden, and future sins are your fear, and other men's sins are your sorrow, this is a clear evidence that the stony heart is taken away; and therefore you stand in relation to God as his people. To sin and not to be troubled for sin, is a sign of a hard heart, and of an evil condition; but to fear sin, and to be grieved for sinning, this is a sign of a changed and broken heart.

Fourthly, Then it is very unjust to accuse and discountenance any of the people of God (as ill affected) for this reason only, Because they do oppose the Heresies, and blasphemies of these times; and because they do so earnestly contend for the Gospel and Ordinances of Christ by Prayers, and tears, and speaking, and writing, &c. Why, are you angry with them that God hath taken away from them the heart of stone? Must we be sensible of God's dishonor, or must we not! And if Christ wept at the hardness of heart in Jerusalem because she would not receive the Gospel, is there not much more reason to weep and pray

because of the hardness, nay of the desperateness of any man who endeavors to pull down and extirpate the Gospel! I say the Gospel in which all the love and goodness of God is revealed, and in which all the glory of Christ is interested, and in which all the salvation of poor sinner's souls is so necessarily concerned.

Use 2. Will the Lord take away the heart of stone from his people? What cause then have those people to bless the Lord, who do find this cure wrought in their hearts! O it is an unspeakable mercy and favor! Whether you respect the evil from which you are delivered, or else the good which falls in upon the removal of hardness of heart.

First, If that you do consider the evil from which you are delivered, by being delivered from an hard heart. One saith it is the greatest sin in the world; another saith it is the greatest judgment in the world: Certainly it is one of the strongest holds of sin, and it was the hardness of heart which kept up all the power of your sins, and all the sinful practices; it was the foundation of your long impenitency; you had long ere this repented, had not your hearts been hardened. If the Lord had not in wonderful mercy by his exceeding power of grace taken away the hardness of your hearts, your souls would never have been brought in to Christ, but you would have gone on in your sins, and died in your sins, and been damned for your sins: And yet again, that after the long resistance of God's grace, offers of mercy, callings of the Gospel, strivings and resisting's of his Spirit, the Lord shall pass by all this, and mercifully cure thy foolish, proud, stout, self-destroying soul; O what mercy was this, and what grace was this?

Secondly, If you do likewise consider the good which falls in upon the removal of hardness of heart, certainly you have great cause to bless God, &c. e.g.

1. An immediate receptivity or capacity to have the Law or will of God written and engraven on your hearts, as when the wax is softened, it is thereby made capable of any impression.
2. A spring of repentance is set up in the heart to bewail all our sins and transgressions; and fear to transgress anymore.
3. An obediential principle appears in making of us ready and willing to comply with the precepts of God; liberty and ability, &c.
4. The great work of Faith to receive the Lord Jesus into our hearts.
5. Affectionate communions with God, and a special delight in his presence, and Ordinances, and Services.
6. A liberty, and confidences in our accesses unto the throne of grace.
7. In one word, a newness of heart, and a newness of relation unto God as our God and Father. All these flow in upon the soul when God takes away the hardness of the heart; and in time all the good of the Covenant; and therefore unquestionably you have great obligations lying on your hearts to bless God if he doth take away the hardness of your hearts.

**Object. I, will some say, no question it is a great blessing to be delivered from a hard heart! But we fear it is not so with us; for we find sometimes, such**

1. A strange indisposition to what is good.
2. A marvelous unsensibleness, and cannot mourn for our sins.

3. No delight in communion with God, cannot pray.

Sol. For your help in these cases, know

First, Melancholy is one thing, and hardness of heart is another thing: Melancholy breeds an indisposition to all works Religious and Civil; unfit to Pray, and unfit to Trade: But hardness of heart is rather an opposition than an indisposition: Melancholy indisposeth for a time, for a fit; but when that is off, the soul is free again.

Secondly, Indisposition from temptation is one thing, and from affection is another: Temptations may deject the heart, and distract it; but these are grievous and burdensome to the soul.

Thirdly, Indisposition is absolute; no heart at all; or comparative, not so full, free, quick, and lively as at sometimes.

Fourthly, Constant, And transient, approved, resisted, and bewailed.

And to that of unmournfulness;

First, There is direct grief, and there is reflexive grief; a mourning because we cannot mourn.

Secondly, There is dolor voluntatis, which is displeasing; and dolor passionis, which is vexing; this not always, nor always alike.

Thirdly, Though you find not your hearts so mournful, yet you have hearts to beseech the Lord to give a Spirit of mourning, Zach. 12:10.



We cannot pray!

First, What, not at all, never, no desires!

Secondly, Not at sometimes, with that freedom, fullness, cheerfulness, uninterruptedness.

Thirdly, Yet you will pray, you will look up.

Fourthly, Three things may comfort and quiet you, though you cannot pray with that earnestness, and enlargedness; yet if you can pray, 1. With a believing heart. 2ly. With a humble heart in the sense of it. 3ly. With a sincere heart and desire, God will accept you.

### SECT. III.

Use 3. Doth the Lord himself undertake to take away the heart of stone from his people? O then let all such who are the people of God (whose hearts God hath cured of this Spiritual disease of hardness) let them in a special manner beware that they suffer not their hearts to harden themselves again.

Perhaps this may be a word in season to some of us this day, who have lost our former tenderness of heart, and do now find a strong obduration upon our spirits, and we know not therefore what to think of ourselves and conditions.

With your favor I will speak three things unto this Case.

1. The real Symptoms of a heart hardening in a godly man.

2. The sadness of that condition.

3. Directions in this case for recovery.

I. The real Symptoms of a heart hardening in a godly man.

First, A listlessness of heart to the Ordinances; the man hath not that flying spirit unto them (flies not as Doves to the windows) nor that hungering spirit after them as heretofore; he longs not for a Sabbath, nor doth his soul complain for his appointed food. It is with him as with a man on whom a disease is seizing; his stomach begins to fail him, and he minds not his meat as he was wont to do: So it is with a good man on whom hardness of heart is seizing; the Ordinances are not so precious and dear to him as heretofore, he falls in the high estimation of them, and in the wonted affectionateness of them, and the man can miss many a Sermon quietly, and neglect any Ordinance: Ah friend, remember from whence thou art falling; consider whither thou art going: Hardness is growing, when carelessness is rising, &c.

Secondly, A flatness of spirit under the Ordinances: The time was that the man's heart was to the Word, as wax to the seal; every part of the world would have wrought, and imprinted something on his heart; a threatening would have startled him; a Precept would have guided him; a promise would have revived him; there was ordinarily a vigor and warmth falling from the Ordinances upon his heart. But now his heart is chill, and cold, and formal, and dead under the means of life; he is little or nothing stirred or moved: He comes and hears the sound of the Word, but he seldom meets with the power of the Word; there is not that mourning, nor joy, nor fear, nor trusting as formerly: Divine Precepts do not quicken his heart; Divine Promises do not establish his heart; Divine Exhortations do not encourage and enlarge his heart; Divine Trials and discourses do not

make him to search his heart; Divine Rewards do not affect and open his heart as heretofore they have done.

Thirdly, A carelessness of mind after the Ordinances: Heretofore when the man had heard the Word, home he would go, and retire himself, and consider, and confess, and pray, and bless the Lord; Lord! In such a Point thou didest discover my sin and failing, O pardon and heal me! In another thou didst clear my doubts, be pleased still to settle and quiet my soul; in another Point thou didst show me more of my work, O now grant unto thy servant more of thy strength; in another Point thou didst raise my faith, and comfort my soul; my soul did therefore love and bless thee. You would not imagine what pains the man took with a Sermon; after a Sermon what wrestling's with God; what tears and cries to take out the lessons of God, to be cast into the mold of every Divine Truth.

O but now it is not so with him, he hath quickly done with the Word, after he hath read or heard the Word; the Word doth not dwell with him, nor go home with him; he is seldom in after Meditations, in after Applications, in after Supplications: The Word of God comes and goes; is heard and laid aside; perhaps the man speaks a little of it, but minds it not as a Message or Errand from God to him.

Fourthly, A remissness concerning private duties; when these begin either to be omitted, or seldomly to be performed; rather out of course than Conscience, without that intentiveness of mind, and without the labor of the heart and affections which God requires, and which the Christian formerly found and expressed. v.g. The Christians confessions, were wont to be with singular sense of sin, compunction, and brokenness of heart, judging's, mourning's, shames, and condemning's of himself; his Prayers were wont to be strong cries, importunate wrestling's, vehement strivings and

pleadings in the name of Christ; humble urgings and pressings of the promises of God, unsatisfiable thirsts after mercies, graces, comforts. O but now they are not so, or are very seldom so: This poor Christian is scarce sensible of the sins which he doth now confess; and scarce apprehensive of any Spiritual good which he seems to crave; he doth not insist on these with his ancient affections, and ancient expectations; he seems to be satisfied with what he doth, and not with what he desireth: Ah friend! When the edge and fervor of the spirit is gone, when fervency daily degenerates into formality, surely tenderness is falling into hardness of heart.

Fifthly, A watchlessness over the spirit or soul; it is not minded, observed, looked unto in its motions, affections, transactions as formerly; but the guard is drawn off; there is less fear, and more security; less diligent care and more loose presumption. The man was wont to keep his heart with all diligence, narrowly observing the passages and workings of his Spirit, the inclinations of his heart, temptations of Satan, behaviors of every day, alone and in company; and accordingly did apply himself with variety of petitions to God, and humbled himself for what was amiss, and renewed his strength in the Lord for the time to come: O but now it is not thus; the precious soul is neglected, the City is not watched, the thoughts, and affections, and actions are not observed, the poor man is asleep, and drowsy, and his spiritual frame is impaired, and he considers it not.

2ly. The sadness of this condition.

First, It is a very evil and naughty distemper; an hard heart softening, that is good; but the soft hardening again, that's very evil. Was it good to tremble at the Word? What is it now not to be moved by the Word! Was it good to think of sin, and mourn? What is it now to hear of thy sins, and not to be troubled at all! Was it good to act

duties with affections and life? What is it now to neglect the duties, or to act them with a heavy and careless Spirit!

There are four things which show this hardening to be very evil.

1. The marvelous ingratitude in it, that the Lord should show so much mercy to heal the disease, and yet you relapse into it again.
2. There is an express self-condemnation; why! You were exceedingly troubled at the hardness of your hearts, and prayed against it, and sought the prayers of others, and now to harden your hearts again!
3. There is presumption in it, you do tempt the Lord by it; Do you mean to continue in this case? Then you are undone; do you mean to come out of it? Why do you then tempt the Lord by falling into it, and presuming on his grace to recover you?
4. If you look not speedily to yourselves, where think you will this hardening end! Perhaps in some great desertion, perhaps in some great transgression! Perhaps in some exceeding great and long trouble of conscience.

Secondly, It is a very uncomfortable condition: How is thy Sun eclipsed! And thy Spring cut off! What is become of that spirit of Prayer? What is become of that excellent assurance of which thou hast so much spoken? Where is that sweetly excusing testimony of Conscience! What is become of that joy in the Holy Ghost? And that peace with which thou wast wont to work? Ah! Thou hast suffered thy heart to harden again, and God looks not on thee as he was wont, and Conscience speaks not as it was wont, and the Spirit of God manifests not himself as he was wont, and Ordinances smile not on

thee as they were wont, nor doth Providence shine upon thy Tabernacle as it was wont: But instead of these, thou meetest with many a sharp affliction, with many piercing reproofs, with many a sad item, and reckoning, and scourges, which no man knows and feels (in the sting and bitterness of it) but thou thyself.

Thirdly, It is a very formal and empty estate; how may it grieve thee to see a fruitless Vintage of thy soul? Tell me what returns hast thou had all this while that this hardening distemper hath been upon thee! Thou hearest carelessly and negligently; what hast thou been the better for all the Sermons which thou hast heard! Thou prayest coldly and formally; and what good hath returned upon thy soul after them! Thou hast had no trading all this while at heaven! How dull must grace be which is not used! And how decaying must thy Spiritual strength be, which all this while recovers no more strength?

Fourthly, It is a very dangerous posture; though it be not absolute Apostasy, yet it looks toward it. Though I will not say that it is the turning of the grace of God into wantonness, yet it bends towards it: Though it be not falling from grace, and though it be not a forsaking of God; yet unquestionably it is a grieving of God, and a provoking of him, and for which he may very far leave a person.

3ly. Directions in this case for recovery.

First, By all means find out the cause or causes of the hardening; observe well

1. What conscience tells thee in thy bed at night, or in the day of fear and affliction, or in a day of Solemn Humiliation, or in the meditation of thy short appearances before God.

2. What the Word of God hints and points at in thee, at what it levels and strikes; there is an arrow (some time or other) shot which falls into thy very heart; a message that is secretly delivered in way of conviction and reproof, which saith, Thou art the man, and this is thy way and thy doings.

3. What thy faithful and watchful friends say unto thee; what their suspicions and fears are, and unto what their friendly counsels do tend. A thousand to one but some of these things (which I shall mention) have brought on thee this new hardness upon thy heart.

1. Either spiritual pride, this hath made thee to neglect thy watch, and to neglect the Ordinances.

2. Or a worldly surfeit; thou hast been taking in too much of the world, and worldly business, and this hath robbed thee of thy precious time, to converse at heaven, to meditate, to examine, to read, to hear, to pray, to confer with thy Fellow-Christians.

3. Or the deceitfulness of sin: Thou hast ventured on lesser sins, and they have ensnared thee, and drawn thee to greater sins, and these have brought upon thee the hardness of thy heart again, &c.

Secondly, When you have found out the spiritual causes by which your hearts have been hardened, then judge yourselves and repent; remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, said Christ unto Ephesus, Rev. 2:5. Nay, do not stay to look when this hardening will fall off from thee; but hasten, but compel thyself to retiredness, and to a penitential consideration of thy hardening with the causes of it, and the great evils in it, and fall down before the Lord in humble confessions of thy great backslidings, and pour out prayer upon prayer: O wrestle with the Father of mercies for his Christ's sake to

pity, and pardon, and heal, and once more to cure and recover thee: Follow on to seek the Lord, though he doth secretly upbraid thee, though for a while he delays thee; though to thy apprehension thy heart is more hardened, yet pray, and yet pray that God would heal thy backslidings: Praise the Lord in the Name of Christ, presenting his Covenant unto him, wherein he promiseth to take away the heart of stone. And this contains in it not only the natural or original hardness of heart, but also the accidental contracted hardness by his people; the Covenant of taking away the heart of stone extends to both of them: O Lord, cure this hardening as well as the former hardness: I have hardened the heart which thou hast softened, O do thou soften the heart which I have hardened; revive thy work, and quicken my almost dead heart, restore my soul, and recover my ancient estimations, affections, tenderness, love, fear, care, zeal, &c.

Thirdly, If the Lord (at length) begins to make thy heart to relent by his Word or by his Rod, or by his Spirit, O bless his Name; He is come, he is come, said the Martyr; so, &c. get thee into a corner, help on the spring, pump the water when the water comes, enlarge thy confession, abound now in supplications.

Fourthly, Be earnest with God to pardon thee, and to give thee assurance of the pardoning of this hardening, and be importunate with him for it; I tell thee such a gracious assurance will presently soften and melt thy soul, assuredly raise and restore thy soul to those careful and tender communions with God, and watchful walking with him.

Fifthly, When you are recovered, then bless God and keep up tenderness of heart, and beware of suffering hardness to grow upon your hearts again.

**Quest. What is to be done for this?**



Sol. I answer.

First, Never trust hardening causes anymore; as Eliphaz spake, in Joh. 15:31. Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity, for vanity shall be his recompense. After your great humbling's, and praying's, and wrestling's, and prevailing's with God, do not now go and tamper with sin and sinful occasions again; and do not go and over-world yourselves again; and do not go and renew familiarity with wicked company again; and do not neglect the Ordinances anymore, &c. If you do, you will harden your hearts more than ever.

Secondly, If at any time you do espy any hardness creeping and rising upon your spirits, O make a present resistance, and wrestle against it, even unto present victory: When you pray, if you find coldness and formality in your spirit, O stir up Prayer, stir up the heart, and stir up the graces; blow the spark, break the ice when it begins to harden, &c.

Thirdly, Be often in the search of your hearts; and keep a daily and strict watch over them and your ways: Blessed is the man that feareth always, Prov. 28:14.

Fourthly, Constantly and seriously attend the Ordinances, which do beget, and preserve, and increase softness and tenderness of heart.

And I will give you a heart of flesh. - Ezek. 36:26.

I Have finished two Propositions already from these words, viz.

1. That there is a natural hardness in every man's heart.
2. That God will take away that stoniness, or hardness of heart from his people.

I shall now proceed unto the third and last Proposition from the Text, which is this.

## CHAP. XI.

God gives a heart of flesh.

Doct. 3. That God will not only take away the heart of stone from his people, but also he will give them an heart of flesh; or that all the people of God have soft and tender hearts given unto them.

And by the way, before I insist upon this Point, observe two things.

1. That God's works in restoring and renewing of man, are not terminated in Privatives, or Negatives; but they are Positive also and Collative: Evil is removed, and good contrary to that evil, comes in the place of it. He doth take away the old heart, and also he gives a new heart; he takes away the heart of stone, and also he gives an heart of flesh: He takes away ignorance, and gives knowledge; he takes away pride, and gives humility; God is a wise and perfect Agent; he will not only deface and abolish Satan's Image, but also he will repair his own Image; he will not only root up what is evil, but also he will plant and lay foundations, and build up. Therefore have a care of yourselves, that you be not deceived in the judgment of your conditions; you are not so wicked as you were; but what good is wrought in your hearts? What contrary quality unto the former evil, &c?

2. That as to the conversion or change of the sinner, all the work rests on God; he doth all, he works all; if the heart of stone be to be removed, he must do that work, he must take it away; and if the heart of flesh be to be enjoyed, he must also do that work; he must give unto us the heart of flesh; power against evil, and power to any good, all from God; we are the Patients, he is the Agent; we are the

receivers, he is the giver; you cannot take away the hardness of your own hearts, nor can you give unto yourselves an heart of flesh; both of them are the work of God.

These things being briefly premised, I now come to the Proposition itself; viz. That the people of God are the people of soft and tender hearts; God gives unto them (unto every one of them) a heart of flesh; (i.e.) a tender and soft heart. A heart of flesh (in this place) stands in opposition to the heart of stone, to the unsensible, unmournful, stubborn, unyielding, resisting heart, and it notes a sensible mourning, relenting, yielding, complying, tender, teachable and tractable heart.

But for the opening of this excellent Point, I shall discuss these three Questions.

1. What this heart of flesh is? What this soft and tender heart is?
2. How it may appear that the people of God are a people of soft and tender hearts?
3. Why the Lord gives such a heart to all his people?

#### SECT. I.

**Quest. 1. What this heart of flesh is? Or what the soft and tender heart is?**

Sol. To understand this, you must remember that there is a fourfold softness or tenderness.

First, One is Natural, and this is that which we call commonly a good nature, and tender disposition, and a softly spirit, on which anything is apt to work, any harsh word, any sad news, any affliction, any cross, anything that hath the notion of calamitous or grievous.

This tenderness or softness: is not the soft heart here in the Text; for;

1. It is no heavenly quality, nor is it let in by heavenly means; a man never got this tenderness by praying, or hearing, or reading, or meditating, &c.

2. It is such a softness as leaves a person in as great a pliability (nay greater) to evil, than to good: You may as soon draw them to an Ale house, and Play-house, and Gaming-house, as to God's house; they cannot deny their friend and request, &c.

3. Notwithstanding this softness and tenderness, yet a man's heart remains spiritually hardened; for take me this soft natured person which can weep almost at everything, and put him upon mourning for his sins, for his long ignorance, for his manifold profaneness, for his exceeding unprofitableness under the means of grace; why, this soft-natured man now cannot shed a tear, and is ordinarily so far from relenting and mourning that even his heart riseth against what you speak, and is extremely incensed, &c.

Secondly, The second is Moral, which ariseth from education and learning, and is of that force as to restrain and civilize, and scour off the barbarous rudeness of spirit and behavior, and trims up the person to a gentleness of conversation; but neither is this the heart of flesh in the Text; for

1. This is but an outward and seeming softness.

2. If anything of it may be said to be inward, yet it flows not from any work of grace, but from the Rules of Moral Philosophy, admitted into the understanding, as fit to be received and practiced for a man's reputation in the world.

3. It is Human and not Divine; it is a tenderness to respect men, when all this while there is a stubbornness, and resistance, and unyieldingness, and a constant irrespectiveness to God and his will and ways.

Thirdly, The third is a legal tenderness, which is the yielding tenderness and pliability of the heart under the sense of God's dreadful wrath for sin; what will not a sinner do in such a case? He will pray and hear, and forbear, and do what God will have him to do, and forsake what God will have him forsake; but this is not the heart of flesh neither; for

1. This is but anguish of heart, it is not tenderness of heart.

2. This will off when anguish is off; like Iron that is softened in the fire, when the fire is taken away, it grows more hard: Pharaoh yet hardened his heart more, when God gave him some respite.

3. The sinner is quickly weary of this tenderness, and would with all his heart be rid of it; but so it is not in the right softness.

4. The fourth is Evangelical tenderness or softness of heart; and this is a gracious temper of heart given or formed by God himself, whereby the whole soul becomes melting and yielding, and pliable, flexible to God, in respect of his Attributes, Word and Works; here observe,

First, It is a gracious temper or frame of heart] no man hath it, but first he partakes of the Spirit of grace; his heart is converted and renewed by grace; before the work of grace, the heart is stubborn and rebellious, disobedient and gain-saying; the natural man is a child of disobedience as well as of wrath; he is stiff-necked, and unto every good work reprobate; but when grace enters into the heart, now his heart is changed and subdued, and mollified, and is easy to be entreated, and is ready to take any impression that God will stamp upon it. Acts 10:33. We are all here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God.

Secondly, It is a temper or frame of heart] it is not an occasional and transient work, but an inherent and permanent, and fixed work upon the soul; even wicked and hardened sinners may have some fits and appearances of softness, as some hard stones (in change of weather) appear to be moist; Pharaoh under some of God's judgments did relent; and Ahab under those sharp threatening's of God did humble himself; and Felix upon the hearing of Paul, did tremble; and the Israelites in their distress did cover the Altar with tears; and Judas with the terror of conscience did repent; but these were fits and passions only, they did not last and abide on their hearts; when exigencies were off, their natural hardness appeared again. It is not thus when God gives a heart of flesh; (i.e.) a tender and soft heart; for this dwells and reigns, and continues in all estates, in all changes; in perplexity, and in adversity; in freedom, and in danger; under blessings as well as under afflictions.

Thirdly, It is such a temper, whereby the whole heart becomes a melting and yielding heart, and pliable, and flexible; the Scripture calls it sometimes a contrite heart, Psal. 51:17,

sometimes a trembling heart, Isa. 66:2, sometimes a tender heart, 2 Chron. 34:27, sometimes a mourning heart, Zach. 12:10,11, sometimes an obedient heart, Rom. 6:17, sometimes a heart that bows and stoops to receive the Word of God, Deut. 33:3.

And this softness and pliability spreads over the whole soul when God gives an heart of flesh.

First, The mind is willing to see, and to be taught, and know the mind of God; his will, his way, his work concerning us. Teach me thy truth, and teach me thy way, and teach me thy will, saith David, Psal: 27:11. Let us go up to the house of the Mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, Isa. 2:3.

Secondly, The judgment is willing and ready to assent, and to acknowledge the truths and commands of God; the Law is good and holy, said Paul, Rom. 7. I esteem thy precepts to be right, said David, Psal. 119.

Thirdly, The will is made tender and pliable: I will keep thy statutes, Psal. 119:8. I will run the way of thy Commandments, Ver. 32. The Lord is our God, and him will we serve, Josh. 24:18.

Fourthly, All the affections are tender and pliable: O what propensions to mourn for sin (they that escape of them shall be on the Mountains as Doves of the Valley, all of them mourning, everyone for his iniquity, Ezek. 7:16) and so a tender fear, they fear the Lord and his goodness, Hosea 3:5, a tender love, a tender delight, &c.



Fourthly, This frame of tenderness and softness appears towards God;

1. In respect of his Attributes: His mercifulness melts the heart, and leads it to Repentance; his goodness melts and draws it to more obedience; his greatness and power, and wisdom awes the heart; O who would not fear and serve such a God?

2. In respect of his Word: Promises work on the heart, and threatening's, and precepts, and reproofs; the promises draw and raise the soft heart; threatening's awaken, and awe the soft heart; precepts direct and bind the soft heart; reproofs do pierce and recover, and mend the soft heart.

3. In respect of the Works and Dealings of God, all of them make impression on the soft heart; those of mercy, and those of judgment; those of blessing, those of affliction, they all work kindly.

Fifthly, The Author and Cause of all this is, God himself: Job 23:16. God maketh my heart soft: Zach. 12:10. They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. The Lord doth give this soft and tender heart, when he doth effectually call and convert a sinner, as you may see in Paul's conversion; and thus you see what the heart of flesh is, what a soft and tender heart is.

## SECT. II.

**Quest. 2. Now to the second Question, How it may appear that the people of God are people of soft and tender hearts?**

First, By Instances all the Scripture over; I will mention some. David was a godly man, and he was a man of a soft and tender heart; when he did cut off the lap of Saul's garment, his heart smote him; as soon as Abigail spake with him, he was with-drawn from his rash and dangerous resolution: Nathan spake but one word unto him (Thou art the man) and presently he is struck (I have sinned) and that made him to water his couch with tears. Josiah was a godly man, and he was a man of a soft and tender heart; see 2 Chron. 34:27. Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the Inhabitants thereof; and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rent thy clothes, and weep before me, &c. Joseph was so both to God (Gen. 39:9. How can I do wickedness, &c?) and to Man; How tender to his father and brethren? Job was so, and so was Peter, on whom one look of Christ did work so kindly, that he went out and wept bitterly. What should I speak of Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, Ezra, Daniel, or of Paul, or of the Corinthians? 2 Cor. 3:3. Ye are the Epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart; nay, see more of this softness and tenderness: 2 Cor. 7:11. Behold this same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire, &c.

Secondly, By Practice; and there are eight things appearing in their practice, which do show that they are persons of soft and tender hearts.

First, Quick apprehensions, even of a frown, and of God's displeasure afar off; in the beginnings, in the threatening's, in a with-drawment, in any stop or estrangedness of communion and visits, and unusualness, in these cases presently the heart of them begins to

misgive and fear, Is all well? Is not the Lord angry? He looks not on me, I hear not from him as formerly, Have not I offended him, &c?

Secondly, Easy convictions: A reproof (saith Solomon, Prov. 17:10) entereth more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool; and so doth any conviction, if the people of God have sinned: Christ's look to Peter; Nathan's word to David; sometimes a glance, a hint, a passage in a Sermon, or in Discourse is enough; for conscience is very tender, and takes presently, and yields, and confesseth, &c.

Thirdly, Great griefs for lesser trespasses: Great sins trouble not an hard heart, no more than the nettles and thorns do the hardened hand; but little sins do exceedingly trouble the hearts of the godly, being soft and tender; if a mote fall into the eye, it causeth vexation, because the eye is tender; the omission of duty, the coldness of performance, distraction in services, vain and idle thoughts, unprofitable words, losing of time, sit heavily upon the hearts of God's people, &c.

Fourthly, Special care of sure warrant for special actions: They must have a light, and a voice going before them, This is the way, Walk in it: May I do this? And may I do that? Doth the Lord command such a work? And doth he enjoin me? And am I sure and clear that I do not transgress if I should venture upon it?

Fifthly, Wise Caution in doubtfuls: Where if the work or way seems doubtfully good, or doubtfully evil, the godly person makes a pause, a stand, a stop; he dares not to act boisterously; if it be but (a perhaps) it is evil, but (a perhaps) God may be dishonored, or his Gospel prejudiced, he will abstain until he gets more light to clear his steps; as Job offered sacrifice in the case of perhaps.

Sixthly, Present obedience: When God commands, no delays, no shuffling's, no consulting's with flesh and blood; their hearts are indeed at God's command: I made haste and delayed not to keep thy Commandments, Psal. 119:60. You need not use many arguments and persuasions to the people of God, a word of God's command is of easy authority, &c.

Seventhly, And Choice obedience; they would serve the Lord with their spirits. Rom. 1:9, and seek him with their whole hearts. Psal. 119:10, and serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Hebr. 12:28, and love him with all their might.

Eighthly, Earnest supplications, that they might not offend; or if they have offended, that they might not offend; so David, Keep thy servant from presumptuous sins, Psal. 19:13. Let not any iniquity have dominion over me, Psal. 119:133. And in case of offense, O take away iniquity: I have sinned, I have done exceeding foolishly; O Lord forgive, be merciful unto my transgressions, heal my backslidings, return in mercy, speak peace; whence is all this, but from the tenderness of their hearts? They cannot live out of doors, under frowns, having any difference 'twixt their God and their souls, no more than the tender wife or child, &c.

**Quest. 3. Why the Lord gives a heart of flesh, a soft and tender heart to his people?**

Sol. The Reasons may be these, which I will but mention:

First, God will teach them (they shall be taught of God) and write his Law in their inward parts. Ergo.

Secondly, His people must be his servants, they must serve the Lord their God, be at his command to do his will and his work. Ergo.

Thirdly, They must be like unto their God and Father, and have a nature answerable to his nature; God is a God of very merciful nature, very tender, and gentle, easy to be entreated, and (if I may so say) to be wrought on; sometimes a prayer works on him, sometimes a tear, sometimes a groan and sigh.

Fourthly, That they may walk without offense to God and man; tenderness of heart is a ground of circumspection and holy jealousy, and that is a ground of unblameable walking; not to do anything (willingly) by which God may be dishonored, or men (justly) offended.

### SECT. III.

Use 1. Doth God give unto all his people in Covenant a soft and tender heart, a heart of flesh? Let us then carefully survey and search our hearts, whether God hath bestowed on them this heavenly quality, this Jewel, this Covenant-grace of softness or tenderness of heart?

This Point is of wonderful consequence, and therefore I must carefully dispense it, and manage it, which shall be in this manner.

1. Convictions in a privative way, that many persons are utterly destitute of spiritual softness of heart.
2. Convictions in a defective way, that many persons deceive themselves with a false softness of heart.
3. Demonstrations of the manifold misery's incumbent upon, and incident unto all persons destitute of softness of heart.

#### 4. Testimonies and true Characters of a heart really softened by grace.

1. Convictions in a privative way, that many persons are utterly destitute of spiritual softness of heart.

First, By the disposition of their hearts unto sin, by which only God is offended and grieved, and dishonored; yet there are six things evidently appearing in in many men about sin, which show that there is no spiritual softness or tenderness of heart in them at all: v.g.

First, Easiness to sin: Solomon speaks of some who will transgress for a piece of bread, Prov. 28:21. The Prophet, speaking of Ephraim, saith, that he willingly walked after the commandment, Hosea 5:11. Ahab sold himself to work wickedness, 1 Kings 21:25. Judas goes and offers himself to betray Christ, Matth. 26:15,16, and the chief Priests and Captains were glad, Luke 22:5. When a small temptation is bait and hire enough, but a look, but a thought, but a word, and the man is presently ready to sin, hath he a soft and tender heart to fear the Lord? Any temptation will master him, nay, he will sin without a temptation.

Secondly, Boldness in sinning: When a person makes no bones of great transgressions, but can sin with a high hand, and dares to venture on presumptuous sins, and yet is not ashamed at all. Isa. 3:9. They declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Jerem. 6:5. Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush! When people can swear and for-swear, and curse and blaspheme, and commit whoredom, and steal and oppress, and lie and murder, and with the Whore in the Proverbs, Wipe their mouths, and say, What evil have I done? Doth this show

the least of tenderness of heart, which quakes at lesser iniquities?

Thirdly, Joy and delight in sinning: Solomon speaks of such who rejoice to do evil, Prov. 2:14, and the Prophet in Isa. 66:3. Their soul delighteth in their abominations; and the Apostle in Phil. 3:19. Whose glory is in their shame; and the Psalmist, Psal. 10:3. The wicked boasteth of his hearts desire: Who can say that any man hath a tender heart least he should sin, and after he hath sinned, who makes his very sins the object of his delight and joy, and rejoicing and boasting, such a time of his filthiness, another time of his drunkenness, &c?

Fourthly, Diffusion or spreading of sin; of such Solomon speaks, Prov. 4:16. They sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall; like Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin, 1 Kings 16:26, or like Manasseh, who made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, 2 Chron. 33:9, or like the Whore in the Proverbs, With much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him, Prov. 7:21. O where is this softness and tenderness of heart, when it sufficeth us not all alone to offend, and anger, and dishonor the Lord, but we will also cause others to sin against the Lord! Draw others to drunkenness, and uncleanness, seduce others to errors and profaneness, make others to neglect Ordinances and duties, to break the Sabbath, to steal and purloin, to lie, and forswear themselves, &c.

Fifthly, Progress in sin, to go from evil to worse; not only to multiply sins in several kinds, but to heighten and raise sins in further degrees, and still to step on further in sinful ways; to be

like Ezekiel's waters which did rise from the ankle to the feet, from the feet to the knees, and then into a river. Or as the Prophet spake, Isa. 2:7. There is no end of their Charets; so there is no end of their sinning, but they overflow in wickedness and revolt more and more, and add drunkenness to thirst.

Sixthly, Unalterable resolution to sin: when men will not forsake their sins, but will hold them fast, and will not cease from evil, though the Lord expressly threatens them, and although the Lord punisheth others for the same sins, nay, although the Lord doth in eminent manner judge them themselves, and punish them for their wicked doings, as in Amos 4:6,7,8, &c. and made them sick in smiting of them, and desolate because of their sins, Micah. 6:13. Who can say that these obstinate and perverse sinners who dare thus to contend with God himself, and will try to the utmost, and provoke him (when he inflicts his wrath on them for provoking of him) have in them the least degree or pretense of softness and tenderness of heart!

Secondly, By the carriage of their hearts towards the Word of God; which is such as palpably proclaims they have no spiritual softness or tenderness of heart; and that appears in four particulars.

First, They care not to know it, nor to be taught by it the mind and will of God, Job 21:14. They say unto God depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Hose. 8:12. I have written unto them the great things of my Law, but they were accounted as a strange thing. Prov. 1:23. Though the Lord saith, I will make known my words unto you, yet ver. 24, they regarded not: but ver. 29, they hated knowledge. Let him that hath an ear hear what the spirit saith to the Churches, Rev. 2:7. Be swift to hear, James 1:19. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all



wisdom, Col 3:16. Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, Isa. 2:3. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, Psal. 119:33. But many people, they have no desire to hear the Word, nor any heart to be taught by the Word: Nay they think the Word is much beholding to them, if they will vouchsafe him an hours time to come and hear; have these men tender hearts to please God, who care not at all to know the mind of God?

Secondly, They will not walk according to the rules and prescriptions of it, but esteem of them as burdens which they would cast off, and as cords which they would break asunder, Psal. 2:3, or as superfluous niceties, and preciseness which they need not to regard. Their wills are absolutely in complying with the will of God, and condemning the will of God, and perking up above the will of God: Can any rational man imagine that such persons have soft and tender hearts, to fear the Lord, to obey his voice, whose heart will not yield to his Word, nor submit at all unto it!

**Object. But will some say, Are there any such men?**

Sol. 1. There have been such amongst those to whom the Word hath come: Jer. 44:16. As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. And ver. 4. I sent unto you all my Prophets, saying, O do not this abominable thing that I hate. Ver. 5. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn incense to other gods. Ver. 17. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouths, &c. Zach. 7:9. Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother. Ver. 10,

and oppress not the widow or the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. Ver 11. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away their shoulder, and stopped their ears that they should not hear.

Secondly, And there are such amongst ourselves who will not conform unto the will of God, nor obey his Word. The Lord saith, swear not at all, Matth. 5:34, but they will swear by their faith, and by their troth, and by the creatures, &c. The Lord commands every man everywhere to repent Acts 17:30, but they will not leave their sins; he that was proud is proud still; and he that was filthy is filthy still; and he that was drunken is drunken still The Lord commands us to keep the Sabbath day holy, Exod. 20:8. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; but men will not hearken to the Lord in this; they will have their delights, and will sell their wares, and will have their pastimes, and meetings on that day, &c. The Lord commands Parents to teach and instruct their children, and to bring them up in the nurture of the Lord; and Governors of Families to set up his worship and fear in their houses; but men will not do this, &c. The Lord commands us all to walk strictly and circumspectly, Ephes. 5:15, and according to the rule, Gal. 6:16. But we will not be bound up to the straight path of life, we will allow ourselves such a looseness of Opinion, and such a looseness of speaking, and such a looseness of walking, which the Lord doth not only not allow, but expressly forbids and condemns in his Word; assuredly this is far from the frame of tender and soft hearts.

Thirdly, They do slight and mock at the threatening's of the Word, and misuse the Messengers of the Lord: Isa. 21:11. Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? Jer. 23:23. What is the burden of the Lord? Chap. 5:12. They

have belied the Lord, and said, It is not he, neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see sword nor famine. Jer. 6:10. Behold, the Word of the Lord is a reproach unto them. 2 Chron. 36:16. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets. Acts 2:13. Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine. Unquestionably such men as these are far from softness and tenderness of heart, which when any have it, they do fear the Word of the Lord, and do tremble at his threatening's. Nevertheless we do find it among ourselves, that many persons do slight and mock at the reproofs and threatening's of the Word, and do misuse the Messengers of God when reproving their sins, and applying those threatening's which God himself hath denounced against them for their sinning's: As (like Solomon's fool) they do make a mock of sin, so like those hardened Jews, they do make but a mock of God's threatening's for their sins, despise and laugh at them, whereas they should humble their hearts under them, and repent of their sins, that so they may avoid that wrath which God threatens them for their sinning's.

Fourthly, They will not be brought under the obedience of it, let the Lord do what he will: Hose. 6:5. I have hewed them by the Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth, and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. Ver. 7. But they like men have transgressed the Covenant, there have they dealt treacherously against me. Zeph. 3:5. Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not, but the unjust knoweth no shame. Ver. 6. I have cut off the Nations, their Towers are desolate, I made their streets waste, that none pass by; their Cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is no inhabitant. Ver. 7. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction, so their dwellings should not be cut off,

howsoever I punished them; but they rose early and corrupted all their doings.

Thirdly, By untowardliness and untractableness of their hearts under all the mercies of God, and all the merciful dealings of God. Beloved, that man is certainly under the dominion of hardness of heart, and without all softness and tenderness, on whom no mercies of God will work; why, nothing will work, if mercy will not work.

Now there are six choice merciful dealings of God, which yet work not to any purpose on the hearts of many men; viz.

1. God's merciful Providence.
2. God's merciful Treaties.
3. God's merciful Strivings.
4. God's merciful Waiting's.
5. God's merciful Warnings.
- 6 God's merciful Repenting's.

First, God's merciful Providence, in manifold, nay in daily fruits of preservation, and deliverance, of goodness and blessings; the Lord it is who gives us life, and all things that pertain to life; he feeds our bellies, and clothes our backs, and maintains our health, and multiplies our seed sown, and makes us to prosper, and thrive, and with this hedge hath our portion been secured. Yet this Providential mercy and goodness of God doth not work kindly and effectually on the hearts of many men; no penitential pliability and obedience at all: Hos. 11:4. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was to them as they

that take off the yoke on their jaws, and laid meat unto them. Ver. 5. But they refused to return. Rom. 2:4. Despisest thou the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering of God, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Ver. 5. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, &c. Nay instead of yielding unto and complying with God by reason of his good hand of blessing, many sinners do therefore grow more disobedient and wicked: I spake unto thee in thy prosperity, but thou saydst, I wilt not hear, Jer. 22:21, Deut. 32:15. But Jesuron waxed fat, and kicked; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation.

Secondly, God's merciful Treaties. The Lord sends the Gospel unto a people, and by that sets open his Mercy-seat, and sets up his Throne of Grace, and proclaims himself to be the Lord, the Lord gracious and merciful in goodness and truth, and by it reports unto sinners, that he hath raised up an horn of salvation for them, that he hath (out of his infinite love) sent his own Son Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners, and that whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. And he offers his Christ unto sinners, invites them, commands them, earnestly urgeth them to come unto him, to receive him, to believe on him, and assures them of the pardon of all their sins, and of eternal life; nay, intimates clearly, that though they have no worthiness, yet they may come and drink of the water of life freely. O what merciful dealing is this, and yet after all this, the hearts of many sinners are no more stirred or drawn than the stones or Rocks! Who hath believed our report! Saith the Prophet. Who hath believed our report! Said Christ. Matth. 23:37. Who hath believed our report! Said the Apostle; Sinners are not gathered, and ye will not come unto me that ye might have life, Joh. 5:40.

Thirdly, God's merciful Strivings; what he offers by his Word, he presseth the same (ofttimes) by his Spirit, who follows our hearts with one work after another; with Humiliation, and then with Conviction, and then with Pulsation, and Excitation; the Spirit of God doth (ofttimes) make sinners to see their sins, and their need of Christ, and that their life, and health, and hope is only in him, and in no other Name; and that they shall certainly perish and be damned if they believe not; nay, he troubles their Consciences, and sets them a work to regard Jesus Christ, and to comply with his excellent self and gracious offers; and yet all this is lost; many sinners harden their hearts, and will not put their necks into his yoke, they will not have him to reign over them.

Fourthly, God's merciful waiting's: The Lord doth not presently take the denial and forfeiture, but waits that he may be gracious; comes to the door again, renews the offer, sends one servant, and a second, and a third; gives yet more time, he waits thus on sinners; more than three years, sometimes more than twenty years, sometimes more than forty years, sometimes more than sixty years (for so long, and perhaps longer doth he continue his Gospel to them) yet after all his patient waiting, many sinners do continue as they were, ignorant, proud, obstinate, impudent, and unbelieving, and are not drawn either by the goodness, or by the patience of his grace.

Fifthly, God's merciful warnings; when all this works not on sinners, then the Lord gives notice unto them, that if they will not hearken unto his voice of mercy, he will forsake them, he will give them up unto their own hearts lust, and they shall perish, and never enter into his rest: Joh. 8:24. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Hebr. 2:2. If the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and every transgression and

disobedience received a just recompense of reward; ver. 3. How shall we escape, if we neglect such great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken of by the Lord! Heb. 12:25. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven! And yet all the warnings of God that he will not bear any longer, that he will close up the day of grace, that refusers of his grace in Christ shall not escape, but shall receive a just recompense of reward for their disobedience; I say, all these move not many sinners at all; but though they must die in their sins, perish and be damned for their unbelief, yet will they not yield to come to Christ.

Sixthly, God's merciful recoiling's or repenting's, (i.e.) when the Lord (being so contemned and provoked by proud and obstinate sinners) draws out his wrath, and is now ready to execute vengeance on them that obey not his Gospel; his hand is even stretched out to destroy, yet his bowels work within him, and his mercy prevails with his justice for a little forbearance and trial: Luk. 13:7. Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none? Cut it down. O Lord let it alone this year also, &c. Hose. 11:8. How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repenting's are kindled together? Ver. 9. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man. Nevertheless though God repents of his wrath, yet how few do repent of their sins! They do not return to the Lord, nor seek him, for all this! By all which it doth evidently appear that many sinners are destitute of all spiritual softness and tenderness of heart.

2ly. The convictions in a defective way, that many persons do deceive themselves with a false softness of heart.

There are six sorts of softness or tenderness of heart with which many do deceive themselves, instead of this true spiritual softness of heart. v.g.

1. Exigentia softness.
2. The Legal softness.
3. The Partial softness.
4. The Temporary softness.
5. Worldly softness.
6. The Desperate softness and tenderness.

First, The Exigentia softness and tenderness; I mean that which ariseth only from fear of punishment, as in Ahab's case, or from that present sense of punishment, as in Pharaoh's case: You would not imagine what tenderness may appear in men while the rod is held over them, or while the rod lies heavy upon them; penal evils have a marvelous contrariety unto our natures, and they have (many times) a strong authority with us; the rod of God commands and obtains that from us which the Word of God cannot, because our natures are servile, and are more ready to act out of fear, than out of love. Hence is it that we read of such a quick pliability in distressed and punished sinners unto the will of God. Psal. 78:34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired early after God. Ver. 35. They remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless, ver. 36, they did flatter him with the mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.



Hose. 5:15. In their affliction they will seek me early. Chap. 6:1. Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. Judge. 10:15. And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, Do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Ver. 16. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord. How many persons in times of common judgments, and in personal sicknesses, how mournful, prayerful, dutiful! Yet their hearts are not softened.

Secondly, The Legal softness, which is when Conscience is awakened with the sense of God's wrath; O what a softness, what a tenderness, what a pliability doth there appear in persons at such a time as this? They will weep most bitterly; they will pray most earnestly; they will hear most diligently; they will not come near to sin, or the occasions thereof, they set upon a reformation; what may not God have now from them? What resolution, Covenants? Yet all this is but iron in the fire; all this is but a Mariner in a storm, but a Sea sickness; all this is but forced work; all this crouching is but to compound the sooner; self-love, and self-ease, and self-fear, and self-deceit are the Grounds and Reasons of this softness or tenderness: And when this Conscience troubled sinner hath got safe to land, and all grows quiet and calm, then his tenderness and pliability is gone; he lays aside his cares, and fears, and tears, and reformations, and resolutions, and he returns to folly again, and his heart grows more hard, and more unsensible, and unmournful, and unflexible and disobedient than before.

Thirdly, The Partial softness, which is, when the heart of man is uneven in this work of tenderness; it appears in some things, but not in other things, v.g. In trouble for sin, where the sin hath been foul and notorious, now the man is sensible and troubled, but not so for spiritual sins which are more dishonoring of God, and more

dangerous, though less infamous amongst men; ignorance, guile of heart, unbelief, &c. In commission of sin, a tenderness is like to be discovered when it is with them as with those, Job 24:17. If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death, but none, if it may be carried with security; Jehu is against Ahab's idolatry, but not against Jeroboams idolatry. Some have a tenderness not to swear, but no tenderness to lie, and slander, and speak idly: In practice of obedience there may be a tenderness, not wholly to neglect it, but no tenderness conscientiously to perform it; a tenderness in duties to man, but no tenderness in duties to God.

Fourthly, The Temporary softness, which may be great, even to zeal, and yet at length it wears away; what an earnestness have we seen in some against sin! And what a forwardness in duties! Nay they have seemed very much to bewail their own sins, as well as to bewail the sins of others; and to put on themselves as well as others to the practice of duties both public and private; and yet after a while this tenderness is lost; their jealousy, and watchfulness, and provocation of themselves and others, it is gone; they grow very negligent, very careless, and may perhaps be found amongst the companions of profaneness, and ungodliness: Again, some in the hearing of a Sermon, in good company, &c. as Felix when he heard Paul, may express much tenderness. This tenderness doth nor arise from renewing grace, but from some secret lash in conscience, or from some inconsiderateness of spirit, or from some carnal design, or from vain glory, &c.

Fifthly, The Worldly softness: I have observed a kind of tenderness, and pliability, and softness in some persons.

First, When they would get some worldly things, as the Shechemites would be circumcised upon this ground, Shall not

their cattle and their substance be ours! Gen. 34:22,23. O how many persons will come to the public Ordinances, hear the best Ministers, be acquainted with them, order their conversations demurely, and inoffensively, yea, and religiously; and all this is but to get some good match, or some rich place.

Secondly, When they have lost some worldly things, a Husband, a Wife, a Child, a Parent, a Friend, an Estate; now they melt into tears, mourn, and will not be comforted! They accuse their sins, and send for a Minister, and what must they do! But this softness is only worldly sorrow, and ariseth from natural affections; and is quickly allayed and cured by the access of some other worldly comfort and blessing.

Sixthly, The Desperate softness, and tenderness of despair: And indeed when any one doth despair, there is in him an exceeding and surpassing sensibleness; he is deeply sensible of his sins, and dejected, and overwhelmed in the apprehension of them, and often cries out in an amazing manner concerning them, and the wrath of God for them, and the expectation of judgment and destruction. But this is also a false tenderness of heart, and it comes not from faith, and is not raised by mercy, drives the soul from God, keeps up impenitency, and hardens the heart against all help and hope.

3ly. The demonstrations of the manifold miseries incumbent upon, and incident unto all persons destitute of softness and tenderness of heart.

I will mention some of them unto you.

First, Certainly there is no work of grace in such persons; they are still in their sins, under the power and dominion of them, in a dead and unconverted condition, without the Spirit and the life of Christ:

For where renewing grace is wrought in the heart, there is always an heart of flesh, a soft heart, a pliable heart; the heart is brought in and made willing, and obedient, and ready, and serviceable unto God: Now a graceless condition is a most miserable condition.

Secondly, Certainly these people are out of Covenant; God is not their God, nor are they his people: For God doth give unto all his people in Covenant an heart of flesh (i.e.) a soft and tender heart: Now remember that as it is our only happiness to have God to be our God (Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord) so it is our greatest misery to be none of the people of God, not to have the loving God to be our God, not to have the merciful God, the pardoning, blessing, comforting, saving God to be our God.

Thirdly, It cannot but be a most dreadful and reproachful frame of heart, To be at an utter incomppliance with God, and contradiction unto his will; his will being a Holy, Good, Righteous, Perfect, Sovereign will, unto which every creature should yield.

What would you think of that Child, or of that Servant who casts off all acknowledgement of a Father, or of a Master, and will not own their commands, but will set up their own wills against their wills! Mal 1:6. If I be a Father, where is my honor? And if I be a Master, where is my fear? So what should we think of those men, but as of a company of Atheists, who will not acknowledge the Lord God, and will not obey his voice, but reject his Word, and despise his Counsels!

Fourthly, It seems to be a very hopeless and desperate condition, and ripe for destruction, when no word of God doth a man any good, and no blessings do him any good, and no afflictions do him any good, but still he goes on in his wickedness, still he refuseth Christ, still he is unmoved and unpersuaded; why! What will the end of this man be at the last!

Fifthly, Although nothing doth this sinner good, yet he must be accountable to God for all the means which have been used to do him good, and he shall be judged of the Lord, because his hard heart hath received no good by them: God will call him to an account, for every disobedience to every command of God, and for his slighting of every request and warning, and threatening of his Word, and for neglecting and refusing every offer of Christ, &c.

Sixthly, A sinner that is destitute of all spiritual softness and tenderness, he is in danger of the powerful efficacy of every great temptation, which may easily prevail upon a heart void of Spiritual tenderness. For as a man is preserved from lesser sins, when there is tenderness in his heart: so he is open and obnoxious to great sins, where there is no tenderness of heart; And verily that he doth not upon every temptation and occasion fall into great sins, it is not because the sins are great, and that God will be greatly dishonored by them, but only because of shame and trouble which may befall him.

Seventhly, He can never be recovered out of his lost estate, by repentance and faith, till his heart be softened.

4ly. The Testimonies or Characters of a heart Spiritually soft and tender.

Now I come to the discovering evidences by which we may know whether we have indeed the hearts of flesh (i.e.) the soft and tender hearts which God hath promised to give unto his people in Covenant. If there be such a soft and tender heart given unto us, it will appear

1. By our behavior toward sin.
2. By the special activities in Conscience.

3. By the respectiveness of our hearts to the Word of God.
4. By the sense and expressions of our souls, in the cases of God's honor and dishonor.
5. By the performance of our duties both for matter and manner.
6. By the temper of our spirits in times of temptation.

First, If you have hearts Spiritually soft and tender, this will appear by the disposition and behavior of your heart towards sin. v.g.

First, Shame for sin; one of a soft heart is ashamed of sin, and for sin, as one who is ashamed of any deformity in his body, or of anything that is a reproach and dishonor unto his name: Ezra 9:6. O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face unto thee my God; for our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespasses are grown up to the heavens. Here are two expressions directly contrary to those in hardened sinners, mentioned Jer. 6:15. Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: But soft-hearted sinners are ashamed, and they do blush for shame that they have offended their God. Jer. 31:10. Surely after I was turned I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. In the former place there was shame and blushing; in this place there is shame and confusion: Ephraim was ashamed and confounded for the reproach of his youth: Confounded (i.e.) amazed, knew not what to say, or do, could not open his mouth; O such a sinner hath sinned against God! Job 7:20. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men! Luke 18:13. The Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes

to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner! One that is ashamed, keeps aloof off, looks with a dejected countenance, and is angry and vexed with himself for doing what was unworthy, and reproachful, and would fain have his offense and reproach wiped away: Thus was it with the Publican (and thus is it with every soft-hearted person) he doth by reason of his sinning judge himself unworthy unmeet to draw near to God, or to look up unto him; he is ashamed of what he hath done; dejected, vexed troubled at his sins which are appearing with him before God, and earnestly begs the Lord to remove them out of his sight by a merciful forgiveness, that his shame may appear no more.

Secondly, Grief for sinning: A soft and tender heart is a mournful and sorrowful heart; no heart so stout against sin as a soft heart; and no heart so mournful for sin as a soft heart, which is therefore called a broken heart, and a grieved heart, and an afflicted heart, and a weeping and lamenting heart. A person of a soft heart mourns more for one sin, than a hardened person doth for all his sins; how bitterly did Peter weep for his one sin! Yet Pharaoh never mourned for his many sins; a person of a soft heart mourns more for one sin, than for all the afflictions that ever have or shall befall him; *dolore appreciationis*, & *dolore voluntatis*, & *dolore perennitatis* & *durationis*. He that hath a soft heart, mourns and grieves

1. For his own sins: Ezek. 7:16. They that escape of them, shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like Doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, everyone for his iniquity. David that man of a soft heart, how mourning and lamenting for his sin! My sin is ever before me, Psal. 51:3. I water my couch with my tears,

Psal 6:6. Those in Zechariah mourning as one mourneth for his only son; And in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first born, Zech. 12:10. Mary Magdalene weeping and washing the feet of Christ with her tears, Luke 7:38. Peter remembered the words of Jesus, who said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice; and he went out and wept bitterly, Mat. 26:75. The Penitent Corinthian, so mourning for his sin, that Paul writes unto the Church, by all means to forgive and comfort him, least he should be swallowed up with over much sorrow, 2 Cor. 2:7. Now by the way observe, that persons whose hearts have been really soft and tender, they have mourned not only for their gross sins, but also for their lesser sins; not only for corporal sins, but also for their spiritual sins; for pride, hypocrisy, vain-glory, unbelief; not only for outward sins, but also for inward sins; not only for the sins in life, but also for their sins in heart; for the sin of nature (original sin) and the secret motions thereof; not only for his sinful doings, but also for his sins which do accompany his best doings; not only for the sins which they have committed alone, but also for the sins which they have caused others to commit, either by their persuasion, or by their evil example: Not only for their sins of knowledge, but also for their sins of ignorance, as he prayed, Lord forgive me my known sins, and Lord forgive me my unknown sins; so, &c. not only for present sins, but for sins long since committed and pardoned.

2. For the sins of others, as well as for his own sins: Psal. 119:136. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law. Ezek. 9:4. Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. Jer. 13:17. If you will not hear it, my



soul shall weep in secret places for your pride. Exod. 32:31. Oh this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them God's of gold! Luke 19:41. When he came near, he beheld the City, and wept over it. The sins of others do grieve the Lord; (Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, Psal. 95:10) and dishonor him; and how can a tender heart endure to see his God and Father grieved and dishonored, but his soul must grieve and mourn, be afflicted and troubled! Paul reproveth the Corinthians because they grieved not for the sin of the incestuous Corinthian.

Thirdly, Fear to sin: True tenderness of heart always breeds the greatest care to please God, and the greatest fear to displease God: where there is no fear to sin, there is no tenderness of heart; and where there is true tenderness of heart, there is an exceeding fear to sin against God: Prov. 23:17 Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Act. 9:31. The Churches walked in the fear of the Lord.

There is one who sets out seven degrees of fear, which are to be found in every truly tender-hearted child of God. viz.

1. He is afraid to commit gross sins, though never so secretly, as you find in Joseph when tempted by his Mistress; O saith he, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God! Gen. 39:9. And in David when he was strongly tempted to take revenge of his mortal enemy, and had an opportunity also put into his hands, yet he durst not do it, and why, because he durst not sin against God! Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's Anointed, and be guiltless! 1 Sam. 26:9.

2. He is afraid to commit little sins: what a small matter had it been for Daniel and the three children being brought into Babylon, to have eaten of the meat, and to have drunk of the

wine which Nebuchadnezzar appointed for them? But Daniel saw it was such meat as was contrary to the Ceremonial Law then in force, and therefore he would not defile himself with it, Dan. 1:8.

3. He is afraid to omit the least duty: Moses was commanded to fetch the people of Israel with their cattle and substance out of Egypt: Pharaoh consents for the people and their little ones, but he would have the Flocks and Herds stayed; by no means saith Moses, Our Cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind, Exod. 10:24,26. So in the setting up of the Tabernacle, and in all other Services commanded by God, he was faithful in all things, he durst not leave out one knop, not one tach, not one pin which the Lord prescribed about the Tabernacle, &c.

4. He is afraid to serve the Lord carelessly and negligently: Awake Psaltery and Harp, I myself will awake early, Psal. 108:2. With my whole heart have I sought thee, Psal. 119:10. Not slothful in business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. 12:11.

5. He is afraid to do anything that is of evil report, which though in itself it may be lawful, yet if advantage may thereby be taken to cause Religion or the profession to be reproached and evil spoken of, he is afraid to do that thing: 1 Cor. 6:1. Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to Law before the unjust, and not before the Saints? And why might they not do so, what unlawfulness was there in that? Is not civil Magistracy ordained of God? 'tis true; but though all things are lawful, all things are not expedient, 1 Cor. 6:12. At that time such applications would have exposed the Christian Religion and

Profession unto scorn and contempt amongst unbelievers, &c. Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; he speaks it concerning things indifferent, 1 Cor. 10:32.

6. He is afraid not only of apparent evils, but also of the appearance of evil. 1 Thes. 5:22. Abstain from all appearance of evil; if it hath the look or show of evil, it is enough to a tender heart to avoid it, and abstain from it. If it looks like pride, if it looks like unchastity, if it looks like unbefitting service of God, if it looks like persecuting of the Gospel, &c. like error, idolatry, &c.

7. He is afraid not only to do anything that is evil (Let not any iniquity have dominion over me, Psal. 119:133) nor only to speak any evil (Set a watch O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips, Psal. 141:3) but also to think anything that is evil: Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, Psal. 19:14. So Deut. 15:9. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart; the seventh year, the year of release is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, &c. So Ezek. 7:10. Let none of you imagine evil against his brother in his heart. So Job 31:26. If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness. Ver, 27, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, &c. You see by all this, that where there is true softness or tenderness of heart, there is a singular fear to sin against God, or to offend him.

Fourthly, Zeal against sin: A soft and tender heart is a zealous heart; a heart earnestly and inflamedly set against sin; not coldly and faintly, but stoutly and courageously; And that

First, Against our own sins: a person of a tender heart is zealously carried against his own sins; which appears thus.

1. By the impartial opposition of them; he will not hide and spare any one sin in himself, neither pleasant nor profitable, nether great nor small, neither open nor secret, but he hates every false way, Psal. 119, yea he hates all vain thoughts, and cleanseth himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. 7:1.

2. By the deep and deadly persecution of them: It doth not suffice that he disallows and condemns sin in respect of his judgment, not that he abstains from sin in respect of his practice, but he strives after the utter extirpation of sin; He lays the Ax to the root of the tree, Matth. 3:10. Crucifies the flesh in the affections thereof, Gal. 5:24. And mortifies the members of sin, Col. 3:5.

3. By the Irreconcilable resolution against them; He will never admit of league, or friendship, or have any peace with them, but loathes and hates, and resists, and conflicts, and fights with them all his days; and if at any time he be surprised and foiled, he riseth again and renews the war more firmly against them, by calling in all the helps and powers that make against his sins; the power of Christ, and the power of the Spirit, and the power of the promises, and the power of grace.

4. By cutting off all the Succors of sin, in occasions and temptations, yea many times denying himself the use of lawful things, lest by them he should be accidentally overcome by sin.

5. By watching his deceitful heart, and binding it with special vows and Covenants from starting aside, and hearkening unto

sin in the motions of it anymore.

Secondly, Against the sins of others. A soft and tender heart would not sin itself, nor would that any other should sin against God, and offend him, and therefore (in a proportion to its sphere) it will act against sin wheresoever it finds sin: Sometimes by entreating, as Lot unto the men of Sodom, I pray you brethren do not so wickedly, Gen. 19:7. Sometime by directing: Judah saith unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Gen. 37:26. Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh; and his brethren were content, ver. 27. Sometimes by reproof, as Elijah to Ahab; I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord, 1 King 2:4. And Nathan to David, thou art the man, 2 Sam. 12:7, and Job to his wife; thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Job 2:10. Sometimes by authoritative opposing and punishing, domestically in the family, as David: Psa. 101:7. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. Public in the state, and for this remember three admirable instances of zeal against sin by godly persons of public place and authority.

The first in Asa, who removed Maacha his Mother from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove, 2 Chron. 15:16.

The second in Josiah, who burnt all the vessels made for Baal, and put down the idolatrous Priests, and Groves, and brake down the houses of the Sodomites, defiled Topheth, beat down all their Altars, and high places, and images, and all old relics of Idolatry. The third in Nehemiah: See the history of his zeal, Neh. 13:15. In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and

bringing in sheaves, and lading Asses, as also Wine, Grapes, and figs, &c. and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals &c. Ver. 17. Then I contended with the Nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Ver. 21. I testified against the Merchants and sellers, Why do ye lodge about the wall? If you do so again I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath. Ver. 23. In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. Ver. 24. And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, &c. Ver. 25. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons, or for yourselves, &c.

Fifthly, Special cares, and requests to be kept, and blessings when kept from sin: Psal. 18:23. I kept myself from mine iniquity. Job 31:1. I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I look upon a maid? Psal. 39:1. I said I will take heed unto my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. Psal. 119:11. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. Psal. 119:133. Order my step; in thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me; and so for blessing when kept from sin. 1 Sam. 25:32. David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me. Ver. 32. And blessed be thy advice, blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand: So when the ten Tribes and an half returned, the rest blessed God that they were kept from sinning, Josh. 22:33.

Sixthly, Restlessness under the commission of sin, and importunity for the pardon of it, and the testimonies of God's reconciled favor. O

how doth the tender heart take on, and judge, and condemn itself, if at any time it fall into sin! O what a fool! What a beast! And why have I dealt thus with my God! Why did I deal so unkindly with my kind God? Is this my love unto him? Is this my fear of him? Is this my tenderness of his glory? O my soul! What hast thou done! Why hast thou broken the bonds of friendship! What hath the Lord been to thee, that thou hast thus sinned against him! And now the man falls a weeping, and lamenting, as if his heart would break; and after some respite he thinks of his father again; but he is ashamed to come to him, and yet he will go to him and return with weeping and supplications: O I cannot live thus, I will home again to my fathers house, and say, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, Luke 15. Though shame and confusions belong to me, yet mercies and forgiveness to him; Dan. 9. O Lord, heal my back-sliding's, and forgive my back-sliding's, and receive me graciously, Hos. 14:2. And return again in mercy, and make thy face to shine upon thy servant for the Lord's sake!

Thus have I opened unto you the first Character or evidence of a heart spiritually soft and tender; it is a heart filled with shame for sin, and with grief for sin, and with fear to sin, and with zeal against sin, and with care to be kept from sin, and with restlessness till it can find God mercifully pardoning sin! O that such tenderness, and that such fruits of tenderness might be found in all our hearts!

Secondly, A second Character by which we may know that we have the true spiritual softness and tenderness of heart, is the activity, and life, and power in conscience; when God gives any one a soft and tender heart, he gives him a conscience arrayed and enabled with other qualities and powers than in times past. The Conscience heretofore was asleep, but now it is awakened; heretofore it was blind, but now it sees; heretofore it was silent, but now it speaks;

heretofore it was loose and large, but now it is strict and narrow; heretofore it was dull and weak, but now it is quick and powerful; heretofore it was stupid and senseless, but now it is apprehensive and active: But I must not speak of all things about this; that which I will pitch on, is this, the special Activities of Conscience (where the heart is indeed tender)

1. Concerning the good estate and wellbeing of our souls.
2. Concerning particular facts, as to our doing or walking.

First, Where the heart is tender, there Conscience becomes active to clear out the good and safe estate, and well-being of our souls; It will not suffer the poor soul to delude and deceive itself in matters of life and death; to lay no grounds, nor to venture all upon false bottoms and grounds of salvation and damnation, of favor and wrath. O, saith Conscience, thy soul is immortal and is for eternity, and there are ways to that eternity of God's making, and of men's making; there is a real relation to Christ, and there is a seeming relation to Christ; there is the power of godliness, and there is the form of godliness; there were virgins with oil, and there were virgins with lamps only; there are some which believe and are saved, and there are some that believe but for a time, and perish: If a man mistake himself, he is undone forever; hereupon it is, that Conscience in tender hearts dares not take up the estate of the soul upon trust, and proud confidence, and vain pretenses, or common grounds, or every appearance, but puts them on, and makes them to study the Word of God, and to prove what is the good and acceptable will of God, and what indeed are the marks which do accompany salvation; what are the infallible tokens of life, of union with Christ, of the new creature, of a child of God born of the Spirit; it causeth us to search our hearts, and try our ways, to prove and examine ourselves whether Christ be



in us of a truth, to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; it will not suffer us to be careless, sluggish, dallying, delaying, &c. Conscience takes those saving promises of the Word as unquestionable, that a man must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ that will be saved, and that he must repent that will have his sins pardoned, and that he must be regenerated and born again who will enter into the kingdom of heaven: And hereupon Conscience puts us on (if our hearts be tender) exceedingly to make clear and evident the assumption: I do truly believe, I do truly repent, I am born again, and my sins are pardoned, and my soul shall be saved. A tender heart would be sure that it is in a state of life and favor.

Secondly, Where the heart is tender, there conscience is alive, in respect of the particular facts of our lives whether good or evil.

For good actions which concern us in our places and callings, Conscience puts us upon the careful and sincere practice of them, will not suffer us to omit and neglect them, but inclines and hearkens unto them, although danger and trouble be incident unto us for the performance of them: Act. 4:19. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. Ver. 20. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. Act. 21:13. Then Paul answered, What mean you to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. Josh. 24:25. If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

For evil actions, Conscience puts forth itself against them, partly by warning, It is evil if thou do it not; partly by threatening, It will be bitter unto thee, it will deceive thee, and break thy peace and confidences; partly in striving with us, and presenting argument upon argument, consideration upon consideration; God's favor on the one hand, and God's displeasure on the other hand: the happiness of walking uprightly, the shortness of sins deceitful pleasures, &c. and all to keep us from sinning; which if they prevail not, then Conscience begins to be unquiet, and it smites for sinning, and accuses, and condemns, and troubles, and vexes, and will never be quiet until repentance be renewed, and God appears to be pacified.

Thirdly, If we have hearts spiritually soft and tender, this will appear by the respectiveness of our hearts to the word of God.

And there are ten Properties of a tender heart in relation to the Word of God.

1. It sets up the Word as a Light and Rule: So Psal. 119:105. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths. Ver. 133. Order my steps in thy Word.

2. It studies the Word, and meditates therein, to understand the mind of God concerning it: Psal. 119:15. I meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. Ver. 148. Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy Word.

3. It lays up and gives special heed unto what God saith in his Word: 2 Pet. 1:19. We have also a more sure word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed. Psal. 119:11. Thy Word have I hid within my heart, that I might not sin against thee. Prov. 7:1. My son, keep my words, and lay up my commands

with thee. Ver. 3. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

4. It stands in awe of the Word: Psal. 119:161. My heart stands in awe of thy Word.

5. It is led and guided by the Word: Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, Psal. 73:24. Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors, Psal. 119:24. My sheep hear my voice, and follow me, Joh. 10:17.

6. It keeps close to the Word in all matters of faith and practice; receives all, and admits no more; will not go without it, and dares not strive against it.

7. It conforms itself unto the Word: Teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it even to the end, Psal. 119:33. All that the Lord hath said, will we do and be obedient, Exod. 24:7. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Psal. 119:5. He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths, Isa. 2:3. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine whereto ye were delivered, Rom. 6:17. Molded, cast.

8. It is quickly reduced, wrought upon, and recovered by the Word: As in David's case, when Nathan said, Thou art the man: 2 Sam. 12:7. David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord, ver. 13. So Judges 2:2. Ye have not obeyed my voice; why have you done this? Ver. 4. And it came to pass when the Angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lift up their voice and wept. Ver. 5. And they called the name of that place weepers Bochim, and they sacrificed there unto the Lord.

9. It will often review and try itself by the Word, lest it hath sinned, or lest it should sin against God: Psal. 77:6. I communed with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search. Psal. 119:59. I considered my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

10. It desires and endeavors to comply with all the Word of God, and to fulfill all the will of God, and to walk according to it in all things: I have lived in all good Conscience unto this day, Act. 23:1. We trust we have a good conscience, Heb. 13:18. I have respect unto all thy commandments, Psal. 119:6. Zacharias and Elizabeth walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances before the Lord blameless, Luke 1:6.

Fourthly, If we have hearts Spiritually soft and tender, this will appear by our sensibleness and choice behavior in the cases of God's honor and dishonor: This I think is one of the fullest discoveries of a soft and tender heart, and therefore I will insist the more upon it by showing unto you,

1. The several ways how God is honored.
2. The several expressions of a tender heart in relation unto God's honor.
3. The several ways of God's dishonor.
4. The several affections and workings of a tender heart in the case of God's dishonor.

First, The several ways of God's being honored; God may be and is honored,

1. As to his glorious Name and Attributes; (Deut. 28:58. That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful Name, the Lord thy God.) When we do acknowledge, and admire, and exalt God in his holiness and goodness, and mercifulness, and Omnipotency, and wisdom, and greatness, and authority and justice, and faithfulness, &c. Exod. 15:11. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the God's! Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders! Job 9:4. He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength. Exod. 34:6. The Lord, the Lord God merciful, and gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth. Ver. 7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sins, and that will by no means clear the guilty. Deuter. 7:9. Know that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God which keepeth Covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.

2. As to his worship and service: Psal. 29:2. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his Name; or as it is in the Hebrew, the honor of his Name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. When we set up the true worship of God, and serve him only, and worship him only in Spirit and in truth, and keep faithful unto it, now we do honor and glorify our God: Thou hast not honored me with thy sacrifices, Isa. 43:23. The place where God is worshipped, is called the place where his honor dwelleth.

3. As to his Word and truths, when they are magnified, believed, and embraced, and upheld, and obeyed; when they have liberty, and prosperity, and success of efficacy,

4. As to his works of Providence, whether merciful, respecting the good of his people; or judicial, respecting the punishment of

his adversaries, in both which very much of God is to be seen, and admired and blessed.

Secondly, Now a soft and tender heart is exceedingly affected with God's honor and glory; and with all the ways (public and private) for the honoring of God: Such a person will take much pains to recover and restore the honor of God, as you may see in Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, and Josiah, to restore the true worship of God; such a person will be at much cost to promote the honor of God: 1 Chron. 29:3. Because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine one proper goods, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God (over and above all that I have prepared for thy holy house) even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver to overlay the house withal: such a person will exceedingly rejoice in any way by which God is honored: 2 Joh. ver. 4. I rejoiced that I found of thy children walking in truth. 3. Joh. ver. 3,4. So Paul in Phil. 1:18. That Christ is preached I do rejoice, yea and I will rejoice: So David, Psal. 122:1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord: Such a person will be content to lose his own honor, so that God may have honor: David will be yet more vile, and counted so, that he may the more promote God's honor; 2 Sam. 6:20,21,22. John must decrease, that Christ may increase, and this was the fulfilling of his joy: Joh. 3:29,30. Such a person will make all his parts, his gifts, his graces, his power and authority, yea his very life serviceable to the honor and glory of God, yea his very eating and drinking; Whether ye eat or drink, er whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God, &c. 2 Cor. 10:31.

Thirdly, Now on the contrary, there are several ways of dishonoring of God, both public and private, as swearing, blaspheming, looseness of walking, pulling down his true worship, setting up a false worship;

forsaking the truth, and holding error; reproaching the true God, the Persons of the Trinity, the Gospel, the whole Scripture, the Ordinances of Christ, and the practical ways of Christ in holiness and godliness, &c.

Well, A soft and tender heart is passionately sensible and working in the apprehension of any dishonor cast on God; a person of such a heart will be troubled and mourn in this case: When Hezekiah heard the blasphemies vomited out by Rabshakeh against the Lord, he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord; this day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy, Isa. 63:1,2,3.

Will be stirred in his spirit; as Paul when he saw the people of Athens given to idolatry, his spirit was stirred in him, Act. 17:16, he could not bear it, he could not hold, he must testify against it.

He will put himself to the utmost of his place and power, as Phineas did against Zimri and Cosby; and as Josiah did against all the idolatry and wickedness in his days.

Will hazard and expose all his honor, and estate, and his very life, as Elijah did, and Daniel did, and the three children, and those in Rev. 12, who loved not their lives to the death.

Will bear any reproach and injury done unto themselves, more patiently and quietly, than those done to God; he can sit down under them, and weep, and makes his moan to God, when they tear his own name; but when comes to God's Name, now his zeal is kindled, &c.

Fifthly, If we have hearts spiritually soft and tender, this will appear by the acquitement of ourselves in duties both for matter and manner.

1. For the matter; concerning which, observe these conclusions.

1. A person of a tender heart makes conscience of duties both to God and to men, not only of duties unto God, nor only of duties unto men, but of the duties which he doth respectively owe unto them both: Acts 24:16. Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men. Mat. 22:21. Render therefore to Caesar the things which are Caesars, and unto God the things which are God's. Tit. 2:11,12. The grace of God teacheth us to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world. Mar. 12:29,30. The first of all the Commandments is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. Verse 31. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Many plead a conscientiousness of duty unto men, they dare not but deal justly, and squarely, and honestly; and yet they make no conscience of duties unto God; no conscience of praying, of keeping the Sabbath, of fearing an oath, of walking holily; and many pretend a conscientiousness of duty unto God, but yet they make no conscience of duty unto men; they dare to revile, and to control, and to oppress, and rob a man of his right, and to slander and reproach: Neither of these are persons of soft and tender hearts, but of deceitful and hypocritical hearts, who fear not God, and follow not him, but their own lusts; A person of a tender heart indeed, dares not withhold from God what is due to God, nor from man what God requires to be done in way of duty unto man: but as the Apostle speaks of subjection unto powers ordained of God, That it must be for conscience sake, Rom. 15:5, so say I of a tender heart, it performs duties to God, and duties to man, even for conscience sake; it dares not defraud the one or the other.



**Object. But will some say, What if God and man be contrary in their commands, how can I obey and perform duty to them both?**

Sol. I answer.

1. There is no duty which God commands to himself, and unto men, which admits of contrariety, but of subordination.
2. If man commands anything of us contrary to God's command, we must do (as the Apostle did) obey God rather than man.

Secondly, A person of a tender heart, makes conscience of all duties to God, and of all duties unto all sorts of men unto whom he owes duty. Of all duties unto God; of fearing of him, as of praying, and of praises, as well as of rejoicing in him; of repenting of sins, as well as of believing the pardon of sins; of walking uprightly, as well as of trusting in the promises; of keeping the Sabbath, &c.

Of all duties unto all sorts of men: If they be his Superiors, to honor and yield obedience to them; if they be his Inferiors, to regard and condescend unto them; if they be his enemies, to love them, and to pray for them; if they be poor, to pity and help them; on whatsoever, and to whatsoever God is pleased to lay a command, there the person of a tender heart, hath a readiness and willingness to obey.

Thirdly, The person of a tender heart makes conscience of relative duties: There is a Relation twixt;

1. The Magistrate and the people.
2. 'Twixt the Minister and his flock.
3. 'Twixt the husband and his wife.

4. 'Twixt the Parent and the child.

5. 'Twixt the Master and the Servant.

And many are the duties which reciprocally do concern all these persons in all their several relations; and any one who is of a soft and tender heart, makes conscience of them all.

The tender Magistrate makes conscience of governing and ruling, and believing, and protecting, and reclaiming, and punishing, and rewarding; and dare not be unjust, neglect, or unfaithful, or oppressing, or out-facing, or over-bearing; and so people of tender hearts dare not to be disobedient, unruly, reviling, despising, &c.

The tender Minister makes conscience of feeding his flock with wholesome food, and not to keep back any of the counsel of God concerning them; he is instant and diligent in his work, he instructs and exhorts, and warns, and reproveth, and comforts according to the several conditions of his people; and the people will pray, will love, will honor, will encourage, will obey them that have the rule over them in the Lord.

The tender husband will love and cherish his wife; and the tender wife will love and please, and reverence her husband.

The tender Parent will pray for, will instruct, will teach his children, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and the tender child will hearken, &c.

Fourthly, A person of a tender heart and soft heart, makes conscience of all the duties respecting the times and changes that do befall him. He meets with times of adversity, and with times of prosperity; with times of love, and with times of hatred; with times of

peace, and with times of trouble; with times of light, and with times of darkness; with times of God's clear presence, and with times of God's desertions. And there are several and distinct duties proper unto these variations, the which he strives to draw out, and act in their time.

If his time be the time of prosperity, he is doing whilst he hath that time, and to honor God with his increase, and to bless him, and to do for him; and if his be the time of adversity, he desires patient submission unto the hand of God, and special instruction, and improvement, and refining, &c.

In a high estate he will love his God, and in a low estate he will by faith live still upon his God.

Fifthly, A person of a tender heart, will make conscience of duties.

1. Though never so small and little; thou shalt not lay a stumbling block before the blind, nor cause the deaf, &c. thou shalt fear the Lord thy God.

2. Though never so great and difficult, and strict; to deny himself, to enter in at the strait gate, to render good for evil, blessing for cursing.

3. Though contemned and reproached by profane men, and erroneous men, or disaccepted by those unto whom it is performed.

4. Though dangerous and exposing, &c. as Daniel of praying, the three children of worshipping God only, the Apostles of preaching Christ.

2ly. For the manner of performing these duties;

A tender heart hath a special regard unto that; he will serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, Heb, 12:28. And as David, after the due order, 1 Chro. 15:13.

The duties which he performs they are by him done

1. Willingly: Psal. 110:3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Rom. 7:19. The good that I would do. And Isa. 26:8. The desire of our soul is to thy Name: freewill-offerings.

2. Delightfully: 1 Joh. 5:3. His Commandments are not grievous; Nay, Psal. 40:8. I delight to do thy will. It was Christ's meat and drink to do the will of his Father that sent him, Joh. 4:34.

3. Humbly, as Paul; Act. 20:19. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears.

4. Believingly; resting on the strength of Christ for their performance: Phil. 4:13. I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. And he acknowledgeth all that is done, to be done in his strength: 1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me: and expecting all the acceptance of duties for Christ's sake: Rev. 8:3. The prayers of the Saints were offered up with incense upon the golden Altar.

5. Sincerely; with a plain, honest, obediential heart, with all his heart, with his very soul and spirit; in truth without guile; and with a direct, pure, and single respect unto God's glory.

These are the desires, and these are the endeavors thus to serve and obey the Lord, by every truly soft and tender heart; and if he misseth, or is interrupted in any of these, his heart is troubled and grieved,

and he strives and wrestles with God to cloth him with the strength of his Spirit, that he may thus serve his God according to his will.

Sixthly, If our hearts be soft and tender hearts, this will appear by the temper of our spirits in the occurrences of temptations.

There are temptations and suggestions

1. From Satan; he many times presents unto the minds (even of the people of God) thoughts of Atheism, and blasphemy, and other vile and inglorious thoughts. O what an affrightment, amazement, and grievous burden are these unto a person of a soft and tender heart! They do even crack and crush his spirits, and take away all rest from him, and fill his heart with tears, and complaints, and prayers.

2. From the World, to withdraw from God and Christ, and the truth and holy walking, partly by reproaches, scoffs, threatening's, restraints, and punishments; these a tender heart will bear, and suffer, and rejoice in; and by them grows more resolute for Christ, and to hold fast his truth, and to walk with him: And partly by profits, pleasure, friendship, fears, and honors: these a tender heart will trample underfoot, rather than sin against Christ; Like Moses, who refused to be called the Son of Pharaohs daughter, Hebr. 11:24. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Ver. 25. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, ver. 26.

3. From our own hearts, in several wicked motions, to several vile affections: And if your heart be tender, it will not dally with them in contemplation, nor yield unto them in prosecution, but will resist them, and pray against them, and strive to have them mortified and subdued, and instead of them, would have a daily frame of holy and heavenly thoughts reigning in the mind.

#### SECT. IV.

Use 2. Doth the Lord promise to give unto all his people a soft and tender heart, a heart of flesh? Then by all means let everyone of us strive to get this heart which God promiseth to give.

Now for this I will propound, 1. Some Motives to persuade you to get a soft and tender heart. 2ly. I will show you the way and means to compass and enjoy it.

##### 1. The Motives to get a soft and tender heart.

First, The possibility of getting this heart; God can give it, therefore it is possible to get it; God can take away the heart of stone, and he can give the heart of flesh. Again, God hath promised to give it, therefore it is possible; why should any one think it more impossible for God to give any spiritual good which he hath promised, then to give any outward good which he hath promised? He having as much power, and willingness, and faithfulness to perform spiritual promises, as he hath to perform temporal promises. Nay once more, he hath given this soft and tender heart; do you not read in Scripture, and do you not find in your own experiences many persons of soft and tender hearts? And who but God hath made their hearts soft? It was God who subdued the pride, and stoutness, and hardness, and rebellion of their hearts; and it was God who made their hearts humble, and sensible, and mournful, and teachable, and pliable; is not God as able, as willing, as powerful now, as ever he was?

Secondly, The necessity of having this heart; can you be saved without it? What will become of a hardened sinner? Of the disobedient sinner, of the sinner that doth and will walk contrary unto God, that will not hearken unto him; shall heaven open to let him into glory, who will not open his heart to let in grace? Can you be brought into this without it! If your hearts continue hardened, will they not continue unbelieving! And if they continue unbelieving, will they not continue Christless! And if they continue Christless, will they not continue hopeless! Ephes. 2:12. Without Christ, having no hope: For Col. 1:27. It is Christ in you the hope of glory: can you find pardon of your sins without it? Do you find in all the Bible pardon of sins either conferred, or promised unto the hardened sinner! Wrath and destruction are threatened unto that sinner; but mercy and forgiveness are promised only to the soft, and mourning, and tenderhearted penitent. Thus you see that there is a necessity to get this soft and tender heart, if you will be saved, if you will have Christ, or be Christ's, and if you will be pardoned. Ergo.

Thirdly, The excellency of this heart; As an hard heart is a base heart, so the soft and tender heart is an excellent heart; Pharaoh stands upon Record for a hard heart, and it is his infamy as long as the world lasts. And Josiah stands upon Record for a person of a tender heart, and it will remain for his glory as long as the world continues.

There are five things which are a man's glory and excellency.

1. One that he belongs to God in a special relation, that God is his Father, and that he is one of the children of God; why! The person of a soft and tender heart is indeed in this relation; he is in Covenant with God, God is his God and Father, and he is a child of God.

2. A second, that he is a new creature; that new creature is an excellent creature, he is a glorious creature, he is changed into the glorious image of Christ, 2 Cor. 3:18. And made partaker of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. Now every person whose heart God hath made soft and tender, he is a new creature; God hath changed his heart, which was a heart of stone, but now is made a heart of flesh.

3. A third, that he is an humble person: Humility is an ornament, and God much esteems of the humble, and puts honor upon them, and will give grace to them; but he abhors and resists the proud: Now every tender-hearted person is an humble person; and the more softness of heart there is, the more humbleness of heart there is; they always go together, as hardness of heart and pride do; David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Job, Paul, the Publican, the Prodigal, were persons of soft hearts, and of humble hearts.

4. A fourth, that he is one who loves the Lord exceedingly: Is not this a man's honor and excellency to love his God! O love the Lord all ye Saints, Psal. 31. Saw ye him whom my soul loveth! Cant. 3. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, &c. Is it not an honor to the wife that she loves her husband! And to any of us to love our friend! And to the child that he loves his father! Thus doth every person of a soft and tender heart, he loves his God; he fears to sin and offend his God, why! He loves him; and he is zealous against any dishonor done to God, why! Because he loves him.

5. A fifth, that he is obedient to the voice and will of God; ready to hearken, ready to follow, willing to obey, careful to come up fully to the mind and command of God: Is not this our honor



and our excellency? Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth; And O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Surely it is a shame and reproach to be disobedient to God; For 1. Sam. 15:22. To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Lambs. Ver. 23. But rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry: And certainly the tender heart is an obedient heart, very ready to receive the Law from the mouth of God.

Fourthly, The Benefits and helpfulness of this heart: It would be of wonderful use and advantage unto your sundry ways.

1. It would be an help to repentance, both initial and renewed: It would help you to repent of your old sinful course of life, to bring you off from it with shame and grief, it would not suffer you to continue in such ways of dishonoring God any longer; but would hasten and compel you out of it, with grief and detestation; you would quickly cast away your sins as a menstruous cloth, saying, Get ye hence; if the heart were once made soft and tender, it would recover you out of particular falls, you would quickly see and acknowledge them, and bewail them, and return to your first husband, and do your first works, if you had but soft and tender hearts; as David, Hezekiah, Peter; and the Church of Ephesus, &c.

2. It would be a daily preservative against sin, and temptations unto sin: tenderness is the foundation of fear, and fear is the Guardian of the soul against sin. No man is more secured against sin, than the man of tenderness, and of faith, and of fear; as the hardened sinner is presumptuous, and will venture on any sin, and on the occasions thereof; so a tender heart is fearful of

the least sin, and keeps off from all the occasions thereof: And from these two Consectaries do flow: viz.

Great peace in conscience; For it is sin committed which disturbs and disquiets the Conscience, and breaks up the peace of it; but the more that any person is kept from sin, the better doth he walk with peace and joy of Spirit: Great peace have they that keep thy Law, Psal. 119:165.

Great confidence in access to God: 1 Joh. 3:21. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And (ver. 22) Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight. Psal. 66:18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Ver. 19. But verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voice of my Prayer. Job 11:13. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hand toward him. Ver. 14. If iniquity be in thine heart, put it far away. Ver. 15, then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot: So Zophar.

3. It would be a Table-book for God to write his will upon: what the Apostle spake of the Corinthians, that would be affirmed of us: 2 Cor. 3:3. Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in Tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart: The heart of flesh is the Table on which the Spirit of God writes the will of God; his will is there engraven, it makes impression, it admits and receives the will of God, there it is to be seen and read: Thy Law is within my heart, said David, Psal. 40:8. How kindly would the Word of God take with us! How powerfully and effectually would it work upon us! How easily would it prevail, and rule, and order us, how wonderfully would it prosper amongst us, run and be glorified! Why, all our souls

would be convinced, and converted, and allured, and brought into Christ, and walk in Christ, and be obedient to the faith, and become the servants of righteousness; if we had soft and tender hearts, we would no longer walk contrary to God, or to his Word, we would no longer hate instruction and despise counsel, and resist the Spirit, but would presently fall down at the feet of God, and desire to be taught the ways of God, and be willing, and ready, and glad to walk in his paths.

4. It would be a means of upright walking: There are three sorts of people in the world;

Some that walk not at all with God; as all profane Atheists, who walk without God, and contrary unto God, by reason of the blindness and hardness of their hearts.

Some that walk unevenly with God, only in some things, and in some places, and at sometimes; as hypocritical and temporary believers, by reason of the unsoundness and deceitfulness of their hearts.

Some that walk cordially and uprightly before the Lord, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, keeping close to the rule in the whole course of their life: (Isa. 66:7. The way of the just is uprightness) they are undefiled in the way, do no iniquity, but seek the Lord with the whole heart: walk in the Law of the Lord, and in his ways, Psal. 119:1,2,3.

Now softness or tenderness of heart is a special means of this upright walking: For

1. It raiseth in the heart a universal regard to all the Commandments of God, Psal. 119:6. And ver. 10, would not

wander from the Commandments, and to walk in all well-pleasing before him.

2. It fills the heart with a hatred and fear of all sin, that it may not offend the Lord in anything, nor at any time, nor in any place: Still seeing him who is invisible: Job 31:4. Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps! Prov. 5:21. The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.

3. It lifts up the glory of God; that is the great end, and aim, and scope, and motive to a tender heart; he doth all to the glory of God, and so that Christ may be magnified.

5. It would be a means of promoting the knowledge of Christ, and the power of godliness, and of casting down whatsoever is contrary to sound Doctrine, and unto the ways of godliness; for it would fill the hearts of men with spiritual compassion to souls with zeal, and it would draw out their graces, and gifts, and powers in a right way for God, and for the good and salvation of others. If Magistrates had but as much tenderness of heart in relation to the interest of God, as to their own interest, they would be more quick and active for God than for themselves; they would justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked; they would countenance the faithful in the Land, and condemn the profane; they would honor and exalt the truth of God, and disgrace and repress the errors and blasphemies against God and his truths; they would encourage every godly person, and they would appear against all open ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

If Ministers had more tenderness of heart, they would (in their places also) give all diligence to make Christ known, and the truths of Christ, and contend for them, and oppose men of corrupt minds, and

that which is Antichrist indeed, and they would exceedingly persuade, and encourage even to the knowledge of the truth, and to the love of the truth, and to walk in all manner of holiness and godliness: and they would reprove, threaten, warn, and declare the wrath of God against all sorts of wickedness in all sorts of men.

If Parents, and Masters of Families had this tender heart, they would not suffer ignorance and looseness in their dwellings; but on the contrary would study and take pains to instruct and teach their children and servants, and would reprove and correct, &c. How would they pray and strive on the behalf of knowledge, and faith, and holiness, and fear of God, and of walking with God! Verily the whole Land would in a short time, be made a habitation of holiness, a Land flowing with knowledge, and fear of the Lord, had we more of this tenderness of heart, which would undoubtedly make us more zealous, and industrious for the glory of God.

6. It would be a special help unto steadfastness, and perseverance to hold out and continue to the end: Jer. 32:40. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. As long as fear holds, steadfastness doth hold; and as long as tenderness of heart continues, the fear will continue. Again, where the heart is soft and tender, it makes us to be much in Prayer, and diligent and serious in our communion with God, and to rest on his Arm, acknowledging that our standing and safety is not in our strength, but in the presence and influence of his grace.

2ly. The Means how to compass a soft and tender heart.

First, You must go to the Lord by Prayer for it; a sinner can harden his own heart, but God only can soften the heart. If four things were wrought in the heart; it would be soft and tender. viz. 1. An

experimental Sensation. 2. A mournful Humiliation. 3. A spirit of Fear. 4. A yieldingness and pliability of the heart to the will of God.

**Object. True, will some say; but who can work these things in the heart?**

Sol. That can God, and he hath promised to work every one of them in our hearts, if we do earnestly and unfeignedly seek him:

1. He can make us to see, to feel, to remember, to consider our sins, and our doings which have not been good: Job 34:32. That which I see not, teach thou me, &c. Job 13:26. Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth: Ezek. 16:61. Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed.

2. He can make the heart mourning, and humbling, and lamenting: Zac. 12:10. They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c. Ezek. 7:16. All of them mourning, everyone for his iniquity.

3. He can put his fear in their hearts: Jer. 32:40. I will put my fear in their hearts. And Hose. 3:5. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness.

4. He can make the heart yielding and pliable unto his Word and Will: Psal. 68:18. Thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them. Acts 9:6. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Jer. 31:33. I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

Secondly, You must to his Word, which is the hammer to break, and the fire to melt the heart: Acts 2:37. When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the

Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 2 Chron. 34:27. Thou diddest humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his Word, &c.

**Object. But many men hear the Word, and that a long time, and yet their hearts are not at all softened by it; therefore it cannot be a means to soften the heart.**

Sol. I answer.

1. It is true, that many men do hear the Word, and for many years, and are not softened, but their hearts are more hardened under it; nevertheless this induration comes not from the Word, which is a means to soften; but from the pride and perverseness of the hearts of men, who do hear the Word, but will despise and reject the Word.

2. It is also true, that though many men have not their hearts softened by the Word: yet many others have their hearts softened by it: as although many who take Physic, are nothing better by it, yet many who do so are recovered by it; and this we find by experience, that though the Word be the savor of death unto death unto some, yet it is the savor of life unto life unto others: And as we must not conclude that the Word is not the means of saving faith, because all that hear the Word do not believe; so neither must we deny the Word as a means to soften the heart, because many who do hear it, do remain hardened; but if we find

First, that God hath instituted his Word for such a purpose and end.

Secondly, That God hath blessed his Word, and made it effectual to that purpose.

Thirdly, Doth call even sinners to come and attend, that they may attain that blessing depending upon this Word.

And lastly, that without the attendance upon the Word, there is no enjoyment of that softness of heart; but a greater access and confirmation of hardness of heart. Thence we may confidently conclude, that the Word of God is a means to soften the heart: But, &c

3. You must know that the efficacy of spiritual means doth not depend upon the mere presence of the means, but upon the concomitancy and influence of the Spirit of God, who sometimes doth put forth his power through those means, and sometimes doth not so. The Word by its own natural and proper vigor, doth not convince, nor convert, nor soften the heart (for then everyone that hears it should be convinced, and converted, and softened) nor then should it be a means, but a principal efficient; but those effects it doth work on all who hear it, when the Spirit of God comes with the Word unto their hearts in his mighty power, working that grace in us which the Word commands from us: And therefore when we come to hear the Word, to have our hearts softened, we should look on the Word as the means; but withal on the Spirit of God as the principal cause, who works that effect by the Word; nor should we ever hear the Word without special prayer and requests, that the Lord would by his Spirit make his Word a lively and effectual means of knowledge, of faith, of all grace unto us; and if we did do so, the Lord would be found of us, and he would give this softness of heart which he promiseth in his Covenant.

Thirdly, If you would have softness of heart, you must then get newness of heart: Your hearts can never be softened, until they be



renewed; and if they were renewed, certainly they would be softened: The old heart is an hard heart, and the new heart is a soft heart. You may as well expect that a dead man should weep, and mourn, and go, and come, as that an old sinful heart (dead in trespasses and sins) should be a soft and mournful heart for sins, or be willing and ready to obey the will of God; why! Hardness in all the causes of it, and in all the effects of it, is predominant and reigning in an unconverted graceless heart. But if the heart were once changed by renewing grace, then softness must needs fall into it: Forasmuch as the change made by renewing grace, brings into the soul another nature, quite contrary to our sinful nature, and other principles quite contrary to all our old principles, Light contrary to darkness; and humbleness contrary to pride; and yieldingness contrary to stubbornness; and softness contrary unto hardness.

Fourthly, if we would have softness or tenderness of heart, then we must get Faith; for faith is indeed the foundation of a soft and tender heart; and the more of Faith, the more of tenderness.

**Quest. What Faith will some say?**

Sol. I answer, a Faith;

1. Of Knowledge, or Credence, that God is, that he is a great God, the living God, the Almighty God, the dreadful God, most knowing, most holy, most righteous, and faithful, who will be so to us, as his Word reveals him, who will be merciful to the penitent, and will by no means clear the guilty.

2. Of union and compliance to bring us into Christ, and to make us one with him, and to give us fellowship with him, and to make us one Spirit with him, and to change us into the glory of his image; if we had this faith, the work were done: Now we

should be made like unto him in meekness, and humbleness, and tenderness of heart.

3. Of dependence and reliance upon God's Promises, believing that what he hath promised, he will also perform; that all his promises are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus; that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; that he is mindful of his Word, and remembers his Covenant, and will not suffer his faithfulness to fail; and therefore he will give unto us (humbly seeking and waiting upon him) this soft and tender heart which he hath promised. How quickly and easily would such a faith prevail with, and obtain from such a Father and God!

Fifthly, If we would compass soft and tenderness of heart, we must then get hearts to love the Lord; Did we love him, we would be tender of his glory, and tender of his love; tender to please him, tender not to displease him, tender to obey him, and tender to honor him. Joh. 14:23. If a man love me, he will keep my words. Ver. 24. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings. Love (you know) is of all affections the most tender, most watchful to observe, the most careful to please, and the most fearful to offend: If we did love the Lord, we would not, we could not grieve him. Beseech therefore the Lord to circumcise your hearts, that you may love him; and consider the exceeding greatness of his love to you, that you may love him again (We love him, because he loved us first, 1 Joh. 4:19) And this love would raise a tenderness of heart in us, in all the effects of tenderness which you have heard.

Sixthly, What shall I say more? If you would have softness and tenderness of heart indeed, and to some purpose; Then get the assurance of God's love, and mercy, and favor sealed unto your consciences by the testimony of his Spirit; this would melt, &c.

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. - Ezek. 36:27.

These Words are one gold link more of the precious chain of Promises in the Covenant of grace: They do contain in them another excellent promise unto the people of God, wherein you have

1. The matter promised (I will put my spirit within you.)
2. The virtue or benefit of this promise; which is twofold.
  1. Obedience (and cause you to walk in my statutes)
  2. Perseverance (and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.)

I begin at this time with the matter promised (I will put my Spirit within you.)

## CHAP. XII.

Doct. 1. That all the people of God have the Spirit of God; or, that God will put his Spirit within his people (I will put my Spirit within you) Psal. 51:11. Take not thy holy Spirit from me. Zech. 12:10. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication. Rom. 8:15. Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father. 1 Cor. 2:12. We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given of God. 1 Cor. 7:40. I think also that I have the Spirit of God. 1 Thes. 4:8. Who hath given unto us his holy Spirit. 1 Joh. 3:24. Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. Chap. 4:13. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

For the opening of this excellent Point, I will speak unto these particulars.

1. In what sense the Spirit is given, or put within the people of God.
2. How it may be demonstrated, that the people of God (every one of them) have the Spirit of God.
3. Why the Spirit is put within every one of the people of God.
4. Whether all the people of God, do in the same measure partake of the Spirit.

### SECT. I.

**Quest. 1. In what sense the Spirit is given, or put within the people of God? Sol. There is a fore fold opinion concerning this.**

First, Some have held, that the Spirit is so given unto the people of God, as to make them one person with himself, and to communicate unto them his very personal propriety; so that they in their own persons, are that person in the Trinity which is called the Holy Ghost.

This was the desperate opinion of Montanus the Heretic, and I fear some wild persons amongst us, are of the same wicked opinion.

But this cannot possibly be; because;

1. No Creature is capable to be God, which yet he should be, if he could be the person of the Holy Ghost, for the person of the Holy Ghost is God: 1 Joh. 5:7. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

2. If any man were the person of the Spirit, and the very Holy Ghost; then 1. He is eternal, for the Spirit is the eternal Spirit: Heb. 9:14. Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, &c. And 2ly, He is Omnipresent in every place, for the Spirit is so: Psal. 139:7. Whether shall I go from thy Spirit. And 3ly, He is Omnipotent, for the Spirit is so: Who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, Rom. 1:4. And quickens, and changeth the hearts of sinners: Joh. 6:36, 2 Cor. 3:18. And 4ly, He is Omniscient, for so is the Spirit: Who searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2:10. And lastly, then he might be adored and worshipped with Divine Worship; be prayed unto, be trusted on, &c.

Secondly, Some do hold, that although the Spirit be not so given as to make us one person with himself, yet he is given personally unto the people of God, (i.e.) he is personally in them; not only his gifts and graces are in them, but also his very person is in them; and they do allege several places of Scripture to make good this their Opinion: Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Ver. 17. Even the Spirit of truth. Ver. 26. But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. Joh. 15:26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, &c. Whence it is thus argued; That Comforter which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, is the person of the Holy Ghost; but that Comforter dwelleth and abideth in us: Ergo, the person of the Holy Ghost doth dwell in us: 2 Tim. 1:14. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep, by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us: Hence it is also argued; the Holy Ghost that keepeth the good gift (or gifts) in, us dwelleth in us; but the Holy Ghost which keepeth these gifts, is not the gifts, but the person of the Holy Ghost distinguished from them. Ergo, it is the person of the Holy Ghost, and not his gifts only that dwelleth in us: Rom. 8:11. If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Hence also 'tis thus argued; the Spirit that dwells in us, is the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, and shall likewise quicken our mortal bodies: But it is not the gifts and graces of the Spirit, but the person of the Spirit himself that raised up Christ from the dead, and that shall quicken our mortal bodies. Ergo, the person of the Spirit himself dwelleth in us.

Thirdly, Some do hold that the putting of the Spirit within the heart of the people of God, denotes only the donation of the gifts and the

graces of the Spirit: And so is the Spirit often taken in Scripture by a Metonymy of the Cause for the Effect: Luke 1:15. He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his Mothers womb. Act. 6:3. Look you out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom. Ver. 5. And they chose Stephen a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost. 1 Thes 5:19. Quench not the Spirit. (i.e.) the gifts or graces of the Spirit, for the Spirit in himself (either Essentially or Personally considered) is not capable of being quenched; there is no abating, or remission, or vacation possibly incident unto him.

Fourthly, Some do hold that the giving of the Spirit unto the people of God, is only the letting in of his vigor and assistance for the works which they are to do; and not any Inherent presence of the Spirit in the people of God, either as to his person, or as to his graces: But as a Bowle moves from that power and strength which the hand lends unto it; so do the people of God act and move from the vigorous influence which the Spirit of God puts into them, and not from any inherent principle of grace which they deny to be in them.

But this Opinion is not sound; for the people of God do possess the Spirit, not only in way of assurance to do good; but also in way of inward influence to make them good: Therefore they are said to be born of the Spirit, Joh, 5:6. And to be washed and renewed, Tit. 3:5. And sanctified by the Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:11, which notes an inward change made by the Spirit, and not a bare assistance only.

And besides here in the Text, the Lord saith, that he will put his Spirit within us, which certainly is something more than external assistance.

Again, They who do hold the donation of the Spirit as to assistance only; hold likewise free-will to supernatural good; that there is in the

will of man such a power unto the same, that it needs not any renovation by the Spirit; but only the assistance of the Spirit to that purpose, &c. which is a dangerous Error. Well then, the meaning of this expression (I will put my Spirit within you) is principally to be understood of the person of the Spirit.

And there are three Reasons which incline me thus to think.

1. One is, because the graces of the Spirit were promised before in the 26th ver. A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you: which unquestionably takes in the renewing graces of the Spirit; and if in this 27th verse, by putting his Spirit within us, should be meant only the graces of the Spirit, then one and the same thing only should be promised: But this is no way probable or congruous to affirm, q.d. I will give you the graces of my Spirit, and I will give you the graces of my Spirit, &c.

2. Another is, because the Spirit here in this verse promised, is that Spirit which doth cause us to walk in the Statutes of God, and to keep them; which cause of such walking cannot well be attributed to any but the Spirit himself.

3. Unto which I may add a third, viz, The usual way of trial and evidencing whether we have the Spirit here promised, namely by the graces of the Spirit; which were very improper, if by the Spirit in the place were meant the graces of the Spirit, q.d. you may know that you have the graces of the Spirit, if you do find in you the graces of the Spirit.

**Quest. 2. How may this be demonstrated, that all the people of God in Covenant have the Spirit of God within them?**



Sol. Besides these Scriptures already, produced, which do bear witness unto this truth, it may be further demonstrated thus;

First, All that are Christ's, have the Spirit of Christ (for saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And 1 Cor. 6:17. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.) But all who are in Covenant are Christ's; because all that are in Covenant are believers, and all believers are Christ's; Ergo, all that are in Covenant have the Spirit.

Secondly, All that are in Covenant are the Sons of God; God is their Father, and they are his sons and daughters, 2 Cor. 6:18. Now saith the same Apostle in Gal. 4:6 Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.

Nay, Thirdly, all the people of God have a fellowship and communion with every person of the Trinity; and so high is that fellowship, that every person of the Trinity doth (as it were) take up his mansion, and make his abode, and dwelling in them: They have a fellowship with every person of the Trinity; 1 Joh. 1:3. Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Phil. 2:1. If there be any fellowship of the Spirit, &c. Every person of the Trinity dwells and abides in them: Joh. 14:23. If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him. Ver. 16. The Father shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever. The Father dwells in us: 2 Cor. 6:16. I will dwell in them. The Son dwells in us: Ephes. 3:17. Christ dwells in your hearts by Faith. The Spirit dwells in us: Rom. 8:11.

Fourthly, That all the people of God have the Spirit of God, may plainly appear by the works of the Spirit, which are to be found in every one of them.

1. They are sanctified by the Spirit: Ye are sanctified by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. 6:11.

2. They are led by the Spirit: As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God, Rom. 8:14.

3. They are upheld and strengthened by the Spirit: Psal. 51:12. Uphold me with thy free Spirit. Ephes. 3:16. To be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

4. They are partakers of the first fruits of the Spirit: Rom. 8:23. Our selves have the first fruits of the Spirit.

5. They are helped by the Spirit: Rom. 8:26, The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, and the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groans which cannot be uttered.

6. They are taught by the Spirit: Joh. 14:26. The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all things.

7. They are comforted by the Spirit: Acts 9:31. They walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

8. They are sealed by the Spirit: Ephes. 1:13. In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

**Quest. 3. Why doth the Lord put his Spirit within every one of his people?**

Sol. There may be assigned six Reasons for it; viz. 1. Necessity. 2ly. Congruity. 3ly. Conformity. 4ly. Excellency. 5ly. The love of God. 6ly. The purchase of Christ.

First, Necessity; The presence and enjoyment of the Spirit is necessary for them in many respects.

1. For applying of Christ unto them, and for the applying of them unto Christ; that there is a conjunction or union between Christ the Head, and his Mystical body the Church, is an unquestionable truth. And how Christ who locally in heaven, should be joined or united to his Church here on earth; this cannot be done but by the Spirit who doth knit or join Christ to us, and us to Christ, as really as the head is joined to the body, and as the body is joined to the head: But take the instance in any particular believer, that Christ is his, and he is Christ's, it is certain; but how comes Christ to be his? What is that on Christ's part which makes this union? It is the Spirit, and none but the Spirit; and what is it on our part which makes this union? It is faith, and it is caused by the Spirit: So that the Spirit is necessary to this union on either part; on Christ's part to apply or unite him to us; and on our part in causing faith which applies and unites us to Christ: And unto this reciprocal union, the Spirit is such a necessary agent, that without him there cannot possibly be any union at all: No man can be united to Christ, but by the Spirit; neither can Christ (I speak it with reverence) unite himself to us, but by his Spirit.

2. For conveying of spiritual life into them, or a new being into their souls. Naturally all men are dead in trespasses and sins, and every faculty in them is totally defiled, and polluted, and corrupted, and is deprived of the glory of God; nor can any man help himself in this case, nor can any creature do it: None can raise him from his death, but that Spirit who raised Jesus Christ from the dead: Therefore is the Spirit called the Spirit of life, and the Spirit of grace, forasmuch as he is the author of both unto

our souls; it is the Spirit who quickens them by infusing the life of Christ into them; and who renews them by changing of them into the image of Christ.

3. For all the actings of grace: Take me any Christian though endowed with all the principles of grace, and great measures thereof; now put him upon any particular acting, put him upon believing, put him upon repenting, upon mourning, upon any acts of obedience; why, look as no member of the body can move or strive, but from an influence from the head; no more can we act any grace we have, but by an influence from the Spirit of Christ our Head; Joh. 15:5. And we find it in experience, that it is with our souls, as with a ship, which stirs not if the wind stirs not, and it stirs more or less as the wind is greater or lesser; so if the Spirit of God stirs not in us, our graces stir not, &c.

4. For all our Receptions: Would you know any truth of God? You cannot know it, unless the Spirit of God give you his light to know it; 1 Cor. 2:10,11, would you be acquainted with the love of God? You can never perceive it, unless the Spirit shed abroad that love in your hearts; Rom. 5:5, would you be clear and satisfied in your relation of sonship unto God as your Father? All the men in the world cannot persuade and satisfy as to that, unless, and until the Spirit beareth witness with your Spirits that you are the children of God, Rom. 8:16.

Secondly, Congruity: It is meet and fit that the people of God should have the Spirit of God; For;

1. They are his children: and is it not meet that the children of God should have the Spirit of God? Should they not bear his image? If they were led by the same spirit by which the children

of this world are led, had they not another Spirit, they could not be his children.

2. They are his servants, and therefore they have much to do for him, and they have much to suffer for him: Is it not meet that the Lord should help his servants? The services of the people of God which they are to do for him, and to suffer for him, are above all their own strength; and therefore God will give them his Spirit to enable them for all their services, whether active or passive, the Spirit can supply them for every work.

3. They are his Heirs, and intended for eternal glory, and is it not fit that they should have the Spirit of grace, who must have the Spirit of glory? Heirs of God, Rom. 8:17. Before a person comes to heaven, it is fit that he should be fitted for heaven, be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light, Col. 1:12. And who can fit and prepare us for that heavenly glory, but the Spirit, &c.

Thirdly, Conformity: There is a twofold conformity required in the people of God.

1. To God their Father; they must be like their heavenly Father; be holy as he is holy; be merciful, as he is merciful; love what he loves, hate what he hates, honor what he honors, &c. this cannot be unless they have the Spirit given unto them.

2. To Christ their Head; they must partake with him of the same Nature, of the same Life, which cannot be, unless they partake with him of the same Spirit.

Fourthly, Excellency; the people of God are the most excellent people in all the world, they are the precious of the sons of men, a chosen

generation, a royal Priesthood, the beauty of the earth; there is that in them which exceeds and surmounts all the glories of the world; but what is that which doth exalt them, and raise them with such a differential excellency? It is the presence of the Spirit, and the graces of the Spirit: As Pharaoh said concerning Joseph, Gen. 41:38. Can we find such a one as this is, in whom the Spirit is? &c. Before they had the Spirit of God given unto them, they were but as other men, vile in their natures, and at the most but of love and ordinary gifts: It is the Spirit which changeth into the image of glory, From glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18.

Fifthly, The love of God unto them, which is exceeding great, and rich in the communication of himself unto them; he counts nothing too dear for them, neither himself, nor his Christ, nor his Spirit: God is their God, and Christ is their Christ, and the Spirit of God is also their portion.

Sixthly, Christ hath purchased for them, all that is happiness, and all that makes for happiness, and therefore he hath purchased the Spirit of God for them, &c.

Thus you see that God gives his own Spirit unto his people, and the Reasons why he doth so; now follows the last Question.

**Quest. 4. In what measure God gives the Spirit unto his people? Whether all the people of God have the Spirit given unto them in the same measure?**

Sol. For the resolution of this Question, I will lay down these Conclusions.

First, There are different gifts of the Spirit, some are extraordinary, as were those of speaking with Tongues, and those of Miracles, in

Raising the dead, and Healing the sick, and of which some did partake in the Apostles times, but now are ceased: And some are ordinary, which are gifts that the Spirit still bestows, and these are either gifts of Edification, or of Sanctification, of which the people of God do partake; they have all of them such gifts of the Spirit which do make them good, and which do enable them to do good.

Secondly, There are different measures of the gifts of the Spirit in the same kind; some are more, and some are less holy: And in Faith, some are strong in faith, and some are weak in faith: And in Knowledge, some are higher and fuller, and some are shorter and flatter: As all the people of God have not absolutely the same gifts of edification; so all of them have not the same gifts for sanctification in the same measure or degree.

Thirdly, Every one of the people of God hath a portion of the Spirit; as all the servants had at least a talent; the first had five, the second had ten, and the other had one; Matth. 25:15, so all the people of God partake of the Spirit of God; though they differ in their proportion (for the Spirit divides to every man severally as he will, 1 Cor. 12:11) yet everyone hath a portion; though Benjamins mess was five times so much as his brethren's, yet every one of his brethren had a mess sent unto him by Joseph, Gen. 43:34. One Christian may have abundant knowledge of Christ, yet every Christian hath a knowledge of Christ: and one Christian may be strong in faith, yet every Christian hath faith; some are young men, and some are aged in Christ, some are babes in Christ, yet every one of them is born of the Spirit.

Fourthly, Every one of the people of God hath but a small portion of the Spirit at first; therefore the grace given us by the Spirit (as to the first plantation of it) is compared unto a grain of mustard seed which

is sown in the fields, and is the least of all seeds; Matth. 13:31,32, unto a bruised reed, which is very weak; and to smoking flax which is newly kindled, Matth. 12:20 and it is called the day of small things, in Zech. 4:10. I believe, said the Father of the child, Lord, help my unbelief, Mar. 9:24. What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I, Rom. 17:15. And to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not, ver. 18. The people of God in respect of the first workings of the Spirit, are called new born babes, 1 Pet. 2:2, and children, and little children, Gal. 4:19, and lambs, and plants.

Fifthly, Not any one of the people of God hath the Spirit in perfection; in this life he hath not the Spirit in the absolute fullness of the Spirit: 1 Cor. 13:9. We know in part, and we prophesy in part; now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face; Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. Phil. 3:12. Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Though the spirit be perfect, we do partake of him imperfectly in this life, we have but the first fruits of the Spirit, Rom. 8:23. As the children of Israel had the bunch of Grapes, and some of the Figs, and Pomegranates before they entered into the land of Canaan, Numb. 13:23.

**Object. But do we not read that some were filled with the Holy Ghost, and were full of the Holy Ghost? As Stephen, Acts 6, and Barnabas, Acts 11.**

Sol. There is a threefold fullness of the Holy Ghost.

1. Absolute and Intensive, as to all degrees; this we cannot reach unto in this life; none but Christ was thus filled with the Holy Ghost.



2. Comparative (i.e.) more than some, or many others; this is granted.

3. Respective, as to such or such a particular work and service, unto which the Spirit may let out himself in an eminent and vigorous manner; thus were they filled with, or were full of the Spirit, &c.

Sixthly, Though none of the People of God in this life have the Spirit in perfection, yet every one of them hath so much of the Spirit as will bring him to salvation: For he hath so much of the spirit as will bring him to Christ; and he who hath as much as will bring him to Christ, certainly he hath as much as will bring him to heaven: Again, he hath as much of the spirit as doth sanctify and renew, and regenerate him; and therefore he hath as much as will bring him to salvation: Matth. 5:8. The pure in heart shall see God. 1 Pet. 1:3. We are begotten again to a lively hope. Ver. 4. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for us.

## SECT. II

Use 1. Doth the Lord put his own Spirit within his own people? Then let all of us look well to this, whether we have within our hearts the Spirit of God, yea or no. O beloved! Think much and often of that expression of the Apostle in Rom. 8:9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; he hath no part in Christ, who hath no part in the Spirit of Christ.

There are four Reasons why I should press this great search and great care upon you, to know whether God hath put his own Spirit within you.

1. Because many persons have not the spirit of God.
2. Because many persons do deceive themselves with a false and lying spirit, instead of the Spirit of God.
3. Because many have the spirit as to many effects and works, yet the spirit is not fully given to them.

1. Many persons have not the Spirit of God.

First, What think you of those who blaspheme and scoff at the Spirit! As those Jews did at the effusion of the Spirit upon the Apostles, These men are full of new wine, Acts 2:13. And ordinarily among ourselves the Spirit of God is jeered, derided, mocked, and reproached in his graces which he bestows upon the people of God: O these are men of the Spirit! These are the Saints! Your holy brethren, and your holy sisters forsooth, they are full of the Spirit! Ah thou profane wretch, unworthy to live among Christians, and unworthy of the name of a Christian, who darest thus openly to reproach the holy God, and the holy Spirit of God! And the graces in the people of God, which are the excellent faculties of the Spirit promised unto all who are in Covenant with God! Is the Spirit of God a scorn unto thee? Is any work of the Spirit a derision unto thee? Is holiness (the chief of all his works) a matter to be scoffed and mocked at: O how wicked art thou! What a child of the Devil art thou! What an Atheist! How deep in the guilt of blasphemy? Will the Lord ever pardon thee? Canst thou ever repent? Canst thou ever be saved who deridest the Spirit, without whom, and his holiness, without which there is no salvation?

Secondly, what think you of those who do despite to the Spirit of grace? Of such you read in Heb. 10:29. And have done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Men do despise to the Spirit of grace many ways;

1. When they have base thoughts of Jesus Christ and his blood (treading underfoot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing) these the Spirit sets forth as most high and precious, and worthy of all reverence and acceptance; but when sinners come to despise Christ and his blood, looking on them but as common and ordinary things, and regarding them no more than the dirt under their feet, they do now despise unto the spirit of Grace; they do now prejudice, and disgrace, and dishonor, and shame him in his Revelation, and Commendation of Christ and his blood.

2. When they will sin on purpose to vex and grieve the Spirit; when they know such or such a work or way is evil and displeasing unto him; they will therefore choose to do it, knowing that it is grievous and vexatious to the Spirit; as they in Jer. 44:4. Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate. Ver. 5. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ears. And verse the 17, profess that they will burn incense unto the Queen of heaven, &c.

Thirdly, what think you of those that either have no work of the Spirit within them, or no saving work of the Spirit within them? Have those the spirit put within them? The spirit is never present in any, but there is some work or other of the spirit appearing in them; for he is most active, and working some way or other in the hearts of those where he is present and dwells. Ergo.

But in some persons;

1. There is no work of the Spirit at all, neither highest nor lowest: the lowest works of the Spirit within men are illuminations, and

pulsations; when he enlightens sinners to see their sins, and moves and stirs them to leave their sins, and gives them some trouble for their sins; But many persons there are who never had any light from the Spirit to see their sins, nor were they ever troubled for their sins, nor did they ever find those strong motions and persuasions of the Spirit to leave their sins.

2. Though in many persons these common works of the Spirit may be found, yea so many works as the Spirit useth the Ministry of the Law for (as Illumination, Conviction, Excitation, Humiliation, and Terror, and Fear) yet in them we no Evangelical and saving works of the Spirit to be found; no works of Regeneration, no works of union with Christ, no hungering and thirsting after him, no faith in him, no love in him, no holy sorrow, no repentance, no newness of obedience, no walking and living in the Spirit, &c.

Fourthly, What think you of those who have in them another spirit quite contrary to the Spirit of God; even that spirit which works effectually in the children of disobedience! And in whom all the qualities and works of a contrary spirit are manifestly appearing and ruling? The Spirit of God is a pure and holy Spirit, but they are unclean and unholy: The Spirit of God is (effective) an humble and lowly Spirit, but they are proud, and lofty, and arrogant: The Spirit of God is meek and gentle, but they are turbulent, and furious, and violent: The Spirit of God is merciful and compassionate, but they are unmerciful, incompassionate, cruel and bloody: The Spirit of God is a Spirit of love, and of peace, but they are full of hatred, variance, discord, &c.

2ly. Many have a false, and lying, and deluding spirit, but it is not this spirit which God promiseth to put within his people.

You read in Scripture of the Spirit of truth, and of the spirit of error (1 Joh. 4:6. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error) and so you read of the Fancies, and Delusions, and Revelations of men, called by the name of the spirit: 2 Thes. 2:2. Be not shaken in mind or troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, &c. And we are charged not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they are of God. 1 Joh. 4:1.

**Quest. But here it may be demanded, how it may be known that the spirit by which man is moved and stirred, and put on, and led, is a false spirit, and not the Spirit of God.**

Sol. This may be known many ways:

First, A false spirit is never let in by the Word; The Ministry of the Gospel is the Channel or the Conduit by which we partake of the true Spirit of God: Gal. 3:2. Ye received the spirit by the hearing of faith (i.e.) the Word or Gospel of Faith, as those who hearing Paul Preach, the Holy Ghost fell upon them, so, &c. But a false spirit comes not in that way, nay it is so far from being breathed by the Word, that it works in men a slighting and contempt of it, as you shall hear presently.

Secondly, A false spirit is a loose spirit; persons that partake of it, do pretend unto strange Visions, and high Revelations, and mysterious Notions; but for all them, this false spirit leaves their hearts unchanged, and their lives unreformed; ordinarily men led by a false spirit, are unfound and corrupt in their judgments and opinions, and are idle, and lazy, and vicious in their walking.

Thirdly, A false Spirit is an irregular spirit; the motions and works of it are such, as

1. The Word of God doth not warrant, nay doth exceedingly condemn: As for the Husband to take away the life of his Wife; and the Parent to kill the child; and for a man to take away the goods of his neighbor, &c.

2. Neither a man's General nor Particular calling can warrant: The false spirit puts on to such works which a man may not do as he is a Christian, nor may he do as he is set in such or such a private Relation.

Fourthly, A false spirit is a preposterous spirit: It fills a man with strange joys and Raptures of heaven, before a man knows Christ aright, and receives him by Faith, and before he repents of his sins, or ever made his peace with God; it is all in joy, and nothing in humbling and mourning for sin.

Fifthly, A false spirit is an earthly spirit: 1 Joh 4:5. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them: They talk much of the Kingdom of Christ, and setting up of that, but they pull down the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ: and it is a temporal kingdom which they strive after, as you may read in those of Munster.

Sixthly, A false spirit is a disordering, and turbulent, and bitter spirit: There are two things which men of a false spirit have been tumultuously, violently railing, and reviling, and lifting at; One is Public Magistracy; the other is Public Ministry: It is a certain truth, that the false spirit, is an enemy to order, and peace, and authority, and likewise to sound teaching, and the instituted Ordinances of Christ.

Seventhly, A false spirit is a Scripture-slighting spirit: This is evident in all sorts of men led by a false spirit: Papists are more for unwritten

Traditions than for the written Word: Ignorant Formalists are more for superstitions and superstitious worship, than for the worship which the Word of God requires: Anabaptists and Enthusiasts are more for Revelations and Visions, than for the Word of God; nay they reject the Word, and do close with them, &c.

Eighthly, A false spirit is a self-contradicting spirit: It frequently gives itself the lie; confidently foretells and determines of matters, and for such particular times, and none of these prove true; as I myself know, &c.

Ninthly, A false spirit is a proud spirit, and extremely impudent and censorious; it swells a man up in a conceit of himself, and in a contempt of others above all measure. The Scriptures are but poor things, and the Apostles but ordinary men, and Ministers but a company of dogs, and others differing from them in their Opinion but the fire-brands of hell, &c.

Tenthly, A false spirit is a presumptuous spirit.

3ly. Many have the spirit as to divers gifts, and works, and effects; nevertheless these do not amount to the putting of the spirit within the people of God here promised in the Text. e.g.

First, A man may be enlightened by the spirit, he may come into a knowledge of God and of Christ, and of the way to heaven, &c. This is the enlightening spirit, yet this is not the sanctifying spirit.

Secondly, A man may be gifted by the Spirit; he may have the gift of understanding, of memory, of utterance, of praying, of preaching, &c. and yet not have the Spirit spoken of in the Text.

Thirdly, A man may be humbled by the spirit, he may see his particular sins, be exceedingly distressed, and terrified, and he may confess his sins (as Pharaoh and Judas did) and yet not have this Spirit in the Text.

Fourthly, A man may have desires of heaven, to be saved, as Balaam, Let us die the death of the righteous, Numb. 23:10, and the young man that came running to Christ, saying, Good Master, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? Matth. 19:16, and yet not have, &c.

Fifthly, A man may have many motions of the Spirit, to take him off from his evil course, to stave him off from some sinful action, and to put him on to a new course of life; yea so far working in him as to raise him to some kinds of purposes and resolutions (as in hearing the Word, &c.) and yet not have, &c.

Sixthly, A man may by the spirit taste of the heavenly gifts, and taste the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, Heb. 6:4,5, he may be joyfully affected (a while) upon hearing, and knowing, and in some sort believing the great happiness purchased by Christ, and yet not, &c.

4ly. The extreme miseries to be destitute of the Spirit of God.

I will mention a few of them unto you:

First, If you have not the Spirit, you belong not unto Christ, you are none of his; most men amongst us presume that they belong to Christ, and that he died for them, that Christ is theirs, and that they are Christ's; but read the Apostle, Rom. 8:9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Gal. 4:6 O what is that man who is



none of Christ's! Whose is he, and to whom doth he belong, who is none of Christ's, and belongs not unto Christ!

All the men in the world are divided 'twixt Christ and the Devil; if you be not Christ's members, then you are the Devils slaves.

But yet consider that expression a little more (none of his)

1. None of his in way of Relation, he owns you not: Is no Head to you, no Husband to you, no Savior to you.
2. None of his in respect of Mediation, he is no Mediator for you, he never took your sins upon him, he is none of your Surety, he became not a curse for you, made not your peace.
3. None of his in respect of beneficial application; he is not your Righteousness for Justification, he is not your holiness for Sanctification; he is not your life for Salvation; if you be none of his, you shall have none of him.

None of his, why! Then God is none of yours; then the Promises are none of yours, then future glory can be none of yours; then the hope of glory can be none of yours; for it is Christ in us the hope of glory, Col. 1:27.

None of his! Then you have no true faith, then you are separated from Christ, then you alone must answer for all your sins, and then unquestionably you are under the condemnation and curse of the Law.

Secondly, If you have not the Spirit of God, then are you dead in your sins, you are still in the natural, unregenerate, loathsome and cursed estates, like so many carrions stinking in your graves; for it is the Spirit, and he only that quickens and changeth the estate of the

sinner: All spiritual life which quickens the soul, comes only from the Spirit of life: You may as well say the body is alive which wants a soul, as that the soul is alive which wants the Spirit of life: Assuredly death hath dominion over you (Spiritual death which is a separation from God, and Legal death which is the sentence of death pronounced against you) if you want the Spirit.

O what misery is this to be a sinner, and nothing but a sinner! To be totally wicked, to be utterly destitute of the glory of God, not anything of his image in holiness, in knowledge, in righteousness; not any love of him, not any fear of him, but filled with all unrighteousness, and all ungodliness, with all the powers of sinful lusts (ignorance, pride, envy, malice, enmity, unless hardness of heart, &c.) and all of them raging and reigning, oppressing, and resisting, &c.

Why! This is our condition really if we have not the Spirit of God, for there is no change, and there can be no charge from it, but by the Spirit of God.

Thirdly, If you have not the Spirit of God, than are you in bondage unto Satan, and are led and ruled by the wicked spirit: There are but two spirits which lead all sorts of men; either the good Spirit, or the wicked spirit; all the sons of God are led by the good Spirit; and all the children of darkness and disobedience are led by the wicked spirit; he moves and stirs, and teaches, and inclines your hearts, and leads, and rules, and commands them; and his will you do obey and act all your days (though you perceive it not) if you have not the Spirit of God, under that bondage do not continue, for only the Spirit of God is the Spirit of victory, of liberty, of delivery.

Fourthly, You can never be bettered by any Ordinance whatsoever: You may come and hear, and go home, and say, or read a prayer,

thrust yourselves upon the Sacrament, but all in vain; for what are any of these without the Spirit? He can do good; cannot repent, believe, mourn, why no not any good desire.

Can any man hear so as to know the mind of God without the Spirit of God? Can any man pray and make supplication who hath not the spirit of Prayer, and the spirit of supplication? Can any man receive benefit and comfort in the Sacrament from Christ, that hath not faith? And can any man have faith, and act faith, who hath not the spirit?

Fifthly, You are open and obnoxious to all temptations, and unto all erroneous disobedience; for to overcome temptations, there is need of much strength (much spiritual strength) and that comes only from the Spirit of God, who is the spirit of might and power, Ephes. 6:10,11. And to prevent erroneous disobedience, a man needs to know the truth, and to be well grounded in the truth: O but it is the spirit of truth who leads us into all truth.

Sixthly, Nay you are (if your conscience should be awakened) exposed to dreadful fears, and troubles, and despairs, for the sense of your great transgressions, and of the wrath of God for them; and in this case you will not be able to find any comfort, or at least you will not be able to apply it unto yourselves; for only the Spirit is the Comforter; though you may read much in Christ, and much in the Promises, and much in God, apt to give comfort, yet nothing in any of these can be your actual comfort, unless the spirit of God make it to be so unto you.

Seventhly, Take you at the best can be but formal Christians (Christians in show) if you have not the spirit of God; for it is the spirit put within us, which makes us Christians indeed: When the spirit makes our hearts his Temple, reforms, renews, enlivens us

with his graces, then are we Christians indeed: Union with Unction constitutes us in the reality and truth of being Christians, &c.

Eighthly, I will say but one thing more; You cannot be possibly saved, if you have not the spirit of Christ: Reasons whereof are these.

1. Without Christ no salvation: Act. 4:12. And if we be without the spirit, we are certainly without Christ.

2. Without holiness no salvation: Without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12:14. But without the spirit, no holiness, for he is the holy spirit, Essentially in himself, Causally in us, &c.

3. Without faith no salvation: He that believes not, shall be damned, Mark. 16:16. But without the spirit there can be no faith, because that grace is the fruit and effect of his Almighty power. So now you see plainly the infinite misery of being destitute of the Spirit of God.

**Quest. But how may we know whether the Lord hath put his own Spirit within us? That the spirit of God is given to us indeed?**

Sol. This may be known. 1. By the works of the spirit. 2ly. By the qualities of the spirit. 3ly. By the properties of such who have the spirit in relation unto the spirit.

1. By the works of the spirit:

The spirit of God is a vigorous, and active, and operative spirit; and when he is indeed put within any man's heart, there he works in order unto the salvation of that man; for unto that do all the works of God the Father (as our Father) tend; and unto that do all the works

of Christ the Son of God (as our Redeemer) tend; and unto that do all the works of the spirit of God within us tend;

Now the works of the spirit in them which shall be saved are these.

1. Conviction: Joh. 16:8. And when he is come (that is the spirit whom Christ calls the Comforter, ver. 7) he will reprove the world (he will convince the world) of sin: As when the light of the sun shines in a room, this opens and discovers all the nastiness and sluttishness in the room: so when the spirit of God comes into the heart, he doth by his own light clearly discover, and represent the sinful foulness that lies therein. Here now I will briefly speak unto two Questions.

**Quest. 1. How the spirit convinceth a person of sin?**

Sol. He doth convince of sin,

1. By opening the Law of God unto us, partly in the spiritualness of it, as reaching not only to our outward words and actions, but also to our inward thoughts and affections, both in the commands of it, and likewise in the prohibitions of it; that God doth not only command of us a Righteousness and holiness of conversation, but also a righteousness and holiness of heart and nature: not only that we do good, but also that we be good; not only that we hear him, but also that we know, and love, and fear, and trust upon him; not only that we draw near unto him with our lips, and bodies, but also that we draw near unto him with our hearts, and serve him in spirit and in truth. That God in his Law doth not only forbid and condemn sinful words and deeds, but also sinful desires, and delights, and motions; not only murder in the hand, but murder also in the heart; not only adultery in the act, but adultery also in the heart; as Christ assures us himself in Matth. 5:28. Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after

her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Perfection of it, that it is so precise and exact, that it expects from us not this or that particular duty, but an universal obedience, and full conformity unto all and every particular which is required; and not for some little space of our life, but constantly and invariably as to all the time of our lives; and if we fail either in the fullness, or in the continuance of obedience at any time, in any particular, presently the Law pronounceth a sentence of curse against us; Gal. 3:10. Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all these things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.

Secondly, By opening our sins (the transgression of the Law) unto us: Rom. 7:9. When the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died; (i.e.) when the Law came accompanied, with the Spirit of God, now sin revived, now it appeared, now I saw what a sinful creature, and what a miserable creature I was.

This is certain, that when the spirit of God doth convince any one of sin, he then doth (by an invincible evidence or light) so set out a man's sinful life and heart, that he cannot but confess and acknowledge the same, and withal, himself to lie under the curse of God, as long as by unbelief he remains in his sinful estate.

**Quest. 2. Whether a wicked person may not be convinced of sin? And if he may, how then can this work of conviction be any distinguishing character that we have the spirit?**

Sol. To this I answer.

First, I do not make every work flowing from the Spirit, a character of his gracious presence; not illumination, not conviction solitarily considered by themselves alone, but as concomitantly considered

with other more powerful and effectual works of the spirit following them.

2. But secondly, there is a difference between that conviction of sin in wicked men, and that in the people of God, and the difference lies thus.

First, The conviction in wicked men, is ordinarily levis & mollis; it is such an evidencing of their sins, as doth not much afflict and distress them; indeed they cannot deny but that they are sinners, yet they hope to escape well enough for all this, &c.

Secondly, The conviction in wicked men is ordinarily semiplena & imperfecta, it is of some outward gross sins, as swearing, lying, adultery, drunkenness; but for all these, they think their hearts are as good as the best; they are seldom convinced their sinful hearts and natures, and that original sin which is the fountain of all sins, and which pollutes the whole soul.

Thirdly, The conviction in wicked men if it be full and strong, it is but Judicialis, it is not Remedialis; it is not in salutem, but proves only in perniciem; for when they are so convinced, either they sin more desperately against the convincing light of the Spirit, or else they fall into despair, as Cain, and Judas, and Spira, crying out that their sins are greater than can, or shall be forgiven!

But now the conviction of sin by the Spirit in the people of God, is another kind of conviction: For;

1. It is deep and powerful, it makes discovery of the very root and foundation of all sins, even of that corruption and vileness in the heart: In sin did my Mother conceive me, said David, Psal. 51:5. And I see another Law in my members, said Paul, Rom.

7:23. And Ecce cor meum Deus meus, ecce cor meum, said Austin! Ah Lord, what a wicked heart had I? &c.

2. It is graciously effectual, this work of conviction works graciously upon them, and in an order to Christ and their salvation by him; for by this they see that there is no longer staying or resting in their sinful conditions; but then they must and will arise from their sleep in sin: By this they find there is nothing in themselves for them to rest upon; for when the Spirit indeed convinceth us of our sinful condition, as he doth therewith convince us of the curse and wrath, so doth he at the same time convince us of our own personal impotency, and insufficiency, and that there is no help at home; if they are there, they perish: By this they are occasioned, and indeed do actually look out for Christ, and Righteousness, and Peace, and Salvation by him, and in the event come in to him, stoop unto all his Precepts, and gladly accept of him and them, and with all their hearts do magnify and bless the grace of God for appointing and setting up such a way of life for miserable, lost, and self-undone, and self-unable sinners!

Secondly, Humiliation; this is another work of the Spirit when he is given unto us: Rom. 8:15. Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; If they had not received it again, then sometime or other they had received that spirit of bondage to fear: Indeed it is a question, whether any who are by faith brought into Christ, are under the spirit of bondage to fear; but it is (I think) without all question, that the spirit of bondage to fear, goes before the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father: And so likewise is it without question, that humiliation for sin, or bondage unto fear, is the work of the Spirit; for none but the Spirit of God can work that work within us.



Now there are two things in that expression (the Spirit of bondage to fear) which I intend in that outward humiliation.

First, An apprehension and feeling of our present sinful condition (of which we have been convinced) as our bondage or slavery, which you know is 1. A base and contemptible condition. 2ly. A restrained and depriving condition. 3ly. A subjected and stooping condition to the will of another. 4ly. A laborious and toilsome condition, and that upon very hard and cruel terms. 5ly. A vexations and grievous condition, even ready to break the heart. 6ly. A most dangerous condition, wherein our life lies at the mercy of him who hath it in bondage every hour. 7ly. It is a most wearisome, and burdensome condition; one would be most glad of escape and deliverance out of it.

Thus it is with a man who hath received the spirit of bondage.

1. He looks on his sinful condition and on himself as vile and base, and cries out like the Leper, unclean, unclean; like Paul, O wretched man that I am!
2. He looks on himself as in prison, as one shut up, and shackled and fettered; no liberty, no power to any good.
3. He looks on himself as fallen into the hands of the living God, and righteous God, who may when he will execute his fierce wrath upon him.
4. On himself as a very drudge to sin, at the command of every lust, and working out his own damnation.
5. He feels this condition full of vexation, and terror, and burdensome; so that his very soul doth fail him, and he knows

not what to do with himself, nor for himself.

6. And oftentimes in the anguish of his spirit, cries out, O who will pity, who will deliver me, who will break the bonds of my distress!

Secondly, A sad expectation of evil settling upon the soul, which is here called fear, for fear is the expectation of evil. The humbled sinner lying under the spirit of bondage, is far from jollity, and mirth, and vain confidences; he fears what the holy, and righteous God (who hath revealed his wrath from heaven against all ungodliness) will do unto him for all the sins of which he is guilty: And he fears exceedingly to die in this condition; if I die, I am damned forever: and he fears to come near to God, he is afraid that God will never look on him, nor answer him, nor show him mercy; in a word, he is a very troubled sinner for what he hath done against God, and for what God may justly do against him?

**Object. But will some say, Doth everyone who receives the Spirit of God find it thus with him? Hath everyone the Spirit of bondage to fear?**

Sol. I answer, everyone who hath the Spirit, hath this; those in Act. 2:37, found it thus; Paul in Act. 9:6, found it thus; the Jailor, Act. 16:29, found it thus; only you must distinguish

1. Of the intentions and measures of it: All that have received the Spirit, have not the like equal measure of bondage to fear: Some drink deeper of the cup than others: It is terror in some, and burden in others; it is horror in some, it is only pain in others; it is the breaking of the bones in some, and only the lash of the rod on others.

2. Of the duration and continuance of it: Some are longer under the spirit of bondage than others are: As some women have quicker labor, and others have stronger and longer labor: So some have a longer time of humiliation for their sins than others have: Some are under trouble of Conscience for many years, some only a few days, and then they meet with Christ and are eased.

**Object. But this work of humiliation cannot be any demonstrative note of having the Spirit of grace, because many wicked men, living and dying so, have had this work of humiliation?**

Sol. Humiliation may be considered two ways.

1. As a mere Legal and Judicial work for sin, as it is a pure retribution of wrath and horror upon the conscience, and one of the first fruits and taste of deserved damnation: Thus I grant that a Cain and Judas may meet with it.

2. As a preparative work of the Spirit for Christ; thus it is not given to any but to such whom God intends to convert and save by Christ.

**Quest. But may some reply, There lies the Question; How may one know that this work of Humiliation is not a judicial, but a preparative work?**

Sol. It may (I humbly conceive) be thus known. When humiliation is a preparative work of the Spirit,

First, Then the heart is troubled for the filthiness of sin, as well as for the guiltiness of sin: Not only because God may punish us, but also

because we have offended God; not only because I am a guilty sinner, deserving and feeling wrath, but also I am a filthy and defiled creature, destitute of the image and glory of God.

Secondly, Then the heart is broken from sin, as well as for sin; sin troubles me, and I trouble sin; former sins are my burden and grief, and present sins is become the object of my hatred; I hate that which hath so much provoked God against me, and which is the cause of all the evil upon me; I will never love nor serve it anymore.

Thirdly, Then all our hopes are in mercy alone, of which we judge ourselves unworthy.

Fourthly, Then it draws out the heart to make after a Christ, who only can give peace, and ease, and bind up the broken in heart; the Spirit of God leads out this humbled sinner to Gospel enquiries, and to Gospel helpers: As Act. 2:37. What shall we do? And Act. 16:30. What must I do to be saved?

Fifthly, Thus the heart strives earnestly with the Lord to give Faith, that it may be able to close with Christ, and the man is not, and will not be satisfied until he be by faith possessed of Christ? How he prays; how he hears? How he attends and waits till it be given unto him to believe?

3. Union and Conjunction with Christ; this is another choice work of the Spirit apparent in all to whom God gives his Spirit.

It is the Spirit of God who persuades, and inclines, and draws in the broken-hearted sinner unto Christ, by him is the match made between the soul and Christ, by him is Christ joined unto us, and by him are we joined unto Christ.

Now the Spirit unites, or brings in the humble and broken-hearted sinner to Christ on this wise.

First, By opening the Gospel (that word of glad tidings, and of good news, that good word of life, and of hope) unto the humbled sinner, wherein, as in a glass he doth see the great love, rich mercy, and free grace of God in Jesus Christ; unto such, who was sent and given by the Father to suffer for our sins, and to take away our sins, and to make our peace, and to reconcile us unto God, and to deliver, and save our souls; and that's the way to partake of him; and all good by him, is to believe on him; this the Spirit of God makes evident unto the humble sinner, and withal, offers him, that whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3:16.

Secondly, By presenting strong and safe Grounds or Arguments to the humble sinner, that he ought to believe, and may lay hold for his particular, v.g.

1. The express command of God: 1 Joh. 3:23. This is his command, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.
2. The express offer unto the humble sinner, and plain call of Christ: Matth. 11:28. Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, &c.
3. The designation of Christ to this work of help and comfort: Isa. 66:1. The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted.
4. The promises and assurances of Christ, that he shall not be disowned if he comes to him: Joh. 6:37. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out; nay he shall be accepted and eased.

Matth. 11:28. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Thirdly, by answering and resolving all the doubts, and fears, and exceptions of unbelief, from the greatest of former sinning's, and from present unworthiness, and multitudes of wants; these the Spirit inwardly answers, and takes off by convincing the sinner that Christ must be his Righteousness, and will be so to everyone that believes; and that our unworthiness hinders not, but he that is athirst may come and take the water of life freely, Rev. 22:17. And he that hath no money, he may come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price, Isa. 55:1.

Fourthly, By making the Gospel (at length) through his own power, an effectual means of faith; so that the humbled sinner becomes a believing sinner, his heart is persuaded and opened to Christ, and he glorifies all the goodness and kindness of Christ, he receives and embraces him, takes Christ for his Lord, and Savior, and Husband, and Head, and is joined unto him, and made one with Christ, and Christ is one with him.

This is the great and notable work of the Spirit, which he works in every one of the people of God in Covenant; not one of them but he is by the Spirit brought in to Christ. The Spirit doth not only in a preparative way convince and humble them for their sins, but also he doth in an effectual manner bring them in to Christ, whom he hath before prepared for Christ. Therefore let us look well unto ourselves; by this may you know undoubtedly whether God hath put his Spirit within you. If his Spirit be in you, then you are in Christ. If the Spirit be in your hearts, then Faith is in your hearts. If you be possessed of the Spirit, then you are possessed of Christ; your hearts are overcome, are persuaded, are drawn to Christ; he hath been the great

desire of your souls, and he is the very portion of your souls: You are Christ's, and Christ is yours.

But if your hearts remain ignorant of Christ, or undesirous of Christ, and careless of Christ, and stubborn, and opposite to Christ, you will not have Christ to reign over you; and you will not come to him though you may have life; and you love your sins better than Christ, and you will sit down with the pleasure, and with the profit of the world; assuredly you have not the Spirit of God; and if you continue thus, you shall die and perish in you sins.

Fourthly, Regeneration or Renovation; this is another eminent work of the Spirit extant in all the people of God; they are all of them regenerated, and renewed by the Spirit: Joh. 3:5. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Tit. 3:5. According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

For the better opening of this, I will show unto you

1. What this work of the Spirit is, what Regeneration or Renovation is.
2. That this work of the Spirit is to be found in all the people of God to whom the Spirit is given.

**Quest. 1. What is this work of Regeneration or Renovation?**

Sol. It is that work of the Spirit by which we partake of a new spiritual being, even of the life of Christ, yea of the same image of Christ, and by which we are made new creatures.

As in every natural generation there is (as the Philosophers speak) an introduction of a new form; as when the water is turned into air, or

the air is turned into fire, there is still another form, a new form brought into them; or as when a child is generated, there is another new form brought into the matter which it had not before, viz. a reasonable soul.

So is it in Spiritual Regeneration, there is a new Divine being or quality brought into our souls by the Spirit, by which we are Spiritually changed from what we were: Joh. 3:6. That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit: Look as that which is born of the flesh is flesh: the sinner begets a sinner; and that which is born of the sinner, it is born after his own sinful image: In like manner that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. If any man be born of the Spirit, there is the life and holiness of that quickening and holy Spirit in him; he is not what he was; there is an excellent change wrought in him; he is quite contrary to himself, not only for conversation, but for inclination; his mind, his judgment, his will, his affections, there is a new principle in every one of these; Old things are passed away, all things are become new, 2 Cor. 5:17.

**Quest. 2. Whether this work of Regeneration or Renovation is in every one of the people of God unto whom the Spirit is given?**

Sol. Certainly it is: The Spirit is never put (in medio) within the heart of any man, but he doth regenerate and renew him: 2 Cor. 3:18. We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord: Mark it, we are changed by the Spirit of the Lord into the same image which we see in Christ: 2 Cor. 5:17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Nay surely, all that ever had the Spirit of God put within them, you shall find that they were new creatures; you read it in Mary Magdalene, in Zacchaeus, in those



Acts 2, in Paul, Acts 9, in the Jailor, Acts 16, in the Corinthians; Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. 6:11.

Therefore consider well what you were, and what you now are; if there be not a Regeneration, a work of Renovation in you, verily you have not the Spirit; God hath not put his Spirit within you.

If the old sinful qualities remain and prevail in you, of drunkenness, of filthiness, of pride, of malice, of hatred of holiness, of unbelief, of hardness of heart; if these or any other sinful lusts continue unmortified, you have not received the Spirit: And if no new qualities contrary unto these are to be found in you, if the image of Christ, if holiness, if faith, if love, &c. are not in you in some measure, you are none of the people of God, you have none of his Spirit within you.

For as they say of the soul of man, the soul doth build and frame a house fit for itself to dwell in, that is most true of the Spirit of God; when he comes into our hearts, he doth purge them, and renew them, and make them Temples fit for himself to dwell in: Indeed he doth not find us holy when he first comes into us; but as soon as he comes he makes us holy, and sanctifies us throughout in soul, spirit, and body; he fills our Temple with his glory.

Fifthly, Direction or leading: This is another work of the Spirit to be found in all who have the Spirit given unto them; Spiritus Dei docet & ducit: Rom. 8:14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

And so (for the words are Reciprocal) as many as are the sons of God, they are led by the Spirit of God. That expression of leading is a Metaphor taken either from blind men, and men in the dark who do

need a guide; or from little weak children not able to go alone, and therefore are held and led by the hand: Now concerning this work of the Spirit, I will briefly open two things unto you.

### **1. Quest. How the Spirit of God leads the people of God?**

There is you know, a twofold leading or guidance of the Spirit.

1. One is general, by a common virtue or influence which assists the creatures in all their powers and faculties to their several operations.
2. The other is special, by a more high and peculiar influence upon the hearts of men in order to the estate, and acts, and ways of grace and salvation: Thus the Spirit of God leads the people of God.

First, By way of Irradiation or illumination; he opens the eyes of their minds to see the paths and ways of life, and the will and ways concerning them; what way the Word reveals, certainly he reveals internally giving light to see it: Isa. 2:3. Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and he will teach us of his ways. Chap. 20:21. Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Secondly, By way of inclination: when the Spirit leads, he doth not only show us what good we are to do, but also he doth powerfully incline our hearts to comply with, and follow that direction of his; Psal. 25:4. Show me thy ways O Lord, teach me thy paths. Ver. 5. Lead me in thy truth. Isa. 2:3. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. The Spirits leading is not a mere Revelation of the will and way of God unto the people of God, as if one should point out the way to Traveler, but it is an efficacious persuasion, add a secret and strange inclination, in

enabling to walk in that good way of life revealed by him unto them: As a Nurse leads the child by lending her help and strength unto the going of the child: Or rather as the head leads the feet in their motion by letting down an influence enabling thereunto.

Thirdly, By way of Exhortation, stirring up their hearts, and quickening them to holy services, and to walk according to his motions and directions: Cant. 1:4. Draw me and I will run after thee. Psal. 119:37. Quicken me in thy way. Cant. 4:16. Awake O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden that the Spices thereof may flow out.

Fourthly, by way of Cooperation: As the Spirit leads us by inclining our hearts unto good, so also he leads us by working with us in doing of good: He worketh in us both to will and to do, Phil. 2:13. And 1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

As when the King of Israel was to shoot the arrow, he did put his hand upon the Bow, and Elisha did put his hand upon the Kings hand, 2 King. 13:16. So when we are to do any good work, we are to put up our hand, and the Spirit of God likewise puts out his hand; he puts his strength to our strength, or rather to our weakness; we are to pray, to mourn, to believe, to obey; and that we may do these, he comes in with a new influence, help, and power assisting us unto all these.

Fifthly, by way of Confirmation, sustaining, upholding, carrying us on from path to path, from work to work, until we have finished all our work; he leads us on in the course of holy obedience all the days of our life, from first to last, till we come

to our journeys end: Psal. 73:24. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me unto glory.

## **2. Quest. Why the Spirit of God thus leads the people of God?**

Sol. Because;

First, Of our ignorance; we cannot see but by his light.

Secondly, Of our own inability or weakness; even when strongest, their own graces of themselves alone are not sufficient strength unto them; which appears in the great falls of the best of them, when left but a little unto themselves.

Thirdly, Of the difficulties of their work, and in their way and journey to heaven; their work is very great, and the encounters which meet them are very sharp; there was a red Sea, and a wilderness to pass through, and strong enemies to be fought with, and conquered before they came to Canaan. So is it with Christians in their way to heaven, &c. Thus you see that the Spirit of God leads the people of God; he is given unto them for a Guide and Leader, and they do hearken unto him willingly, desirously, carefully, constantly, and follow their Leader.

But where is this leading work to be found? Who amongst us is led by the Spirit of God? Many;

First, Are led by their own hearts lusts; they are at the command of every sinful motion. Many are led;

Secondly, By Satan; they presently follow every temptation of his, and his will and works they will do. Many are;

Thirdly, Led by the world; by the example of it, they will do as most men do; by the fashions of it, they will not be like nobody, but will attire themselves as the world doth; by the pleasures of it, by the profits of it, as Balaam was led for reward even to curse the people of God. Many are led;

Fourthly, By their own judgment, and by their own wills, and they will not be controlled. And many are led;

Fifthly, By the spirit of error, and not by the Spirit of truth: They are led away with the error of the wicked, 2 Pet. 3:17. And follow their pernicious ways, 2 Pet. 2:2.

If all the men in the world were drawn out and stood under their proper Colors and Leaders, how thin, how few would be found to follow this best, this only safe Leader, the Spirit of God! But remember what the Apostle saith, Rom. 8:13. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; as it is a sure sign of salvation when we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. 8:1, and 4, so it is a sure sign of damnation when we walk after the flesh, and not after the Spirit.

Thus have you the discoveries of the Spirit of God by his works: Now follows the second way of discovery by which we may know whether we have the Spirit of God. viz.

2ly. By the qualities of the Spirit.

There are many qualities by which the Spirit of God is set forth unto us in scriptures; all which (virtually) everyone who hath the Spirit doth, or may find in himself in some measure: I should be too tedious if I should discourse upon every one of them, therefore I will fix upon some of them, e.g.

1. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of judgment, and of burning.
2. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of knowledge.
3. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of power.
4. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of liberty.
5. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth.
6. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of love.
7. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of glory.
8. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of goodness.

First, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of judgment, and of burning: Isa. 4:4. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning. In the former verse God doth make a promise unto the Relics of Zion, and unto the Remnant of Jerusalem that they shall be holy: In this verse he declareth when this shall be, namely, In the day when he shall wash them from their filth, and purge them from their blood: Lastly, he shows how this should be caused, and that is by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning. Some by the Spirit of judgment do understand that Spirit by which God judgeth and punisheth the wicked; others by it do understand, a mind and power given to execute judgment or righteousness for the deliverance of the people of God from their enemies, but (with submission) I conceive, that by the Spirit of judgment is meant of judicial (or Judge-like) condemnation, such a Spirit as enables us to sit in judgment upon our sinful lusts, in the arraignment of them, censuring, disallowing, and condemning of them, even to death itself: And so by the Spirit of

judgment may be meant the efficacious fruit of the Spirit, which (in a way of execution) separates sinful lust from the heart, and by degrees consumes, as the fire doth the dross: And certainly this is a truth, that such a Spirit as this, is the Spirit of God in every man unto whom he is given: viz. He is a Spirit of burning, he sets up (as it were) a Judges seat into the heart, and makes ourselves to be the judges, to give a righteous sentence, that all our sins and lusts are such evils as are not to be endured, not to be harbored any longer, nay not fit to live, but presently to die, and to be destroyed. And he is also a Spirit of burning; like as fire to the dross, which separates it from the metal, and wastes and consumes it: in like manner doth the Spirit work in our hearts a separation from our sins, and a daily mortification of them: Hose. 14:8. Ephraim shall say, What have I anymore to do with idols? Isa. 31:7. Every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold. Ch. 30:22. Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence: Rom. 8:13. If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, &c.

Beloved! As this is one special end why Lord gives his Spirit unto his people; viz. that they may judge and condemn, and mortify their sinful lusts, so it is (if I may so speak) the very Genius and natural disposition of the holy Spirit to be casting out, pulling down, cleansing, and purging of all our impurities and fleshly lusts which are so contrary to his nature, and so offensive unto his presence: Hence it is that he maintains a constant and perpetual war with sin in the hearts of the people of God, till at the last he gives unto them a complete and perfect victory.

Now from what I have delivered in this concerning the Spirit of judgment and of burning, two things will flow.

1. A conviction unto some, that they have not yet received the Spirit of God; because,

1. They have not received the spirit of judgment to disallow and condemn their sinful lusts and ways, but are so far from it, that on the contrary, they do approve them, and defend them, and support them, and cannot endure to hear the reproof and condemnation of them from the Word, or Ministry, or any other, but presently they rage, and swell, and grow discontented, and malicious, and revengeful.

2. They have not received the spirit of burning to abhor their sins, and to crucify them, forasmuch as they do still love their sins, and will serve them, and will not forsake them, Job 20:13. But their great delight is in their sinful ways, and they hold fast their iniquities, and hate to be reformed; surely these persons have never received the Spirit of God.

2. A comfort unto others, that they have received the Spirit of God: Because,

1. They do judge themselves, and really do disallow and condemn all sin in themselves: Rom. 7:15. That which I do I allow not.

2. They are daily mortifying their sinful lusts, by striving after a fuller fellowship in the death of Christ, by relying on sin-subduing and mortifying promises, and by constant hatred and opposition of their lusts which war against the law in their mind; so that they will not serve sin anymore; and though (as the Apostle spake in 2 Cor. 10:3) they walk in the flesh, yet they do not war after the flesh.



Secondly, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of knowledge and wisdom; so you read in Isa. 11:2. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. Ephes. 1:17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Whosoever hath the Spirit of God, that man hath wisdom given unto him by the Spirit; not carnal wisdom, but heavenly wisdom, true wisdom indeed; which wisdom appears in four things.

First, as to the subject; If thou be wise (saith Solomon) thou shalt be wise for thyself, Prov. 9:12. And herein is a man's wisdom for himself, when he principally minds, and looks after, and spends his choicest cares, and lays out his chiefest pains to make sure work for the saving of his immortal soul. That man is wise indeed, and he only is wise who so attends his soul, that he is never at rest until he finds his soul to be ready in a safe and sound condition: And thus doth everyone who hath the Spirit of God given unto him; he is by the Spirit made wise unto salvation: What shall I do to be saved! Act. 16:30, He works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2:12. And gives all diligence to make his calling and election sure. 2 Per. 1:12. 2ly. As to the Object, in making choice of the best and most necessary object for the soul, and in refusing that which is pernicious and impertinent: And this wisdom all have who have the Spirit of God: For

1 They pitch upon the most excellent and most necessary object to enjoy that; viz. God to be their God, and reconciled Father; and Christ to be their Lord, and Redeemer, and Savior. One thing is necessary, and Mary hath chosen that good part, &c.

2. They abhor sin, which is the pernicious object: I hate every false way, said David, Psal. 119:104. And Solomon saith, Prov. 14:16. A wise man feareth and departeth from evil.

3. They are above the world, which is the impertinent object for the soul; We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, 2 Cor. 4:18.

Thirdly, As to means and ways tending to the fruition of eternal blessedness; These they find out, and in these they walk, until they come and appear before God: Repentance, Faith, Holiness, Righteousness, Love, new Obedience, Uprightness, these are the very paths and ways to heaven, and all these do they choose and walk in, who have the Spirit of God given unto them: Psal. 119:30. I have chosen the way of truth. Ver. 35. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight. Isa. 26:7. The way of the just is uprightiness.

Fourthly, As to time or season: Eccles. 8:5. A wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment: And this part of wisdom also is found in all that have the Spirit of God.

There is a day of visitation, a day of knowledge of the things which do concern our peace, Luke 19:42,44.

A day of salvation, an accepted time, 2 Cor. 6:2. A time when Christ offers himself, and love, and mercy, and happiness, and strives with the hearts of men to know and accept of him: And this time they who have the Spirit of God, discern and do lay hold on, and do gladly embrace; they do not slight, nor delay, nor harden their hearts; But while it is called today they hearken: Like the wise Merchant, who as

soon as he found the pearl of great price, sold all and bought it, Matth. 13:45,46.

Now if this wisdom of the spirit be (as indeed it is) the evidence that we have the Spirit; O how few then have the Spirit of God given unto them! Who takes care in the first place for his soul, and makes sure the salvation of it! Who sets his heart upon a God, upon a Christ, upon Reconciliation, upon pardoning mercy; and not rather upon his sins, and on the world? Who knows the day of grace, the day of his visitation, the day of his salvation, the accepted time! Who choose the path of holiness, the way of uprightness, &c.

3. Thirdly, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of power; and he is such a Spirit in and unto all unto whom he is given: Rom. 15:18. The Gentiles were made obedient. Ver. 19 By the power of the Spirit of God. 2 Tim. 1:7. God hath given unto us not the spirit of fear, but of power. Isa. 11:2. The Spirit of the Lord is there called the Spirit of might: Ephes. 6:10. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The Spirit of God is a most strong and powerful Spirit; and he puts forth a wonderful power in all them unto whom he is given: e.g.

First, he raiseth every one of them from the dead; what the Lord spake of the people of Israel touching their civil estate: Ezek. 37:13,14. I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live: That is true in a spiritual sense of all the people of God unto whom the Spirit of God is given: Though before the donation of the Spirit they were dead in trespasses and sins; yet when the spirit is given unto them, they are by the operation of that spirit quickened, made alive, and raised from that dead estate: Ephes. 2:1. You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; they have the life of God and Christ in them: O what a power is put forth in the raising of

a dead man! And yet there is a greater power of the spirit put forth in the raising of a dead sinner.

Secondly, He enables them, both to perceive, and also to receive the things of God; to perceive the glory and excellency of them, and to receive the goodness and sweetness of them.

1. To perceive them: Mat. 13:11. It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to them it is not given. And 1 Cor. 2:6. We speak wisdom amongst them that are perfect. Ver. 7. The wisdom of God in a mystery. Ver. 8. Which none of the Princes of this world know. Ver. 14. Which are foolishness unto the natural man, and which he cannot know, q.d. they are spiritually discerned: Compare these places together, and you shall find two differences 'twixt them who have the Spirit, and them that have not the Spirit, concerning the things of God; viz

To the one they are wisdom, yea, and wisdom of God, but to the other they are foolishness.

When we preach Jesus Christ and the things of salvation, the new creature, self-denial, living by faith in Christ promised, &c. and make offers of him unto a people; some make light of him, and regard not the offer at all, they see no beauty at all in him that they should desire him: Yet others see in him the glory as of the only begotten of the Father; and do admire at that infinite mercy, and goodness, and love, and life, in and by him; the reason is, because the one knows him not; but to the other it is given to know him, and to discern the mystery of salvation in him.

2. To receive him: Joh. 1:11. He came amongst his own, and his own received him not. Ver. 12. But as many as received him, &c. And who were these that received him; See Ver. 13. Such as were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. So Acts 2:41. They that gladly received the Word were baptized. But 1 Cor. 2:14. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: If Christ be offered, the natural man will not receive him; If Christ saith, He that is my Disciple must deny himself: This is a hard saying, who can bear it? Joh. 6:60. And take up his cross and follow me; the natural man will not receive this: If the Word saith, Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, Acts 3:19. The natural man will not receive this, nor will he receive that truth in Matth. 7:41. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, &c. But everyone who hath the Spirit of God, as he hath a power given to perceive or discern the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, and all the ways and rules belonging thereunto; so he hath also an heart given to close with the Kingdom of Christ, and with every part and path of it.

Thirdly, The Spirit enables them to pray, and under the sense of their wants and troubles to come unto God as their Father, and to open their conditions unto him with judgment, affection, and confidence; Rom. 8:15. We have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father. Ver. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Here you see that they who have the Spirit of Adoption, have received the Spirit of supplication, every son of God is able to call God Father, and to cry unto him as his Father; and that the Spirit of God is in this work of Prayer by making intercession for them, appears, 1. By enabling them to make requests for themselves, with

groanings which cannot be uttered. 2. With fervency and earnestness of heart.

**Object. But will some reply, This cannot be a distinguishing sign that we have the Spirit, because many wicked men do pray, and so do many hypocrites: Isa. 26:16. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they have poured out a Prayer when thy chastening was upon them; Ergo, &c.**

Sol. I answer,

First, By way of Concession, granting three things unto wicked men and hypocrites; viz.

1. They may and do in their distresses put forth natural desires for help, as the very beasts do under their burdens and wants.
2. They may, and generally do satisfy themselves with a form of Prayer, which they read, or hear read unto them, which is another thing from the Spirit of Prayer.
3. They may have the gift of Prayer, or an ability to pray by the strength of gifts, and parts; and upon hearing of others, to gather up some good expressions and fragments, and utter them as if they did pray.

Secondly, By way of Negation: Notwithstanding those three Concessions, I deny that any man hath the spirit of supplication, who hath not the Spirit of grace; because, the spirit of supplication is given with the spirit of adoption which is proper to the sons of God: Everyone who hath the Spirit of Prayer, he can come unto God, and call him Father, which none can do, but such as are in Christ, in whom he becomes our reconciled God and Father. To pray with the

Spirit of Prayer, is to pray with a special (My soul is sore troubled, Psal. 6) feeling of our wants, and of our (I am not worthy to be called thy son) unworthiness, and the desires of our soul, &c. (with my whole heart, and my soul follows hard after thee; with affectionate earnestness of heart, and with (I believe, therefore I have spoken) confidence towards God in the name of Christ, that he will give unto us the good things which he hath promised to us in his Covenant, 2 Sam. 7:27. Thou hast revealed unto thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore thy servant, &c. Who can pray thus, but he who is a child of God, but he who hath the Spirit of God, to show unto him his spiritual wants, to stir up in him spiritual and earnest desires to quicken his Faith on God, and to depend on his good and faithful Promises in Christ! &c.

Fourthly, I will add one instance more concerning the power in all who have received the Spirit, and that is this; All who have received the Spirit, have received a power to do such works as none else in all the world can do; for they are able in the strength and power of the Spirit,

1. To abhor the dearest lusts, which have formerly been more unto them than their lives and heavenly happiness.
2. To forsake Father and Mother, Husband and Wife, and Children and Friends, Houses and Lands for Christ, and an afflicted estate with Christ.
3. To prize communion with God, and to take more satisfying delight therein, than in all earthly enjoyments whatsoever: But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me: Psal. 4:6. Show us the Father and it sufficeth us. Psal. 73:25. Whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.

4. To live by faith in the times of desertion (Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him, Job 13:15) and in times of desolation when as creature helps and comforts fail; Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vine, and the labor of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, and the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, Heb. 3:17,18. The Lord God is my strength, ver. 19.

5. To be contented in every estate, and to comply with it: Phil. 4:12,13, and to glorify God under it: O where is this power of the Spirit of God? Where are any great things or works of the Spirit within us? I cannot pray, saith one, and I cannot leave my sins, saith another; and I can find and take no delight in God, or communion with him, saith another; and I cannot trust on his Word, nor wait upon his Promise, &c. Few men have any Spiritual power, and therefore few men have the Spirit of God.

Fourthly, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of liberty: 2 Cor. 3:17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: Liberty is a freedom from bondage, or slavery; and Gospel-liberty (which principally respects the soul) is a freedom accruing unto us

Partly by price and purchase, namely by the blood of Christ: The Lord Jesus by his death hath purchased many glorious liberties for us; he hath freed us from the Law as it is a Covenant of Works, Gal. 3:11,12, and from the curse and wrath, ver. 13, and from all condemning power of sin, &c. Rom. 8:1.

Partly by strength and efficacy; this liberty comes unto us by the Spirit who puts forth a strong and mighty hand upon all the hearts of all the people of God, and rescues and frees them from spiritual



slavery under which they were held whiles they were in their natural condition.

The Spirit of God doth free them

First, From slavery to sin: See Rom. 8:2 The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death: (i.e.) The power of the Spirit hath freed me out of the hands and power of sin, so that it shall not command and rule over me as heretofore; it is no longer my Lord, nor am I any longer his servant; I am delivered and freed from the dominion and tyranny of it, and service unto it, by the Law (i.e.) by the powerful and authoritative command and work of the Spirit: upon this account the Apostle affirms, that all the servants of God are made free from sin, Rom. 6:18,22, they are not in bondage, they are not at the command of it; sin hath lost its law and authority in them; the yoke is broken by the spirit which is given unto them; sin indeed will stir, and trouble, and usurp; but slavery unto it is taken away: Isa: 10:27. The yoke shall be destroyed, because of the anointing.

Secondly, From slavery to Satan: Before we receive the Spirit of God, we are in bondage unto the Devil, who rules or works effectually in us: Ephes. 2:2, and takes us captive at his will, 2 Tim. 2:26, as one that hath a bird tied, &c. O what power hath Satan over a natural man! How he fetters, and shackles, and binds him, and imprisons him, and makes him to drudge in the fulfilling of his motions, and obeying of his suggestions and temptations! But now when the Spirit of God comes into us, he spoils the strong man armed, and takes from him all the armor wherein he trusted, Luke 11:21,22. For he is stronger than he. 1 Joh. 4:4. He leads captivity captive; he turns us from Satan unto God, Acts. 26:18.

**Object. But Satan still tempts and assaults! Never was man so tempted as I am!**

Sol. Temptation is one thing, and salvation is another; he bestirred himself in tempting and we obeyed; he now tempts and we resist.

He frees us from him, 1. By making us to abhor his Kingdom. 2ly. By translating us out of his power into the Kingdom of Christ. 3ly. By arming us with the armor of God against his assaults. 4ly. By stirring us up to resist him: Jam. 4:7. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. And 5ly. By strengthening us to overcome him; 1 Joh. 2:13. Ye have overcome the wicked one.

Thirdly, From slavish fear, and a slavish spirit in working; in this respect he makes us to serve God without fear, Luk. 1:74, that is, without servile fear; for there is a twofold fear.

There is Timor filialis, which is grounded in the love of God as a Father; and there is Timor servilis, which looks upon God only as a Judge, and hath a respect to of wrath. Now when the Spirit of God is given unto us, we do not serve God for fear of wrath, and punishment, and damnation, but out of love, and reverence, and ingenuity: Though there were no Law to curse us; though there were no Conscience to terrify us; though there were no Hell to burn us; yet the Lord our God and Father we will love, and him will we serve.

Fourthly, From slavish indispositions, as averseness to what is good, and indelightfulness in it: They that are anointed by the Spirit and power of God, it makes them ready, and willing out of love, and working out of love.

Fifthly, The Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth; Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter. Ver. 17, even the

Spirit of truth. John 16:13. When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.

### **SECT. III.**

There are divers sorts of truth of which the Spirit is the Author, and which he works in all those who do partake of him.

First, The truth of Doctrine, in opposition to erroneous and false Doctrines: Joh. 17:17. Thy Word is truth. 1 Tim. 2:4. Who would have all men to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The truth of Doctrine consists principally in knowing and understanding those points and ways which do teach and guide us certainly unto salvation; and this is called the truth in Jesus: Ephes. 4:21. And the truth which is after godliness, Tit. 1:1. This truth doth the Spirit teach all unto whom he is given; he makes them to know the Word of truth, and which is the way of life; he builds them upon Christ, and roots them in Christ who is, Joh. 14:6. The way, and life, and truth; and makes them to be sound in Christ Jesus.

Secondly, The truth of judgment and understanding: Joh. 17:17. Sanctify them with thy truth; by which some think is meant the true understanding of all things necessary to salvation: This is called the Spirit of a sound mind, 2 Tim. 1:7, a mind not tainted, not corrupted: Sound in the Faith, Titus 1:13, and Chap. 2:2.

All who have the Spirit of God, have truth of judgment, they have the Spirit of a sound mind in the matters of salvation, they are sound in the faith; although they may mistake in other matters, and differ in their Opinions, yet they are all of them of a sound judgment in the

Essential Points of salvation; they are sound in the faith, in the fundamentals.

Thirdly, The truth of heart: Psal. 51:6. Thou lovest truth in the inward parts: This truth is that which we call uprightness and sincerity of heart, in opposition to Hypocrisy; the Apostle calls it the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Cor. 5:8. This kind of truth also is the Spirit author and worker of in all unto whom he is given; he gives them true hearts of truth, sincere and upright hearts even in the judgment of God himself: Job 1:8. Hast thou considered my servant Job that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil! Isa. 58:3. Remember now O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.

Fourthly, The truth of speech, in opposition to lying, fraud, and falsehood; as Psal. 15:2. He that speaketh the truth in his heart. Ephes. 4:25. Put away lying, and speak truth every man to his neighbor.

They that have indeed the Spirit of God, dare not lie, dare not be guilty of falsehoods, &c. the spirit of truth ever causeth the lip of truth, Psal. 119:163. I hate and abhor lying.

Fifthly, The truth of faithful and righteous dealing between man and man, in making and keeping just Covenants, Promises, and bargains; Jer. 5:3. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth! (i.e. of just and righteous dealing;) this also is in them who have the Spirit: Psal. 15:4. He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not. But now what shall I say? To whom shall I speak? How few have the Spirit of God which is the Spirit of truth!

1. How abundantly rife is the spirit of error!

2. How unsound are the judgments of men, who do err concerning the faith, and contend to subvert it!

3. How rotten and hypocritical the hearts of men! They profess God in words, and godliness in words, but they deny him in works; and though they have that show, yet they do deny the power of godliness.

4. How lying, and false, and fraudulent are men in their speaking and dealings! One hardly knows when many do speak truth, because we find that they do constantly speak lies, with that boldness, and confidence, and impudency, &c. Jer. 9:5. They will deceive everyone his neighbor, and will not speak the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies, &c.

Sixthly, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of love: So Rom. 15:30. I beseech you brethren for the Lord Jesus sake, and for the love of the Spirit, &c. 2 Tim. 1:7. God hath given us the Spirit of love. Gal. 5:22. The fruit of the Spirit is love; and he puts love in the first place; In whomsoever the Spirit of God is, in them is a holy and precious love kindled by that spirit: A love

First, To God; O love the Lord all ye his Saints, Psal. 31:23. And I love the Lord, saith David, Psal. 116:1. We love him, because he loved us first, 1 Joh. 4:19. The Lord direct your heart to the love of God, 2 Thes. 3:5. It cannot be but that everyone who hath the Spirit of God, must love God. For

1. The Spirit renews all the affections, and carries them to their proper object; God is the peculiar object of a renewed heart.

2. The Spirit sets open unto us the precious thoughts of God towards us, and the exceeding riches of his grace; yea and sheds

abroad the love of God in our hearts, Rom. 5:5. And makes us to know the things which are freely given us of God, 1 Cor. 2:12.

Secondly, To Christ Jesus; Cant. 1:4. The upright love thee. Cant. 3:3. Saw ye, &c. 1 Pet. 1:8. Whom having not seen, ye love. Joh. 21:17. Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee: why, how can it be otherwise, but that if one hath the very Spirit of Christ, he must love Christ? If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be an Anathema Maranatha, 1 Cor. 16:22. Would you have this affirmed of any one to whom God gives his Spirit? But it must if any of them should not love Christ: The Spirit makes the match between Christ and us, causeth that union, and can this be without a mutual love? Can any man give in his heart to Christ, and yet not love him?

**Object. But every man will say that he loves God, and that he loves Christ, &c.**

Sol. 'It is true, men generally say so; but there are few only that do so: To love God, and to love Christ, is;

First, To have the heart entirely set upon them.

Secondly, To have the heart most set upon them.

Thirdly, To desire exceedingly their presence and communion.

Fourthly, To take special delight and satisfaction in that communion.

Fifthly, Not to love anything that is contrary to this, against them, or offensive unto them.

Sixthly, To take heed to walk before them in all well-pleasing; such a love as this is in everyone who hath the Spirit of God.

Thirdly, To all the children of God; and servants of Jesus Christ: 1 Thes. 4:9. Ye are taught of God to love one another. 1 Joh. 5:2. Everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. 1 Pet. 3:8. Love as brethren. Col. 2:2. Being knit together in love.

If this be the fruit of the Spirit, then many men have not the Spirit for they hate the people of God (The righteous are an abomination unto the wicked,) Pro. 29:27. Yea, and many who talk much of the Spirit, have great cause to suspect their hearts, because they do not love the people of God; they do love men of their particular Opinion, and men of their particular interest; but if in these any of the people of God do differ from them, now they cannot love them, but they have very hard and uncharitable Opinions of them, and speak evil of them, and revile them, and utterly shun and decline them.

#### **SECT. IV.**

Thus have you the discoveries of the presence of the Spirit of God by the qualities of the Spirit: Now follows the last way to know whether we have the Spirit of God, and that is

3ly. By the properties of such persons to whom indeed the Spirit is given. e.g.

They that have the Spirit given unto them, are spiritually-minded: Rom. 8:5. They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. Here the Apostle gives a different character of two different sorts of persons: Here are some who are after the flesh, (i.e.) who are carnal, unregenerate, in their natural condition; the character of these

persons is, that they do mind the things of the flesh, sinful, sensual, vain things: And there are some who are after the Spirit (i.e.) who are born of the Spirit, who are Regenerate, converted, sanctified by the Spirit; and the character of them is, That they do mind the things of the Spirit: The things of the Spirit (i.e.) the things which the Spirit of God commands, suggests, the things which are agreeable to a spiritual nature, holy, and heavenly objects, holy and heavenly ways, and works, the things which belong to the kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof; the things which do conduce to the glory of God, and the salvation of their souls: They do mind these things, they do Cogitare, think much of them; they do Curare, lay out their greatest care for them; they do Sapere, relish these things above all other, they are most sweet and delightful unto them: Psal. 4:6. But Lord lift thou up the light, &c. Psal. 119:103. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea sweeter than honey to my mouth! Cant. 2:3. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste. O what a discovery doth this one trial make: They that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit: Many men seldom or never think of the things of the Spirit; God is not in their thoughts, they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, Job 21:14. They mind not God, nor Christ, nor Word, nor Soul, nor Heaven, nor Repentance, nor Faith, &c. If they do think of them, it is but carelessly, and coldly, not with any care to get them, not with any affections to desire them, or to delight in them; they are not suitable objects, &c. The things of God, the things of Christ, the things of salvation, the things of the way to heaven they savor them not, they relish them not at all; but their sinful lusts they do mind, on these do their thoughts run, and in these do they take pleasure; and they do mind earthly things, Phil. 3:19, on these are their affections set; who will show us any good? Any earthly bargain, any earthly gain, and earthly discourse, these they savor and relish, &c.



Yea I doubt that many amongst us who presume their estates to be good, have just cause to fear and suspect themselves, because spiritual Ordinances and spiritual Communion, and spiritual Conferences, and spiritual Exercises and Employments, and spiritual Meditations, and Cares, are no way savory and relishing, and delighting, but rather burthensome, irksome, and displeasing!

O where is a David to be found amongst us! Who can say with him, Psal. 119:97. O how I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day. And ver. 111. Thy testimonies are the rejoicing of my heart. Where is a Paul to be found! 1 Cor. 2:2. I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Secondly, They that have the Spirit given unto them, they are presently in opposition or conflict with sinful corruptions abiding or dwelling in them: As you can no sooner put fire and water together, but immediately they are conflicting with one another: So as soon as any man receives the Spirit of God, which is holy and good, there doth immediately ensue, a commotion, a war, a combat in the soul with it and sinful corruptions; Gal. 5:17, the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, &c.

Before we do partake of the Spirit, all is at rest and peace within us; the flesh (i.e.) sin doth reign and command, and we do willingly yield obedience and service unto its lusts, in the approbation and delight, and execution of them: But when the Spirit of God comes into our hearts, and renews them, now begins the conflict and war, there being in us two natures contrary to each other, and inclinations, and affections, contrary to each other, and motions and services likewise contrary to each other. For the work of Renovation from the Spirit, although it passes through the whole soul and every faculty of it, yet

it is an imperfect work; the whole soul is renewed, but not wholly; not a faculty but it hath renewing grace in it, yet so that there is not a faculty but it hath sin also abiding in it: And hence doth arise the Spiritual conflict from the presence and cohabitation of two such utterly different, and irreconcilable adversaries as grace and sin, the Spirit and the flesh.

Paul found this within himself, Rom. 7, and so doth every regenerate person in the world: The Spirit kindles such a war in a man, renewed self against his sinful self, as will never be quenched nor ended until his course be finished, and his life ended.

Thirdly, They that have the Spirit given unto them (for that very reason) shall meet with most deadly opposition from men destitute of the Spirit, though we be civil, and courteous, and friendly, and helpful, if we be born of the Spirit, &c. Gal. 4:29, as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Here is Ishmael born after the flesh (i.e.) an ungodly and wicked wretch; and here is Isaac born after the Spirit (i.e.) according to the promise of the Spirit, and according to the powerful and gracious renewing of the Spirit, and presently he is persecuted by Ishmael.

That must needs be good which Nero persecutes; so he must needs be good, he must needs have the Spirit of God, against whom all the scoffing's, and mocking's, and reproaches, and persecutions of the wicked are raised.

Fourthly, They that have the Spirit, do walk in the Spirit, and after the Spirit; you read those expressions, Gal. 5:25, and Rom. 8:4. We walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: Now as to walk after the flesh, is to set and order the course of our life after our corrupt reason, and wills, and affections, following them as our guides; so to

walk after the Spirit is to dispose and order our conversation according to the rules and motions of the Spirit, so to lead our lives, and move on in our courses, as the Spirit of God doth teach us in the Word, and stirs us up inwardly to follow.

Thus doth everyone who hath the Spirit of God; he walks after the Spirit, his conversation is in heaven, Phil. 3:20. His course of life is the course of new obedience, that newness of life which the Word sets forth: He walks not as the men of this world walk, nor according to his own lusts in the times of his ignorance, but before God in Holiness and Righteousness; for by the Spirit he is sanctified to obedience, 1 Pet. 1:2.

1. He prays with David, Psal. 119:133. Order my steps in thy Word. Ephes. 5:10. Proving what is acceptable to the Lord.
2. For the paths: Psal. 119:101. I have refrained my feet from every evil way. Ver. 8. I will walk in thy statutes. Isa. 26:7. The way of the just is uprightness.
3. For the end, so as to advance the Kingdom, and advance the Gospel: a living unto the Lord.

Fifthly, They that have the Spirit, are spiritual worshippers: The true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him; God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth, John 4:23,24. So Paul in Rom. 1:9. God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son. Phil 3:3. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit.

Beloved, take these two things for certain truths. viz.

1. Carnal men are but carnal worshippers; a form of worship satisfies them, bodily service, outward performance: Isa. 29:13. This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, &c. Jer. 12:2. Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.
2. But spiritual men (or men of the spirit) are spiritual worshippers, they do worship God in spirit.

**Object. But you will say, What is it to worship God in spirit?**

Sol. I answer, to worship God in spirit, is;

First, To have our inward man taken up, employed, and acting in all those Religious duties which we do owe, and which we do present unto him. As when we draw near to him in prayer, for power to repent, to believe, to obey, &c. not only our mouths do pray, but our very hearts also do pray, and our prayers are the lifting up of our hearts: Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul, Psal. 25:1. (Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens, Lam. 3:41.) And the very desires of our souls, Isa. 26:8. The desire of our soul is to thy name. And when you come to him in confession of sins, not only your lips do acknowledge them, and condemn you for them, but your very hearts are ashamed of them, and bewail them, and judge them: And so when you come to hear the Word, a bodily presence doth not satisfy you, but your hearts do come with your bodies, and your hearts do hear, and your hearts are ready to receive the Word with gladness and fear.

Secondly, To have an edge upon our hearts in the services of God, a kind of heavenly vigor and strenuousness, so that our

souls do come in to it with all the actual strength which they have for the present.

Indeed a Christian hath sometimes a stronger and quicker keenness of spirit than he hath at other times, but still he puts forth (as least in his desires and endeavors) what power he hath in his communion with God: As he seeks God with his mouth, so he seeks him with his whole heart: Psal. 119:10. With my whole heart have I sought thee; he doth not serve the Lord with a cold, formal, indifferent spirit, but as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 12:11. He is fervent in spirit, serving the Lord: He prays and hears fervently, and repents fervently, and believes fervently: 'It is true that he falls very short; yet what he doth to the Lord, he doth the same in good earnest, it is his work, and his business; and if he finds it otherwise with himself, if he finds a dullness and deadness upon his spirit, this troubles him, and he strives to shake it off, by stirring up himself (as the phrase is, Isa. 64:7, and that of 2 Tim. 1:6) and by awaking of his heart and graces (I myself will awake, saith David, Psal. 108:2) and beseeching of the Lord to quicken and to enlarge his heart: I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, Psal. 119:32.

Sixthly, They who have the Spirit of God, are most pleased and delighted in spiritual and vigorous ministrations, which deal most with their spirits, and do in a spiritual power most reach their hearts and spiritual condition. Beloved, this you shall find in experience, that a profane heart cannot endure but always hates and despiseth a spiritual and searching Ministry. A formal heart hath most satisfaction in a formal Ministry. A gracious heart is always best pleased with a spiritual and powerful Ministry, with that Ministry which doth come in power, and in the demonstration of the Spirit,

and makes itself manifest unto the consciences of men, which is quick in operation and piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. 4:12, and which is mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, 2 Cor. 10:1. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, ver. 5. This spiritual Ministry is that with which a spiritual heart doth and can most close. O a Ministry which doth most dive into the heart, and discovers the depth of sin, and the hidden things of the heart, and the secret guiles and hypocrisies of our spirits! And that Ministry which shames our sins most, and rents them out of our bosoms, and makes our souls to loath them! And that Ministry which like a spiritual Adamant draws a heart to Christ, breaking down all the powers of unbelief! And that Ministry which discovers and dashes in pieces all our self-deceits, and all our self-confidence! And that Ministry which presseth and leadeth one to the power of godliness, and to the practical expressing of the virtues of Jesus Christ, and of him that calleth us! And that Ministry which raiseth a drooping soul with spiritual truth, and rules, though never so strict and contrary to flesh and blood! This is a Spiritual Ministry, and this is a Ministry of the Spirit, and this is the Ministry which everyone (who indeed hath the Spirit of God) doth highly prize, doth cordially close with, and desires from his soul to live under: Psal. 139:23. Search me O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts. Ver. 24. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Seventhly, They who have the Spirit, have this property also that they are singularly tender as to that spirit; which appears in four things.

1. In no case will they part with the Spirit: Psal. 6:11. Take not thy holy Spirit from me!
2. They are afraid by anything to grieve the Spirit: Ephes. 4:30. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God by whom, &c.
3. If they have grieved him so as to withdraw himself, they are not at rest until the Spirit returns again in his gracious operations and manifestations: Psal. 51:10. Renew a right Spirit within me. And Ver. 12. Uphold me with thy free Spirit.
4. They strive more and more after purity of Spirit, that so that good Spirit may take more and more delight to dwell in his temple.

Thus have I at length finished the Trials and Characters by which we may know whether the Lord hath given his own Spirit unto us.

#### SECT. V.

2. Use. I Now proceed unto a second Use, which shall be of Comfort unto all and everyone unto whom the Spirit of God is given, who do find him in their hearts in any of those works and saving effects before-mentioned; Not without cause doth the Apostle Paul take pleasure in this, I have the Spirit of Christ, and we have received the Spirit of God, and the Holy Ghost is given unto us: Yea Christ himself looked upon the sending and giving of the Spirit to be the Comforter unto his Disciples, as equivalent unto his own presence with them, and as a sufficient cordial against all the troubles of their heart, and against all the temptations of the world.

**Quest. But will some say, What benefit and happiness is there by having the Spirit of God given unto us?**

Sol. I will answer you 1. In the general. 2ly. In particular unto this Question.

1. In the General.

The presence of the Spirit of God within you, it is an infallible evidence of your happiness in the whole estate of it from first to last, from eternity to eternity, from the time past to the time present, and the time to come.

First, For the time past: Beloved, our happiness begins long before we do begin; it begins in the eternal love of God, and in the election of God, before the foundation of the world, Ephes. 1:4. The Records of election are Records of Eternity; that is the date of writing our names in heaven, and in the book of life: And questionless this is a great part of our blessedness (it is the first stone thereof which is said) that we are (out of a free and an immutable love and purpose) set down and infallibly chosen and ordained for blessedness; of which gracious act the presence of the Spirit is a sure evidence unto us: 2 Thes. 2:13. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit. Ephes. 1:4. He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy.

Secondly, For the time present; it is (you know) a common doubt and debate among serious and solid Christians, whether their present spiritual condition be right and sound? Whether or no they have a real relation to God as their Father? And whether Christ be in them of a truth? And verily that estate is really good, and sound, and sure in which there is such a relation and such a profession. Now when



the Spirit of God is given, his presence and work are undoubted evidences of him: Rom. 8:15. We have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father. Ver. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. 1 Joh. 3:24. Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Thirdly, For the time to come; there is reserved for all the people of God in heaven, an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. 1:4. A Crown of life, Rev. 2:10. An exceedingly exceeding, and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4:17. And of this also is the presence of the Spirit a sure evidence unto us: Ephes. 1:13,14. The holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance; q.d. The Lord will hereafter give you full possession, he hath promised you no less than a heavenly kingdom, and a glorious inheritance; for you are his Children and Heirs; and to satisfy and assure you of this, he hath given you a pledge or earnest, and that earnest is his own Spirit; in that you have for the present the Spirit of God, this is your earnest that you shall hereafter fully enjoy the kingdom of God.

And now I beseech you tell me, whether the enjoying of the Spirit of God be not very happy and comfortable?

If you look back, by this you know that your names are written in heaven: If you look on your present condition, by this you know that God is your Father, and you are his children; Christ is yours, and you are Christ's: If you look forward, by this also you know that heavenly glory is yours, and shortly you shall perfectly and eternally possess it; and all this you may look on as most sure, because God hath given his Spirit unto you.

2ly. In Particular:

But let us descend unto particulars, which if we do rightly understand and consider of, we must confess that to have the Spirit given unto us, it is an unspeakable blessing and mercy.

You read in Scripture of several Attributes (if I may so call them) given unto the Spirit, and all of them in relation unto those to whom he is given; And every one of them respecting their good and benefit all the days of their life; He is called

1. A holy and sanctifying Spirit.
2. A revealing and manifesting Spirit.
3. A strengthening and helping Spirit.
4. A restoring and recovering Spirit.
5. A comforting and quickening Spirit.
6. A dwelling and an abiding Spirit.

1. Fifthly, The Spirit of God which is given unto you is a holy and sanctifying Spirit: He is the holy Spirit of God; Ephes. 4:30. And the Spirit sanctifies, 1 Cor. 6:11.

Now there are three comforts from this, that the Spirit of God (within you) is a sanctifying Spirit.

1. He sanctifies you in truth, he renews your very hearts; it is not a formal or deceivable work, but a real and effectual work, which is indeed the new Creation, 2 Cor. 5:17,18, the image of God, the life and glory of Christ which shall certainly end in happiness, Partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4.

2. He will go on with his sanctifying work, he will begin and make an end: 1 Thes. 5:23. He will change you from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18. Though it begins in weakness, he will carry it on in power: This sanctifying work of the Spirit shall move on in the soul as the sun doth in the firmament, from strength to strength; the Spirit within will more and more mortify, and weaken, and destroy the body of sin, and he will be renewing your inward man day by day, 2 Cor. 4.

3. He will still maintain and preserve this sanctifying work against all the rebellions of our corruptions, and against all the assaults of Satan, and will never leave until he hath crowned it with glory.

Secondly, The Spirit of God which is given unto you, is a revealing and manifesting Spirit: He is expressly called the Spirit of revelation, in Ephes. 1:17, and verily herein doth lie most admirable comfort and joy; yea all our actual soul joy in this life: If all the thoughts and works of grace were hid from us, we should have but sad days all our life long, we should be in perpetual fears and doubts, and complaints: But the discovery of them (which is by the light of the Spirit) makes day with us, makes joy and rejoicing abound within us.

Now there are four things which the Spirit of God (given unto the people of God) can and doth reveal unto them.

First, The presence of Christ within us: Though Christ be in us (for he dwells in our hearts by faith, Ephes. 3:17) yet we cannot see or discover his presence but by the Spirit: Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. 3:24. To know that Christ is mine, and in me, and that I am Christ's, and in him, cannot be without the Spirit, and this manifestation is from the Spirit; and is not this joy and comfort

indeed to know that Christ is in us? Know ye not that Christ is in you, except you be reprobates? 2 Cor. 13:5.

Secondly, The love of God towards us: 'It is true that God doth love his people with a most gracious love, and with a great love, and with a most kind love; his love is called loving-kindness, Hose. 2:19, with a love that surpasseth all love: And it is also true, that the apprehension and experience of his love is most sweet and transcendent, Thy loving-kindness is better than life, Psal. 63:3. And if we could know his love unto us, this would pacify us; and how should we come to taste how gracious the Lord is? By the holy Ghost; Rom. 5:5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost: The love of God is like a fountain that is sealed, it is like a vessel of precious liquor, like that box of ointment, none can open it unto us, none can pour it into our hearts, none can make us see and taste it; he can, and oftentimes doth make us to know that the Father loves us.

Thirdly, The wonderful glory prepared for us; Mark what the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 2:9. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love. Ver. 10 But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God; the quality and quantity of future happiness prepared from eternity, and must answer the blood of Christ, &c.

Fourthly, All the precious works of the Spirit, himself with his finger hath wrought in us: Though there be an aptitude in them to manifest and discover themselves, yet we cannot see them without the Spirit: How often are we in darkness? How often in doubts and enquiries, but have I faith? But have I repentance?

But have I godly sorrow? But have I the new heart? The tender heart? The humble heart? In truth! Beloved, as there is no seeing of the heavenly bodies but by a heavenly light; so there is no discovering of the graces of the Spirit, but by the light of the Spirit: 1 Cor. 2:12. We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given us of God.

O what happiness is all this! To enjoy the Spirit of God, by whom we come to know Jesus Christ, and as present in my soul! To know the love of God, and taste the sweetness of it in my heart! To know the future heavenly happiness that is prepared from eternity, and prepared for my soul! And to know all that God hath freely given me in order unto my own eternal happiness!

Thirdly, The Spirit of God which is given unto us, is a strengthening and helping Spirit: Ephes. 3:16. That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. Rom. 8:26. Likewise also the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, &c. Is it not a benefit when one is weak and faint, to find a friend to relieve, to support, assist, uphold, and help him? We are weak, we are fainting, we are oppressed, distressed, burdened, ready to sink, to fail, many times; we know not what to do, and cannot do any good that we would; and now the Spirit of God comes and strengthens our feeble hands, and supports our fainting spirits, and puts out his power upon our hearts, and carries us on in our ways and works: You do find it thus in several cases. viz.

1. Frequently when we are to pray, we are at a loss and cannot go on with the heavenly work; our ignorance, our unbelief, Satan's temptations, and distractions, all these hold us down, and bind us up, and we cannot help and free ourselves: But then the Spirit of God comes in with his strength and with his help, and stirs up

our hearts, and enlargeth our hearts, and new desires flow, and groans abound, and afflictions work, and faith works with confidence to the throne of grace, to find grace and mercy to help in time of need.

2. Always in our spiritual warfare with our own corruptions, with Satan's temptations; in these conflicts we feel our own weakness, and their power and violence, so that we many times cry out, O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us! Rom. 7:24. Or as Jehoshaphat in another case, We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, 2 Chron. 20:12. And verily we may say concerning our own corruptions, what he spake of his enemies; If it had not been the Lord who was on our side; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, Psal. 124:1,2,3, so if the Spirit of the Lord had not been with us, and if the Spirit of the Lord had not strengthened and helped us, sin had been too hard for us: But in those conflicts the Spirit of God hath made us strong, still to pray, still to believe, still to wait, still to resist, and at length to conquer.

4ly. The spirit of God which is given unto us, is a reconciling and a restoring spirit; he restoreth my soul, saith David, Psal. 23:3. Even the people of God sometimes are circumvented by Satan's temptations, and are overpowered by sin that dwelleth in them (what I hate that do I, saith Paul, Rom. 7:15.) They do many times fall very grievously, and sadly, and are not able by their own strength to rise again, but there they lie with their weakness, and losses, and complaints, and tears: Now in this condition, the Spirit of God puts forth his hand, and recovers, and raises them up again; he doth not

leave them when they are fallen, but by the power of his assisting grace

1. He awakens them out of their sleep, by a quick conviction upon their consciences, to see the great evil which they have done: I have sinned, saith David, as soon as Nathan said, Thou art the man, 1 Sam. 12.

2. He melts their hearts into singular grief for that evil which they have done: David watered his couch with tears, Psal. 6:6. And Peter goes out and weeps bitterly, Luk. 22:62, he makes them to mourn, and to be ashamed, and to loath themselves.

3. He stirs up their hearts to confess and acknowledge their sinning's, and to judge themselves before the Lord for their unfaithful dealings, and unworthy walking, and likewise earnest wrestling's, and strivings with the Lord by prayer for pardoning mercy, and restoring grace, and a more steadfast spirit: Psal. 51:9. Blot out all mine iniquities. Ver. 10. Renew a right spirit within me. Ver. 12. Uphold me by thy free spirit.

4. He enables them by faith to lay hold on Christ to be their peace, and to make Reconciliation; and thus doth the Spirit of God recover and restore their fallen souls, and assures them that their sin is pardoned.

Fifthly, the Spirit of God which is given unto you, is a comforting Spirit: Christ himself calls him the Comforter, Joh. 14:16, and you find him actually comforting the people of God: Acts 9:31. They walked in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. He is called the Comforter by way of Eminency and Excellency; there is no such Comforter as the Spirit of God, Psal. 77:2. For;

1. He can comfort your very souls with proper comforts and consolations: Thy comforts delight my soul, Psal. 94:19.

2. He can comfort you against all your discomforts; 2 Cor. 1:4. Who comforteth us in all our tribulations.

1. From Conscience.

2. From the Devil and the world.

3. From Providence, when it seems to be cross to us.

3. He can comfort you under all absences; when there is neither Father, nor Mother, nor Husband, nor Wife, nor Child, nor Friend, nor Land, nor House, yet he can comfort you; he alone can show you the salvation of the Lord, speak peace and joy, and assure you of mercy, and cause you to rejoice in believing; Psal. 27:10. When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

4. He can comfort you, and none can hinder him, nor men, nor Devils, nor fears, nor doubts; for he can create you peace, and create you joy, and create you comfort; he himself alone is a sufficient cause of comfort.

**Object. How so? How doth the Spirit comfort?**

Sol. 1. By opening all the springs of comfort unto you, the fountain of mercy Zech. 13:1, the Fountain of grace, the Fountain of the blood of Christ, and of justification: 1 Joh. 2:1,2. Rom. 5:11. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement.

2. By actuating your faith, to behold all these fountains of joy, and to dig water out of the wells of salvation, and making you to



suck the breasts of consolation.

3. By applying them to your very souls, clearing and witnessing your right unto them, your propriety in them, that Christ died for your sins, that God is reconciled to your souls, that you are justified and accepted unto life, and that you are the children of God, Rom. 8.

4. By enabling conscience to testify; 2 Cor. 1:12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation.

Sixthly, The Spirit which is given unto you, is dwelling and an abiding spirit in all the people of God: Rom. 8:11. By his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Joh. 14:16. I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever: He will be mortifying your sins, perfecting your graces, conquering your temptations, subduing your corruptions, helping your weaknesses, comforting your consciences, leading you on in your journey, until you come to the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

As Jesus Christ accomplished all the works for which the Father sent him; he gave not over until he had finished all of them: so doth the Spirit of God, who is sent and given unto us; he proceeds and goes on with all the works for which he is given unto us, and that is to communicate and apply unto us all which Christ hath purchased for us, even grace and glory, even life, and eternal life.

Thus have you heard 1. The Discoveries of the presence of the Spirit:  
2ly. The Benefits and blessedness in the enjoyment of that Spirit.

## SECT. VI.

3. Use. I now proceed unto a third Use which shall be of relief to tender and weak Christians, who are full of tears, and sadness, because they can find no discoveries of the presence of God's Spirit within them, or at most very weak and feeble pulses and appearances thereof: That which I would say for the support of those weak persons, I shall set down in five Conclusions.

First, One may have the real presence of the Spirit, and yet sometimes have no sensible discoveries of his presence, as to his own apprehension: As

1. In the time of desertions when the Lord hides himself from the soul, and draws off, and leaves it a while to sit in darkness and in silence; in such a case though there be actings of the Spirit, and putting's forth tears and groans, and complaints (Will the Lord cast off forever? Will he be favorable no more? Psal. 77:7) yet the deserted soul discerns them not in a Relative way, as working testimonies of the presence of the Spirit.

2. In time of great transgressions: Then the Spirit as is it were in a swoon, and the light appears not, and confusion and darkness rise upon our graces; David in his great transgressions looks upon all as lost, and therefore prays that the Lord would not take his holy Spirit from him, Psal. 51:11.

Secondly, One may have the Spirit of God within him, and yet sometimes (as to his own thinking) the discoveries may be rather that he hath not the spirit, than that he hath; Job saith of God, he holds me for his enemy, Job. 13:24. And David saith, cast me not off, Psal. 43:2. And the Church saith, my God hath forsaken me, Isa. 49:14.

This is our condition in the times of vile temptation, and in the time of sad melancholy, and there is no grace in me, no faith, no love, softness of heart, no ability to pray; all was but hypocrisy, there was never anything in truth wrought within my soul.

Thirdly, There are comforting discoveries of the presence of the Spirit; and there are proper and respective discoveries of this presence as to our present ways, and works, and needs: Perhaps you have not the manifestations of the spirit in the effect of peace, and joy, and assurance, and yet you may have the manifestations of the Spirit in the effects of mourning for sin, and conflicting with it, and prayer against it, and to walk uprightly: Perhaps you find not the presence of the Spirit discovering himself in strong and powerful actings in your souls, and yet you may find the Spirit discovering himself in making you to hunger after Christ: Perhaps you find not the Spirit's presence in raising your hearts with his testimony, and yet you find his presence in humbling your hearts for the sins into which you are fallen. Perhaps you do not find the presence of the Spirit in delivering you from temptations, but yet you find his presence in upholding of you against temptations.

Fourthly, There are many things which may befall us in our Christian race and course, which yet are not sufficient grounds to conclude that God hath not given unto us his Spirit. e.g.

1. Afflictions, losses, and crosses in outward things, you may not from these conclude that God hath not given you his Spirit; Because;

1. The Lord doth correct every son whom he loveth.

2. The most holy persons have been afflicted; Job was so, so was Jacob, so was David.

3. These are sent for the trial of our faith and repentance, &c. and for the improvement of them.

2. Oppositions from wicked men, by reproaches, and slanders, and threatening's, and injuriousness, these are so far from approving that we have not the Spirit, that they rather do demonstrate his presence and work in us: Gal. 4:28. We brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. Ver. 29. But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. 1 Joh. 3:12. As Cain who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother; and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous. 1 Pet. 4:4. They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.

3, Inward motions of sin, and outward temptations from Satan: They have and do befall the best of Saints; Paul found the one in Rom. 7, and the other in 2 Cor. 12, and who of the people of God is free from them?

4. Several diversities upon our own spirits; sometimes a lowliness, a dullness; sometimes great confidence, and sometimes many doubting's; sometimes rejoicings, sometimes mourning's; sometimes an enlargedness of heart, and sometimes a narrowness and restrainedness; sometimes an high elevation of heart, and sometimes why art thou cast down O my soul? Sometimes I do believe, and yet sometimes O that I could believe! Sometimes I will not fear what man can do unto me? And sometimes I am afraid, and that I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.

5. Particular wanderings and sinning's, when yet the course of a Christian is holy and upright; in this case we may neither

condemn another, nor yet ourselves as utterly destitute of the Spirit of grace, because as a course of sinning ariseth from the want of grace; so the particular acts of sinning may arise only from the weakness of grace.

Fifthly there may be but a very weak measure of grace in a person, who yet hath the Spirit of grace in truth: A Child that is newly born is a living child, and yet he is very weak: Some Christians are but new born babes, as the Apostle calls them, 1 Pet. 2:2. The graces of the Spirit are sometimes in so weak and so low an ebb, that they are compared to a bruised reed, and to smoking flax, and to the dawning of light in the morning, and to a grain of mustard seed, and to a little leaven in the lump.

Now here I would show you three things.

1. How one may know that he hath as yet but a very weak measure of the Spirit of grace?
2. How one may know that the weak measure of grace is not false but true grace?
3. That no Christian should discourage himself because his grace is weak, but rather encourage himself because grace is sound, although it be weak.

**1. Quest. How one may know that he hath as yet but a very weak measure of the Spirit of grace?**

Sol. This may be known;

First, By the time of the implantation of it; this is a truth, that grace begins in weakness; if a man be but newly converted, his grace cannot be but weak: The Christian at first is but as a plant newly set,

and but as a sick man newly recovered, or as the Sun newly risen; although it may seem much unto him, and he may find many stirrings in his spirit, and in his affections; yet this grace is but weak, it hath but little strength in it: As a prisoner who hath been long in captivity and bondage, when he is delivered, his rejoicing may be great, and yet his body may be very weak; so when the Lord converts a man, and so delivers him from the bondage of sin, his heart may exceedingly rejoice in his mercy, that he is translated from death to life, and yet his Spiritual strength of grace is very weak in him.

Secondly, By the strength of corruptions: The stronger that any man's corruptions are, this is a sign that his graces are but weak: I call those sinful corruptions strong, which do often prevail upon us, and lead us captive, which are able to hinder us from doing what is good, and to drive and force us to do that which is evil; nor are we able to withstand this; why this, ariseth from weakness of grace: When it is with us as with a little Child who is ready to stumble and fall at every straw (as we speak) at every stone, at every chip, is not this the weakness of the Child! So when every temptation, every occasion, every strong motion of sin is apt to shake us, and stagger us, and to surprise us, is not grace very weak within us! If this be a truth that sin grows weak, as grace grows stronger (that the darkness is less when the light is clear) then this also holds true, that grace is weak when sin is strong, when grace is like a little light in the midst of much darkness.

Thirdly, by the proportion of actings: Every true grace of the Spirit is of an active nature, it is apt to put forth itself; in this respect it is like all true fire and light which in the least degrees are apt, and do put forth themselves; but they have their different proportions in acting; a little fire acts but little, and a great fire acts much; so weak grace hath but a weak operation, and strong grace stronger operations;

weak grace acts most in desires, and most in the will, and most in tears, and most in sighs, and groans; O that I could believe! Lord help my unbelief, answered the father of child with tears. O that I could mourn, that I could obey! To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, Rom. 7:18.

Fourthly, By the mixture of contrary workings; a little of grace, and much of corruption; a little of faith, and much of doubting's; a little of hope, and much of fear; a little of sorrow, and much of hardness; a little of prayer, and much of distraction; a little of zeal, and much of flatness; a little that is done, and much that is undone; a little of knowledge, and much of ignorance; a little heavenly-mindedness, and much of earthliness; a little fire, and much smoke; a little going, and much halting, &c.

Fifthly, By the aptness to live not by faith, but by sense; when God draws up all our helps and hopes into his promises, and puts us now to fetch all our supplies and comforts from his good and faithful Word, Here is my Word that I will pardon your sins; and here is my Word that I will subdue your iniquities; and here is my Word that I will answer your prayers; and here is my Word that I will supply your wants; and I will never leave you nor forsake you; O but because we feel not the assurance of pardon, and because we find not victory over our sins, and because we do not see the answer of our prayers, and because we cannot discern the means and ways how our wants may be supplied, therefore our hearts fail us, and we are troubled and perplexed, and sad thoughts do arise in our hearts, and they are much cast down within us; If it be thus with us, certainly our graces are weak, very weak; the less able are ye to trust an All sufficient and faithful God in his promises, but you must have the portion in your own hands, you must see or else you will not believe, you cannot so

steadfastly believe that God's Bond is sufficient, &c. The child is but weak which must still be held by the hand, &c.

Sixthly, By the prevailing of discouragements: If we be apt to be offended and discouraged, this shows weakness of grace; there are discouragements taken from God's dealing with us, as when he delays our suits, and denies some of the requests, and tries, and exercises us with smart afflictions, and suffers temptations to abide on us: From the ways of Christianity, the strictness of them, and the danger by them, and the greatness of them: From men, that wicked men do so vex and trouble us; that good men are so strange and unkind unto us: From ourselves, that we go on so slowly, and exactly, and uncomfortably, and others get so far before us, and attain so much: Discouragements from any of these show that there is in us but small knowledge, little faith, much fear, and weak grace.

Seventhly, By the presence of censoriousness, of strife, and contentions, and envying's: 1 Cor. 3:3. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and division, are you not carnal, and walk as men?

**2. Quest. How may one know that the weak measure of grace is not false, but true grace, and the very effect of the Spirit of God?**

Sol. One may know that there is a true work of grace, although very weak:

First, By his apprehension and love of the image of God, of this work of the Spirit in whomsoever he finds it: His very soul values such a person, and doth close with him, and is knit unto him: 1 Joh. 3:14. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. Everyone that hath truth of grace, doth highly prize all that



have grace, counts them the excellent of the earth, and is most delighted, Psal. 16:3, and satisfied in the society of such.

Secondly, By the choice of his heart; he chooseth God to be his God, and the ways of God to be his ways; I have chosen the ways of truth, Psal. 119:30. I have chosen thy precepts. Ver. 173. Although he doth not serve his God in fullness, yet he doth in sincerity; although he cannot walk in his ways exactly, yet in these ways he will walk; he is a servant to none but his God, and traveler in no ways but his.

Thirdly, By the desires of his soul: They are holy and heavenly, and spiritual; though his work is little, yet his desires are great; though his enjoyments are small, yet his desires are high; and amongst others, there are these five desires where there is truth of grace, viz.

1. An earnest desire of God's love and favor: Psal. 106:4. Remember me O Lord with the favor which thou bearest unto thy people, O visit me with thy salvation.

2. An earnest desire of Christ, a hungering and thirsting after him. I will seek him whom my soul loveth, Cant. 3:3. O that God would give me Christ! O that I could believe! Lord help my unbelief! Mark 9:24.

3. An earnest desire to walk in all well-pleasing before God; O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Psal. 119:5, they do not keep them, but they desire to keep them; Lord, increase our faith.

4. An earnest desire for more grace; as Paul, Phil. 3:12. I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Ver 14. I press toward the mark: A desire of the

Word that we may grow thereby, is a sign of the new birth, 1 Pet. 2:2.

5. An earnest desire that he might not sin against his God: Psal. 119:10. With my whole heart have I sought thee, O let me not wander from thy Commandments.

Fourthly, By the conflicts in himself: Though there be not a present victory, yet there is a present war in everyone who hath truth of grace: Truth of grace will make a man

1. To love the Law of the Spirit of Christ, and to join and take part with his good motions, and directions and commands: The good that I would do, saith Paul; and I delight in the law after the inward man, Rom. 7:19,22.

2. To hate and oppose the Law of sin: Though he doth evil, yet he hates it, (what I hate, that I do) and though he cannot subdue his sins, yet he will oppose them: He opposeth and resisteth the pride, the filthiness, the passions, the frowardness, the hardness, the unbelief of his heart.

Fifthly, By the griefs and complaints of his soul: He is grieved that yet sin hath so much power in him, and cries out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! And he is grieved that he is so low, and weak, and short in obedience unto his loving Christ! That he can love him no better, fear him no more, trust on him no stronger, and magnify him no more: And he is grieved that he cannot grieve, that he cannot believe, that he cannot walk up to the Rule of Christ, and unto the desires of his soul!

Sixthly, By the endeavors and actings of his soul: He that is weakest in grace, is acting according to the proportion which he hath

received: As old father Latimer said to his fellow-sufferer, I am coming as fast as I can brother! So the weakest in grace, he is stirring, and he is doing as well as he can, he is doing his Masters will, and if he could do more, and better service, assuredly God should have it from him; and glad he is if he can mend one.

**3. Quest. Why no Christian should be discouraged, because of the weak measure of grace wrought in him by the Spirit of God.**

Sol. You should not be discouraged for these Reasons.

First All the graces of the Spirit do begin in weakness; we are at the first but babes in Christ, and then young men, and strong, and then Fathers, 1 Joh. 2:12,13. False grace is too sudden and too ripe; it begins where it should end, and therefore it ends usually as soon as it begins: But true grace is first but weak, nevertheless it shall increase.

Secondly, It will not rest so, but gets from weakness to strength, and from strength to strength, as the Sun in the firmament: Prov. 4:18. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day.

Thirdly, The weakest grace doth bring God some honor, it will make a man to honor God inwardly, and outwardly: Rev. 3:8. Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my Name.

1. Inwardly, by setting up his will and authority in the heart, by loving of him, fearing of him, and trusting on him, though but weakly.

2. Outwardly, by abandoning every evil way, by exercising ourselves in godliness, by countenancing the rules and ways of Christ, and walking before God in truth: Even the Children in the Temple cried out Hosanna to the Son of David, Matth. 12:15, whereupon Christ applied that of David, Out of the mouths of babes and suckling's thou hast perfected praise, ver. 16.

Fourthly, The weakest grace is the workmanship of the Spirit of God: Not only our rejoicing, but our tears; not only our assurances, but our very groans are from him: Rom. 8:26. The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groans which cannot be uttered. So Phil. 2:13. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. To will any good, this comes from the Spirit of God, as well as to do any good.

Fifthly, The weakest grace is able to unthrone sin, and dispossess Satan, and to set up a throne in the heart for Christ, to hold forth his image, and to conform us to Christ, 2 Cor. 3:18.

Sixthly, The weakest graces, and breathings, and actings of it are accepted with God; he owns it, as a Father doth his weak babe, and he regards the offering and services of it; he will not only not despise the day of small things, Zech. 4:10, and he will not only not break the bruised reed, and not only not quench the smoking flax, Matth. 12:20, but he will lovingly and graciously accept of the weakest fruits of weakest graces: Psal. 38:9. All my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee. 2 King. 20:5. Tell Hezekiah, thus saith the Lord God of David thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears. 2 Cor. 8:12. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

Seventhly, The Lord hath a very tender respect unto persons who are weak in grace: Isa. 40:11. He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young: You may look up to Jesus Christ your High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and by him you may come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy to help in time of need, Heb. 4:15,16, Mal. 3:17. I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him. Isa. 66:13. As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. 1 Thes. 5:14. Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak. Isa. 61:1. The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted. Ver. 2, to comfort all that mourn.

Sixthly, The weakest grace of the Spirit is a sure evidence that you are in Christ, and it is the earnest penny of your future glory: Matth. 5:8. Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God. Ver. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

## SECT. VII.

4. Use. Doth God give his own Spirit unto all his own people? Let them then who have received the Spirit, remember the duties which do in a more special manner concern them: These are first, Negative: secondly, Positive.

1. Negative duties are

First, Quench not the Spirit; this is the Exhortation of the Apostle: 1 Thes. 5:19. Quench not the Spirit: The Spirit (in this Metaphorical

expression) is compared to fire, because

1. Fire lightning upon any combustible matter, it doth burn and consume it: So when the Spirit of God enters into our hearts, he doth waste and consume by degrees all our noisome lusts, and vile affections, and sinful deeds. Rom. 8:13.

2. Fire doth purge and purify the metals by burning up the dross, and by making them more pure and bright: So doth the Spirit of God when he comes into our hearts, he purgeth the heart of sin, and makes us holy, and fit vessels of honor.

3. Fire doth mollify, and soften, and melt the hardest Iron: So doth the Spirit of God the hardest heart, and makes it melt into godly sorrow and fear.

4. Fire doth give light and heat; So the Spirit of God doth enlighten and teach us, and heats us, and warms us, and inflames our hearts with the love of God, and with a power to do his will.

5. Fire doth ascend and mount upward; So the Spirit carries up our thoughts and affections unto things which are above, Rom. 8:5.

6. Fire doth revive, and as it were put a new life into us, when we are frozen or benumbed: So doth the Spirit quicken and enlarge our hearts when they are oppressed with dullness and deadness.

In these and some other respects is the Spirit of God (with his graces) compared to fire; which may be quenched either in part, as when you suffer it to decay and slack, or in whole when it goes out altogether.

There are four ways by which the fire is quenched.

First, By withdrawing and with-holding the fuel which should nourish it: So when we withdraw our ears from hearing the Word, and restrain Prayer, and decline holy society and conference, we do now quench the Spirit in his gifts and graces, they will decay, and fall, and die within us.

Secondly, By casting on water; though you put much wood to the fire, yet if you cast more water upon it, this will quench the fire: So although you should hear, and pray, yet if you admit gross sins, these will quench the Spirit; they will either totally extinguish, or else extremely diminish the graces of the Spirit. David found it so by his gross sins of adultery, and murder: And Samson found it so in his looseness with Delilah.

Thirdly, By smothering of it: Though you do not withdraw fuel from the fire, nor throw water upon it, yet if you heap upon it much cold earth, or green wood, this will smother and put out the fire: though you do not decline Ordinances and duties, you do not fall into gross sins, yet if you suffer your heart to be overcloyed with the things of the world, with the cares and employments of it, these will choke the word, and these will smother and quench the operations of the Spirit within you.

Fourth By neglecting of it: If we do not look unto the fire, and put the Brands together, and stir and blow it up, it will decay and go out: So if we neglect the graces of the Spirit, if we do not stir them up as Paul adviseth Timothy, 2 Tim. 1:6, shake off the contrary indisposition, and put them out in daily exercise, they will decay, and will be ready to die.

**Object. But some will say, Quorsum haec? May a Christian lose the Spirit? Fall away from grace? Can the work of the Spirit be wholly extinguished? Where is then the comfort and the happiness you lately spake of?**

Sol. I will not take up (by the by) that debate of total and final Apostasy; only this I say for the present that there is such a latitude and compass in the graces of the Spirit, that as the Christian may rise higher in them, so he may fall and decay much in them.

Take me briefly thus; the graces of the Spirit may be considered

First, In their Root which is Christ: And thus considered, as Christ lives forever, so do the graces of Christ, he dies not, neither shall any Branch Rooted in him die.

Secondly, in their essential habit, or spiritual quality; thus likewise the, are immortal seed, and abiding seed, and living, which shall never be cut off.

Thirdly, In their gradual measures, and quick operations; herein there may be a decay and quickening: Rev. 2:4. I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Ver. 5. Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works. Rev. 3:2. Strengthen the things which remain and are ready to die.

Fourthly, In their sensible and comfortable manifestations; and here likewise they may be extinguished, at least for a time; Psal. 51:12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: He had lost it by his sinning, &c.

Now the people of God who have received the spirit, they should be careful not to quench him at all, no not in the measures, no not in



any degree of grace, not in any one lively operation of grace, not in any one comfortable fruit or effect of grace: O sirs!

1. It is an exceeding folly to weaken (may I so express it) the hands of the Spirit, to shake your foundation, to wound yourselves so near the heart: The Spirit is the Spirit of your life and power.

2. It is an exceeding folly to lose any of your precious treasures; why! A degree or measure of grace, one dram of it is more than all the world for value?

3. It is an exceeding folly to bereave yourselves of your best comforts, and only joys, to turn your day into night, your peace into trouble, your hope into fear, your confidence into doubts.

4. It is an exceeding injury unto that good spirit and unto your own happiness, &c.

Secondly, Grieve not the Spirit: This duty you have from the Apostle, Eph. 4:30 Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption: Do nothing which may offend and displease him, or make his abode in you uncomfortable and undelightful: The Spirit hath been the Comforter unto you, you have tasted of his comforts and joys; do not grieve, and offend, and displease him who hath comforted and rejoiced your soul.

**Quest. What will grieve the Spirit, that so we may take heed of grieving him?**

Sol. There are five ways by which the Spirit is grieved.

First, When we do not hearken to his motions, and counsels, and commands: This doth grieve a Father, and a friend when his counsels are disregarded and despised: So when the Spirit of God puts us

upon holy ways, and works, and we regard not his motions and directions, this doth grieve and offend him? Psal. 95:10. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation; and what was that which grieved him? They would not hearken unto his voice, they erred in their hearts, they would not know his ways.

2. Secondly, When we do hearken to the voice, motions, and counsels of Satan, or our own corrupt hearts, which are contrary to him and his suggestions; as Christ spake in Joh. 5:43. I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not; if another should come in his own name, him ye will receive. This grieved Jesus Christ that the Jews would not receive him, coming in his Fathers Name, and yet they would receive another coming in his own name. In like manner it cannot but displease and offend the spirit of God to see his holy and heavenly counsels, motions, commands neglected, and at the same time, the motions, and lusts of our hearts regarded, embraced and followed: Why? This doth more displease a parent, or friend, that the enticements, and seducements of base fellows prevail and take more than his grave, and sound, and loving advice, &c. as Esau went and married the daughter of the Hittites against the mind of his Parents.

Thirdly, When we do any notorious sinful work which is unworthy of men enjoying the Spirit of God, and causeth dishonor and reproach unto him: As when a child doth anything unbecoming his relations, and dishonorable unto his Father: Ye have troubled me (said Jacob to his sons, Simeon and Levi) to make me to stink amongst the inhabitants of the land, amongst the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, &c. Gen. 34:30. So when men professing the Spirit, do yet walk contrary to the nature and rule of the spirit, they do now trouble and grieve the Spirit: e.g. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth, and if we pretending Spirit, embrace or countenance doctrines of lies and

falsehoods: The Spirit of God is a Spirit of holiness, and if we pretending that Spirit, follow and countenance practices of unholiness and profaneness: The Spirit of God is a Spirit of love, and meekness, and peace; and if we pretending that Spirit, yet live in discord, and wrath, and contention; these things are a grief and trouble unto the Spirit of God: 2 Tim. 2:19. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity: So say I, let everyone that nameth the Spirit of Christ, let everyone that pretends to his presence, depart from iniquity.

Fourthly, Especially do we grieve the spirit, when we do sin against the present works and workings of the spirit: As

1. The present illumination of the spirit which at such a time actually shines upon that work we intend to do, and discovers it plainly to be evil and offensive, and yet we do it.

2. The strange motions and operations of the spirit striving to withhold us from our purpose, by arguing and reasoning with our souls, propounding argument upon argument not to do so wickedly: As when a man lies, or swears, or commits uncleanness, or steals against the particular light and present strivings of the spirit, sinful actions thus substantiated, do not only grieve, but do also wound the spirit; these are bitter provocations; Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly, Hose. 12:14, and these are presumptuous sinning's which will cost us bitter desertions, and bitter throws in Conscience, and bitter lamentations, and bitter afflictions (perhaps) all our days, and bitter fears and disputes and questionings in our hearts.

Thirdly, Neglect not the spirit; As Paul to Timothy, neglect not the gift that is in thee, 1 Tim. 4:14. So say I, neglect not the Spirit himself that is in thee.

And there are two things of the Spirit which we should not neglect. 1. His moving's. 2ly. His removing's.

First, Neglect not the moving's (or motions) of the Spirit, but take hold of them, observe and follow them. You have many times sudden and secret excitations to draw you off more from the world, to prepare for death, to make sure work for your souls, to trust more on God, to walk more evenly and profitably, to redeem the time, to pray and seek the face of God, to do more good in your places, &c. Now do not neglect these motions, do not throw them aside, and do not delay or defer to act them; remember it, you shall be able to do much at that time when the Spirit of God stirs your hearts, if you presently act upon his actings of you, as the ship moves the faster when the Mariner takes the wind and tide; but if you neglect them, the work will be more difficult, and your hearts will be more untoward, and backward, and hardened.

**Object. But some will say, It is an hard thing to know what motions are the motions of the Spirit; if we could certainly know them to be his, we would not neglect them.**

Sol. You may know the motions which are stirring of you, to be the motions of the Spirit of God, by the conjunction of these Adjuncts.

First, They are holy and heavenly, they do resemble himself; he never moves you to any evil, but only to what is good and spiritual; to get grace, to increase it, to exercise it, to mortify your sins, to beware of all incentives and provocation unto sin, &c.

Secondly, They are conformable to the written Word: All his motions are but the setting on of God's commands upon your

heart, and lives; he moves you not, and stirs you not to do anything but what the Word of God expressly commands.

Thirdly, They are suitable to your place and condition: The spirit moves to do that good work which belongs to us in our place: He did not move Uzza to put forth his hand to hold the Ark, nor Uzziah to burn incense; It pertaineth not to thee Uzziah to burn incense unto the Lord, but unto the Priests, the sons of Aaron that are consecrated to burn incense, 2 Chron. 26:18. He is the Author of order, and not of confusion; he moves men to exercise the gifts which he hath given them, in the places and callings wherein he hath set them.

Fourthly, They are seasonable: He puts in good motions, not to hinder a present good work but to further it; when we are sometimes praying, or hearing, you shall have many good things presented unto your minds which come not from the Spirit of God, but from Satan; for they are put in as diversions and distractions from that good work in hand; but when they are from the Spirit, they are seasonable and helpful: As when you are hearing, and praying, and confessing your sins, all those good motions which drop into you to humble your hearts, enlarge your hearts to attend, to mark, and remember, and to yield consent and obedience, and to take delight to raise heavenly resolutions to walk according to the will of God revealed, these are motions from the Spirit.

Fifthly, They are gentle and spiritually rational; men talk of impulsives and violent motions upon their spirits for particular works for the doing of which they can give no religious account or ground; Those are dangerous motions, and are to be suspected and questioned; but the motions of the Spirit are not

turbulent, nor violent; though they be strong, yet they are gentle; they are leadings, but not disquieting motions.

Secondly, Neglect not the removing's of the Spirit: The Spirit of God (by reason of our spiritual pride, and security, and formality, and other sins) may remove from us (i.e.) you may not find that comfort from him, and you may not find that strength, and assistance, and vigor from him, and you may discern a general flatness and lowness in your graces and services, they come not off with that zeal, with that delight, with that care, with that love, with that importunity, with that fervency, with that faith as formerly; and you are more ready to fall under temptations, and sinful occasions; you cannot make that resistance which you were wont to do! The Spirit in these cases is removing and withdrawing: And it is a most dangerous folly now to sit still and to be careless and regardless. If a Guard which preserves you, draw off, are you not in danger? Are you not exposed to enemies? Why? All your strength, support, sufficiency, safety is in the presence of God's Spirit. Therefore take notice of his removing's or withdrawing's at any time, and do it quickly, and seriously; for though his removes be not (usually) all at once, yet the oftener he removes, he removes the farther from you; and the farther he removes the stronger will hardness grow upon you.

**Quest. Why! What is to be done in this case?**

Sol. I will tell you.

First, Search your hearts, and inquire what is amiss, what cause you have given unto the Spirit of God thus to withdraw from you, what hardness, what offense; you may read in Scripture these causes.

1. Pride of heart, as in Hezekiah.

2. Self-confidence, as in Peter.

3. Careless neglect, as in the Church Cant. 5:6. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself. See the cause of this in Ver. 3. I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on?

4. Foule transgressions, as in David, Psal. 51. He had almost lost all. Secondly, Then repent; it is the counsel given to the Church of Ephesus which lost her first love, Rev. 2:4. 5.

Thirdly, Cry out with David, Psal. 51:11. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. O Lord, I am willing to let my sin go, but I cannot be willing let thy Spirit go! When the spirit is removing, move after him, and lay hold on him with tears, and supplications, and faith, and say, O forsake me not utterly, O return in mercy! Revive thy work again in me, and quicken, and restore, and establish me, &c.

Fourthly, Do not injure the Spirit.

And I will put my Spirit within you, &c. - Ezek. 36:27.

## SECT. VIII.

4. The fourth Caution which concerns them that have the Spirit given unto them, is this, Take heed you do not injure or wrong the Spirit. Injure the Spirit? Will some say; how can any man injure the Spirit of God? A man may injure the Spirit of God four ways.

First, By bearing false witness against the Spirit: Wicked men do injure the spirit by railing and by reviling his gifts and graces; and good men do injure the spirit by denying and disowning of them

upon every temptation, and every weakness, and upon every failing: O they have no faith, and no love, and no sincerity of heart, and the Spirit of God never wrought any Renewing work, or saving work in their hearts! And they cannot attain unto those joys and comforts which the people of God do meet with! But beloved! Why do we charge the Spirit of God thus foolishly? Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Said the Prophet, Isa. 7:13. So say I, Is it a small thing that you injure another, but will you also injure the Spirit of God? If a friend should help you out of prison, and heal all your diseases and sores, and furnish you with clothes, and money, and house, and lands, do you not wrong him in saying (upon every discontent) What hath he done? He hath never done anything for me. Why, it is the Spirit of God who hath quickened you from the dead, who hath delivered you out of the power of darkness, who hath renewed and healed your soul, who hath begun every saving grace in your hearts, who hath been your life and strength; and after all this, is it meet for you to say, What hath he done? And he hath wrought nothing for us! Nothing? Why! How came you to be so sensible of your sins? How came your hearts to be broken and mournful? Whence came those desires after Christ and grace? Whence came those fervent prayers, and importunate cries? Whence came those resolutions to walk with God, and careful endeavors to honor and glorify him? O Christians! Be humbled for thy rashness, and for thy unthankfulness, and for this injuriousness done unto the good Spirit of God; disown him no more, and deny not any work of his anymore; though it be but little, yet do not disown it; though it be sometimes hidden from thee, yet do not disown it; though it doth many times work but weakly, do not disown it; though it be put sometimes to a stand, though thou dost not in every particular answer the motions and rules of the Spirit, yet do not disown the work of the Spirit; condemn every sinful work which is thine own, but do not deny or dishonor any work that is his.



Secondly, By not crediting the testimony of the Spirit: Beloved, sometimes we do bear witness or give testimony for the Spirit, as when we humbly and thankfully confess his workmanship in our hearts, saying, This is the Lord's doing, this he hath done for my soul, &c. Sometimes the Spirit bears witness, or gives in testimony unto our hearts; he bears witness, saith the Apostle, Rom. 8:16, that we are the children of God; and concerning this he gives in his testimony, partly by his works of Faith and Regeneration which are to be found in all and only the children of God: And partly by extraordinary assurance, letting in such a light, and evidence, and persuasion which abundantly clears up our Relation, that without doubt God is our Father, and we are his children: If now after both these testimonies in assurance of the Spirit, in after times of darkness, and desertion, and temptation, we call the testimony of the Spirit into question, and charge it for a false delusion, do we not exceedingly injure the Spirit of God, in some sort to make him a liar, and a false witness?

**Object. But we do not do so; and we dare not do so, his testimony is true; only we fear that the testimony which we have found, was not his testimony, but a delusion either of Satan, or of our own hearts.**

Sol. O but what if indeed that testimony was not the delusion of your hearts, but the very testimony of the Spirit, which you have challenged and rejected as a delusion, are you not then very guilty of great injuriousness unto the Spirit? And that it was the very testimony of the Spirit of God, may thus appear.

1. It was a testimony after deep humbling's of the heart for sin.
2. It was a testimony after importunate cries and wrestling's for mercy and assurance.

3. It was a testimony after your believing, and closing which Christ offered and accepted.
4. It was a testimony after the matching of the promises with your souls condition.
5. It was a testimony that filled your heart with joy unspeakable and glorious, and with a love most dear and superlative, and with most humble and serious care and diligence how to walk more exactly and cheerfully to the praise and honor of this most gracious God. If it was thus, it was no delusion, it was indeed the testimony of the Spirit; and you have dealt unkindly and unworthily thus to requite him, and thus to disgrace his precious testimony.

Thirdly, By disregarding and slighting the Ordinances of Christ: Some people do think, that because they have the Spirit, therefore there is no need of Ordinances, at least for them; perhaps they hold that the Ordinances may be useful for others who as yet have not received the Spirit, but yet they are needless for them who have received the Spirit: And three places of Scripture they allege for this, Jer. 31:34. They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord. 1 Joh. 2:27. The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 2 Pet. 1:19. We have also a most sure Word of prophesy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.

With your favor, I will speak something in 1. Opposition to this Opinion; it is the Opinion of the Libertines of old, and of some now amongst ourselves, who desire and endeavor to subvert the Ministry and the Ordinances of preaching. 2ly. In resolving the true meaning of those places of Scripture.

First, I affirm that God's giving of his Spirit unto his people, was never intended by him to put a period unto any Evangelical Ordinance, or to render them useless unto any of his people: this may be demonstrated thus,

First, From the scope of the Scriptures: All Scripture, saith the Apostle, 2 Tim. 3:16, is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, ver. 17.

If the Word of God be given for these ends, For Doctrine to teach us the matter of faith; for Reproof to convince errors; for Correction to condemn sin; for Instruction to show us our duties, and to make us perfect: To beget us: Jam. 1:18. Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth: To build us up: Acts 20:33. I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified: then certainly the presence of the Spirit; and the Ministry of the Word are not inconsistent, nor are they to be disjoined.

Secondly, If the Lord Jesus himself hath instituted some men particularly for his service, and the benefit of his Church, and hath committed the dispensation of Evangelical Ordinances unto them; then no man under pretense that he hath the Spirit, may slight and neglect the Ordinances; but Christ hath

instituted some persons in the Church for Ministerial service, &c. Ephes. 4:11. He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and teachers. Ver. 12. For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, &c. Ver. 13, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. What need of these if the presence of the Spirit without these be sufficient? 1 Cor. 12:28. God hath set some in the Church, first, Apostles; secondarily, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers. Ver. 29. Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers? To these and not to all, hath he committed the dispensation of the Evangelical Ordinances: 1 Cor. 4:1. Let a man so account of us as the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God. Matth. 28:19. Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 2 Cor. 5:19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, &c. and hath committed unto us the word of Reconciliation.

What, are all these Ordinances instructed, and fixed, and that by the will of Christ, and yet useless for men that have the Spirit of Christ?

Thirdly, What mean those several passages in the Scriptures? Jam. 1:19. Be swift to hear. 1 Pet. 2:2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. 1 Thes. 5:19. Quench not the Spirit. Ver. 20. Despise not Prophesying. Luke 10:16. He that despiseth you, despiseth me, &c. Isa. 59:21. This is my Covenant with them saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon them, and my Spirit which I have put within thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy

seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord hence forth forever.

Fourthly, If the Spirit be given unto us to make the Ordinances effectual unto us, then his presence should not take us off from Ordinances, but the Spirit is given to make the Ordinances effectual, they are so far life unto us, as the Spirit gives life unto them: 2 Cor. 3:16. The Spirit giveth life.

Secondly, Having spoken these things, I shall now look upon those forementioned Scriptures, and see whether they conclude the needlessness of Ordinances after the reception of the Spirit.

**Object. Jer. 31:34. They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, &c. Hence the Anabaptists do conclude that there is no need of Teachers nor Learning.**

Sol. First, I would fain know Whether these people have among them a Church of Christ, yea or no? If they have, then I would know Whether they have any Teachers of the Word, and Laborers in the Word and Doctrine, any teaching publicly in their Churches?

Secondly, But to the place of the Prophet, who sets out the difference between the Old Testament and the New. 1. In respect of efficacy, this he lays down in ver. 33. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after these days saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, &c. 2ly, In respect of Clarity, that in the times of the new Covenant there should be a more clear and plentiful effusion of knowledge than in the old Covenant; for when Christ came, then did the Sun of Righteousness arise, the light of which was sevenfold to what the light was before

his coming: they before his coming had but a dark knowledge, those after his coming had a more clear and full knowledge.

**Object. True, and they had so much knowledge, that they needed not to be taught, they shall no more teach.**

Sol. That expression is not to be taken literally and absolutely, as if those that live under the Gospel should need no teaching at all; for we read an express promise (relating unto Gospel-times) to the contrary: Isa. 2:3. Many people shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go out the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. But the words are to be taken Restrictively and Comparatively; therefore if you observe them, it is not said only they shall no more teach everyone his neighbor; but they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, saying, know the Lord: So that God doth promise under the Gospel such a measure of knowledge, as that his people now shall not be Alphabetarian anymore; need to be taught the first Principles of the Doctrine of Faith anymore; these they should all of them clearly know, and much more clearly than many or most living under the old Covenant or Testament.

**Object. 1 Joh. 2:27. You need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, &c.**

Sol. The Apostle having in the former words delivered many excellent and comfortable truths, he concludes with a persuasion of their knowledge of, and assent unto them, q.d. you are the people of God, you have received his Spirit, you know these things to be true; I write them unto you not as to the ignorant but knowing Christian; you know them assuredly, the Spirit given unto you hath enabled you

to know, and to acknowledge them, so that no man needs to teach you them, &c.

**Object. 2. Pet. 1:19. Unto which you do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in darkness until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.**

Sol. Untill the day dawn (i.e.) Pleniori & apertiori cognition quam sub legis umbris fuerit.

1. He commends the Jews for regarding the Prophetical writings.
2. He prefers the Apostolical Writings which had more light in them.
3. Until is gradual and not exclusive.

Fourthly, lastly, the Spirit is injured when any do Father upon him their odd Opinions, and wild fancies, and delusions, and sometimes their abominable blasphemies which are not to be named amongst Christians, but with detestation: The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, and the Spirit of holiness; and to entitle him unto any errors or wickedness, it is no less then to blaspheme and reproach him.

Fifthly, The fifth Caution which I would commend to you that have the Spirit, is this; Do not envy the gifts and graces of the Spirit in any man, nor speak evil of them: Numb. 11:29. And Moses said unto Joshua, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them. The Spirit of God gives different gifts unto men to profit withal: 1 Cor. 12:7. To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, Ver. 8. To another Faith by the same Spirit, Ver. 9. And there are different

measures of his gifts; some do excel in one gift, and some in another; and this holds true in public persons, and in private persons; and all of us should rejoice in all these manifestations of the Spirit: It should not grieve us that any one is good, nor that he can do good in his private way, or in his public way; nor should it grieve and trouble us if any man hath more grace, or that he can do more good, bring more glory to Christ than we do or can. The end of every Christian is God's glory; now everyone should mind that, and contribute towards that; one man may contribute more, and every man should contribute his utmost towards it; is it not enough if Christ be magnified, and thy soul saved?

Sixthly, You should not be discouraged for any work which God puts upon you, though never so great and difficult; for you have the Spirit of wisdom, and power, and sufficiency to assist you; Zach. 4:6. Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.

2ly. Now follows the Positive or affirmative duties for them that have received the Spirit of God.

First, You should express the virtue of the Spirit which abideth in you; you should walk like men of another spirit; especially you should hold out those nine fruits or virtues of the spirit mentioned in Gal. 5:22,23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; these you should strive to act in your conversations.

1. Love (i.e.) a loving behavior, especially towards the Godly, nay, and towards all men; you should walk in love, without hatred, and emulation, and envying, and rash suspicion, and censoriousness.



2. Joy (i.e.) such a behavior as sets out a contentedness, and well-pleasèdness with our worldly portion; and a cheerfulness and comfortableness in our spiritual relation unto, and portion in God and Christ.

3. Peace (i.e.) such a behavior as exempts us from meddling, and wrangling, and quarrelling, and contentiousness, and turbulency, and tumultuousness, and variancies, and that frames us to a quiet, peaceable, and unprovoking inoffensive carriage.

4. Long-suffering (i.e.) we should bear much of the weaknesses and infirmities of those with whom we do converse, and pass by slight injuries, and forgive many a wrong done unto us, as God▪ for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

5. Gentleness (i.e.) we should behave ourselves towards others in speaking, or looking, or dealing, without pride, austerity, insolency, scornfulness, rigidness, in a soft, humble, affable, candid manner.

6. Goodness (i.e.) we should not be hard-hearted, and backward to do good to the souls or bodies of others, but should be ready to distribute, full of the fruits of mercy, and be helpful, and profitable, and merciful to them that need, especially to the distressed members of the body of Christ.

7. Faith (i.e.) fidelity, we should be just in our words, promises, and in all our dealing with men, by no means lie, or deceive, or over-reach, or deal with guile, deceitfully, or falsely, but squarely, plainly, and honestly, and righteously.

8. Meekness (i.e.) we should suppress all rash, furious, immoderate, unlawful anger, and frowardness, and perturbation, and passionateness, and strive to manifest that we are in some measure able to deny ourselves, and to bear crosses, and afflictions, provocations, injuries, patiently and contentedly.

9. Temperance (i.e.) we should not excessively lay out our cares and labors for any worldly thing, whether honor, or riches, or pleasures; but be sober in the desire and use of all the earthly blessings which God hath given unto us.

Secondly, you should be wonderful thankful unto the Lord for giving of his Spirit unto you: Paul takes special notice of this mercy, and often speaks of it: We have received the Spirit of God, and he hath given unto us his holy Spirit, and his Spirit dwelleth in us, &c.

There are four things for which God is eternally to be blessed: viz. 1. For his free grace and love. 2ly. For his Christ. 3ly. For his Gospel. And 4ly. for his Spirit.

**Quest. And why for his Spirit?**

Sol. Because, what you are in relation to God, you are by the Spirit.

First, Are you in Christ? This is by the Spirit; are you new creatures, born again? This is by the Spirit: are you delivered from Satan and your sinful corruptions? This is by the Spirit.

2. What you can do, this comes from the Spirit: Can you mourn for sin? Can you pour out your hearts in Prayer? Can you at any time trust in the Name of the Lord? Can you look towards his holy place in times of desertion? Can you deny yourselves? Can you do the will of

God? Can you suffer the will of God? All your spiritual strength is from the Spirit.

Thirdly, Have you any discoveries of the Love of God? Have you any clearness of the love of Christ? And of your propriety in him? Have you any satisfying evidences of your present relation to God? Have you any sealings and assurances of future blessedness? Have you ever tasted of joy unspeakable and glorious? Of a peace that passeth all understanding? Of recoveries out of sin? Of sweet refreshing's under troubles of conscience? Then bless the Lord who hath given his own Spirit unto you?

Thirdly, you should improve the Spirit that is given unto you, and make use of him.

1. For works which he can do, but hath not yet begun within you.
2. For works which he hath begun, but hath not as yet perfected and finished within you.

First, For works which he can do, but (perhaps) hath not yet begun within you. He hath begun the work of humiliation, and of vocation, and of union, and of regeneration; but then (perhaps) there are other works wanting; you have found him a healing Spirit, but did you ever find him a sealing Spirit? You have felt the power of his grace, but did you ever taste the sweetness of his joys? You have found him a regenerating Spirit, but did you ever find him a witnessing Spirit? Now improve your interest in the Spirit for these soul-renewing works which you long for, but never yet found; why, beseech the Lord to give you the Spirit of Joy as well as the Spirit of Faith; the Spirit of Peace, as well as the Spirit of Holiness; the sealing and witnessing Spirit, as well as the renewing and changing Spirit. The Spirit of gladness as well as of mourning; Say unto my soul, I am thy

salvation: Be of good comfort, go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee. Thy heart is ready to sink and break for want of comfort, why! Go to the Lord, Lord comfort my soul; thou hast promised joy and comfort to thy people, and biddest thy Ministers to comfort them; O comfort me with thine own Spirit! It is his work, it is his Office to be the Comforter, &c.

Secondly, For the works which he hath begun, but hath not as yet perfected and finished within you; as all the works of grace, of knowledge, of faith, of love, &c. be not content with a little of these, but (as the Apostle exhorts in Ephes. 5:18.) Be filled with the Spirit; labor to increase and abound in all fruits of the Spirit: Psal. 92:13. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the house of our God. Ver. 14. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.

Here I will briefly answer two Questions.

**1. Quest. One is, Why they that have the Spirit of grace, should strive to increase and to abound in grace?**

Sol There are five Reasons for it.

First, This will testify the truth that is in them: That they have the graces of the Spirit: indeed there are three things (amongst many others) which do testify grace in truth. 1. One is Power. 2. The second is Growth. 3. The third is Perseverance.

Dead things, and Artificial things have no growth, q.d. because they have no life: Every branch in me that beareth fruit, the Father purgeth that it may bring forth more fruit, saith Christ, Joh. 15:2.

Secondly, Yea and this testifies that the Spirit is in you of a truth; for the Spirit changeth us from glory to glory, 2 Cor. 3:18. When the Spirit changeth us at the first from sinfulness to holiness, this is a glorious change (for as the natural estate is vile and inglorious, so the renewed and sanctified estate is an excellent and glorious estate) and when the Spirit begins a glorious change, he proceeds and makes it still more glorious; the spirit changeth us from glory to glory: Grace makes us glorious, and more grace makes us more glorious; the more grace, the more glory; and where the Spirit of God is, there he carries on his work from glory to glory.

Thirdly, The more that ye do grow in the graces of the spirit, the greater and fuller is your conformity unto Christ! Grace is in Christ as in a Fountain, and perfection, as in a pattern: Now the more you have in answerableness to the pattern, the fuller is your conformity; a little grace in us resembles that grace which is in Christ; But as those who lived under the Old Testament, had some glimpses of Christ, but they that lived under the New Testament had a more clear knowledge of him, face to face: So they that have but a little of grace, there is some resemblance and manifestation in them of the image of Christ; but they who are high in grace, they are nearer to Christ in the resemblance of his excellent perfection of holiness, and to speak plainly, there is much more of Christ in them.

Fourthly, The more you obtain in the proportion of grace, the greater Revenue of honor will you be able to bring in to God: I told you that the weakest grace can enable you to bring God some honor; why then much grace can help you farther in that service, it can set up his Name on high: A little Faith can honor God, but a strong Faith (such as Abraham's or Moses's) will bring more honor to his goodness and faithfulness; a little love will make you to do something for Christ, but much love will make you do much more: The more grace that you

attain, the more gloriously will you shine in your conversation, and in all the fruits of Righteousness, with more fullness, evenness, and steadfastness, and all this glorifies your Father which is in heaven.

Fifthly, You yourselves would gain more, if your graces were increased more. e.g. You would certainly find more peace in conscience, and more freedom from slavish fears, and doubts, and more confidence in your accesses to God, and more sweetness in the Ordinances of Christ, and more enlargement of heart in all your communions with God, and more wisdom and strength against the temptations of Satan.

## **2. How may one know that he hath much of the Spirit of God in him? That grace is increased and raised, that he is more spiritual?**

Sol. You may know it thus.

First, If you be more humble: The more pride, always either no grace, or very little; but the more humility, still the more grace; mark the Records in Scripture, and you shall find the most excellent in grace have been the most eminent in humility, e.g. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Paul, &c. For much grace, 1. Discovers most wants. 2ly. Most failings. 3ly. Most self-insufficiency. 4ly. Most self-unworthiness. 5ly. That all our receptions are from mere grace and mercy.

Secondly, If you be more exact in your walking, giving no just occasion either of offense to the weak, or of grief to the strong Christians, or of reproach to them that are without. A man that can order his conversation, so as good men are edified by him, and wicked men have their mouths stopped, or cannot speak ill of him without lying, he hath a great measure of grace.

Thirdly, If a man be able to drink of the cup which Christ did drink, and to be baptized with the baptism wherewith Christ was baptized (Mat. 20:22,23) this man hath got on far in the work of grace: The more able that you are to suffer reproaches, and losses, yea death itself for Christ, the greater is your faith, and the stronger is your love; when you can rejoice in tribulations, bear the reproaches for Christ, taking the Cross as your Crown, and triumph that ye are counted worthy to suffer for his Name.

Fourthly, If you be able to govern your tongues with wisdom, and meekness, and grace, and truth, this is a sign that you are strong in grace: Jam. 3:2. If any offend not in word; the same is a perfect man.

Fifthly, The less careful we are for outward things, and the more able we are to trust God, and to look on his Promises, with as much cheerfulness as others do only in their performances: If we can bless and praise God when he takes away, as well as when he gives: Psal. 56:10. In God will I praise his word, in the Lord will I praise his word.

Sixthly, The more compliance with, and contentedness in all the changes which do befall us in our journey to heaven in these days of our pilgrimage, certainly this declares a presence of much grace: The Lord saith of Job that there was not a man like him in all the earth, he was eminently good and upright; and he it was who blessed God in his great changes: Job 1:21. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord. Chap. 2:10. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? See Paul that strong Christian, Phil. 4:11. I have learned in whatsoever estate I am, therewith to be content. Ver. 12. I know how to be abused, and I know how to

abound; everywhere, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need.

Fourthly, A fourth duty which concerns you who have received the Spirit, is this; your hearts should be more earnestly and fixedly, and entirely carried unto, and laid out for spiritual things; spiritual objects, and treasures should be of more value with you, and they should draw out your thoughts and affections to the utmost: other things should be of small account with you: If the Spirit be in you, then the things of the spirit should be in you: as wickedness is in the wicked man, and the world is in the worldly man, so should spiritual things be in a man of the Spirit: In him, i.e. his heart, still in the minding's of his heart, and in the projects of his heart, and in the cares of his heart, and in the desires and longings of his heart, and in the delights and satisfactions of his heart; he should be wholly given up to them, and his soul should be resolved into them: Psal. 73:25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. The spiritual man should be so addicted to spiritual things, that he should spiritualize all things; he should spiritualize the world, and all his dealings in the world, and he should spiritualize all the comforts of the world (look on them as from his God, and raise his heart more to God, have much more delight and sweetness in him) he should spiritualize all the afflictions and troubles of the world, learn Righteousness, and more holiness by them, and more to live by faith: Nay, he should spiritualize all his fails, grow more fearful, self-denying, mournful, watchful; fruitful; well, he should spiritualize his conference and converse with all men; edifying the good, and admonishing the wicked, comforting the weak, supporting the feeble: But to the main thing, his heart should lay out itself for spiritual things: O more of the favor of God, and more of Jesus Christ, and more of the fruits of the Spirit, &c.



1. The great Promises are of these.
2. And the Promises of them are only unto you.
3. They are the best portion, and your best portion, and your only portion.
4. These are eternity, or for eternity.
5. The Spirit is given unto you to carry out your hearts for these.
6. These are most suitable to a spiritual nature.

Now in the desires of spiritual things, remember to

1. Desire grace infinitely more than gifts.
2. Desire strength and power more than joys and comfort.
3. Desire the means as well as the end.
4. Desire all for the honor and glory of God.

#### SECT. IX.

5. Use. Doth God promise to give his Spirit unto his people? Then let us all be persuaded to look after this great gift of God, not to content ourselves under the want of it, but by all means to obtain it: For the managing of this Use I will present unto you 1. Some Motives to excite us. 2ly. Some Means to enjoy.

1. The Motives to look after the Spirit of God. e.g.

First, The Spirit and Christ come always together: If any man hath Christ, he hath the Spirit; if any man hath the Spirit, he hath Christ; if any man hath not the Spirit, he hath not Christ; Christ and the Spirit ever go together: Should not this provoke us to strive with God for his Spirit; what sinner on earth would not have Christ? What will become of us without Christ? How happy is every soul in the enjoyment of him? How miserable in the want of him? How longing are the hearts of some for Christ, and for the knowledge that Christ is their Christ? But if the Spirit of God be yours, then the Son of God is yours: Here is a double portion at once, a double gift at once, the Spirit of God and Jesus Christ at once: If you mind not the Spirit for the Spirit's sake, yet mind the Spirit for Christ's sake; your desires after him, must come from the spirit, and your union with him must come from the spirit, and your knowledge of the person, all propriety or interest in him must come from the Spirit: A man may think he hath Christ, but if he hath not the Spirit, Christ is none of his, Rom. 8:9. A man may fear that he hath not Christ, but if the Spirit be given unto him, then assuredly Christ is given unto him; Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. 3:4.

Secondly, Forgiveness of sins and the Spirit always are given together: Though forgiveness of sin be one thing, and the Spirit in us another thing, yet they are both given together: A man hath not his sins pardoned, and yet he remains unsatisfied without the Spirit; and a man is not sanctified by the Spirit, and yet his sins remain unpardoned, but both are given together at the same time: 1 Joh. 5:6. This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit that beareth witness. 1 Cor. 6:11. Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

It is true, that the blood of Christ is the only meritorious cause of the forgiveness of sins; God forgives our sins for Christ's sake; but then it is as true, that assurance of forgiveness and reconciliation of the Spirit are given together: Hath God sanctified thy heart by his Spirit? Assuredly he hath forgiven thy sins. Hath God indeed showed thee mercy in forgiving thy sins, he hath then assuredly given unto thee the Spirit of grace to change thy sinful heart!

Now would you have your sins forgiven? Do you look on forgiveness as a desirable mercy? As a mercy of life, and of peace, and of hope; O then get the Spirit of God; God never forgives a man his sins, but he gives his Spirit: Forgiveness of sins is the great deed of mercy written in the blood of Christ, and the giving of the Spirit is the seal of that deed.

Thirdly, The Spirit and excellency always go together: Can we find such a one as this is? A man in whom the Spirit of God is; said Pharaoh concerning Joseph, Gen. 41:38.

Before we receive the Spirit of God, there is no excellency in us, we are but low and vile, nothing of worth in our hearts; they are wicked, corrupt, and dead in trespasses and sins, and short of the glory of God; nothing of worth in our thoughts, All the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts are only evil continually: Nothing of worth in our affections, they are set upon evil, and set upon the world; no love of God, nor fear of God, nor desire of God, nor delight in God, nothing of worth in our conversations, they are unprofitable, vile, vain, loose, and dishonoring of God: But when the Spirit of God come into us, then comes an excellency into us, and a true excellency into us: The Spirit of God is styled an excellent Spirit, Dan. 6:3. And they that enjoy the spirit; are men of an excellent Spirit, Prov. 17:27, and to be more excellent than other men, there is no way to attain

unto it, but by getting the Spirit, and this I shall show in particular; all that have the Spirit, they immediately enjoy

1. An excellent Nature: They are made partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. They are changed into the glorious image of Christ, 2 Cor. 3:18.

2. An excellent Relation: They are born again of the Spirit, Joh. 3:3. And are made the sons of God, they receive the adoption of sons, Gal. 4:5. And by the Spirit given unto them, cry Abba Father, ver. 6.

3. Excellent Ornaments: Ezek. 16:7. An excellent wisdom which excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness, Eccl. 2:13. An excellent knowledge, even the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, Phil. 3:8. An excellent faith, which is precious, and more precious than gold. An excellent love, even the love of Jesus Christ in sincerity. An excellent joy, which is unspeakable and glorious. An excellent hope; which makes not ashamed, which is as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, Heb. 6:19

4. Excellent Privileges; To come with boldness to the throne of grace; to have the golden Scepter still held out unto them, to lay claim to all the purchases of Christ, and to challenge their right in him, to make use of, and apply any promise of God, respecting any condition of their souls or bodies, to appeal from themselves to Christ, and from the sentence and severity of the Law, unto the mercy and salvation of God in the Gospel: In a word, they that have the Spirit, they are thereby made an eternal excellency, Isa. 60:15.

5. Excellent conversation: Holiness, Uprightness, Righteousness, and unblameableness of life, a life in Christ according to godliness.

Fourthly, The Spirit and All-sufficiency comes together: Whatsoever your condition may be, whatsoever your experiences may be, whatsoever your troubles and sorrows may be, whatsoever your wants may be, whatsoever your works and services may be, if you had but the Spirit, you had enough for all; his presence and efficacy can supply you with all.

1. Are you weak? He can strengthen you.
2. Are you ignorant? He can teach you.
3. Are you doubtful? He can counsel and guide you.
4. Are you fallen? He can raise you.
5. Are you tempted? He can succor you, and make you to persist, and conquer.
6. Are you brought low in wants? He can make you to live by Faith.
7. Are you filled with sorrow? He can fill you with comfort.
8. Are you in darkness, and can see no light? He can open your eyes to see the salvation of God.
9. Are fears upon you? He can satisfy and quiet you.
10. Is dullness on you? He can quicken and enlarge you.

11. Are you doubtful of God's love and mercy? He can shed abroad the love of God in your hearts, and make mercy turn unto you.

12. Are you to die, to suffer, to live and die? He can enable you for every good work; and in your sufferings be a spirit of glory unto you; while you live he can make you to live unto the Lord; and when you come to die, he can make you to die unto the Lord: O who would not, who should not wrestle with God for this Spirit! Without whom no Christ, no life no, peace no joy, no faith, no help, no hope; and with whom comes Christ, and Mercy, and Excellency, and Help, and all Spiritual tastes, Earnests, Sealings, Rejoicings, and Glory!

2ly. The Means to get the Spirit.

First, If you would get the Spirit of God, you must then lay down all prejudices against the Spirit: As men have prejudices against Christ, which hinder them from the receiving of Christ; so men have prejudices against the Spirit of Christ, which do hinder and withdraw them from desiring of the Spirit.

There are four Prejudices especially, and Exceptions in this case, viz.

1. The humbling work of the Spirit.
2. The mortifying work of the Spirit.
3. The sanctifying work of the Spirit.
4. The derisions that befall men for the Spirits sake.

**Object. We would be content to have the Spirit, but that he will show us our sins, and trouble and humble us for our**

## **sins?**

Sol. I answer.

First, Of a truth he will do so, for he is a Spirit of Conviction, and a spirit of bondage to fear.

Secondly, Nevertheless this should not take off our hearts from desiring the presence of the spirit: For;

1. The troubles from the Spirit are good troubles: Of necessity we must be troubled for our sins, either in this life or in hell; the troubles for sins in hell are unsufferable and remediless, but the troubles of this life for our sins (especially) when they come from the Spirit they are good, they are penitential troubles, and tend only to stir in us a loathing of our sins, and a separation from our sins which have been so displeasing and injurious to God, and have been, and are the cause of all our troubles: The troubles which the Spirit causeth in us for sin, is a means to deliver us from sin, and the eternal troubles for sin.

2. The troubles which the Spirit causeth in us for sin, do end in much joy and peace: The joy and peace of the Spirit are very precious, and they cannot be delivered out unto us, unless we be first troubled for our sin: The Spirit comforts mourners, and them that are cast down: Now the Spirit troubles us for sin, 1. To make sin bitter to us. 2ly. To make Christ sweet to us. As he troubles us for our sins, so he leads and draws the troubled soul to Christ, that in him he may find deliverance from those sins, and his peace made with God, &c.

Trouble is not all the work of the Spirit; it is an inceptive work, and a preparative work; he troubles you for sin that you may not be

damned for sin, and that you may make out for Christ to save you from your sins.

**Object. We should be willing to have the Spirit, but that then we must bid farewell to all our sins; the Spirit is a mortifying Spirit, he will not suffer us to love our sins, nor to take pleasure in them as heretofore; we are afraid of the sword of the Spirit.**

Sol. I answer.

First, It is granted that the spirit will do this as you do speak, it will cast sin out of the throne, it will take off love and service from sin, and it will be more and more in mortifying of it.

Secondly, But then, where is the hurt, the danger, the prejudice which you have against this? (Gal. 5:24. They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.) Rom. 8:13. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live. Here is death and life; If you keep your sins alive ye shall die; if you through the spirit mortify your sins, you shall live: The life of sin is your death, and the death of sin is your life: Saul spared Agag, but it was his ruin; and Ahab spared Benhadad, but it was his ruin, &c.

**Object. O but the Spirit will make us holy, and we must then live holily, and not so loosely and freely as heretofore!**

Sol. First, Will the spirit of God make you holy? And should you not be so? 1 Pet. 1:16. Be holy, for I am holy; and should you not walk so! As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. 1:15.



Secondly, Consider only three places of Scripture for this.

1. Isa. 4:3. He that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written amongst the living in Jerusalem.
2. Heb. 12:14. Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.
3. Matth. 5:8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

**Object. But I shall be a derision, and a mock if I should pretend to the Spirit, &c.**

- Sol. 1. Who will mock you? Those that are led by the Devil; wicked, graceless, ungodly men.
2. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.
  3. If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of Christ resteth upon you, 1 Pet. 4:14.

Secondly, if you would come to partake of the Spirit, you must not then resist the Spirit: Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, Acts 7:51.

Men resist the Spirit two ways.

1. When they will not hearken unto, nor regard the counsel and commands of the Spirit delivered in the Word, but set themselves against them, and oppose, and despise them.

2. When they will not receive the offers and motions of the Spirit, but harden their hearts against them, and quench them, and will not give way or entrance unto them. Now take heed of this, when the Spirit of God is knocking at your hearts, and stirs your hearts to accept of him, and of his graces, (which he is willing and ready to work in you) by no means neglect them, or slight them, but lay hold of them presently, as one of the greatest mercies that God is intending toward you; bless him, and cherish them, and beseech him to go on with his work on your souls; do not reject any work of the Spirit, neither grieve him by neglecting his good motions: Prov. 1:23. Turn you at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my works unto you, my Spirit shall not always strive with man.

Thirdly, If you would come to partake of the spirit, then you must pray the Lord to give you his spirit, you must thirst after him, and seek for him: Isa. 44:3. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring. Luke 11:13. Your heavenly Father will give the spirit to them that ask him. What a promise is this to encourage any man sensible of the want of the spirit, to pray unto God! Jesus Christ assures him that if he will ask for the Holy Spirit, he shall have him.

**Object. But who can pray unless he hath the Spirit first?**

Sol. I grant that the spirit must make you sensible of the want of the spirit, and he must stir up your hearts to pray for him; there is some degree of the spirits presence in stirring us up to pray for these; but then if you would fully enjoy the spirit, you must pour out your hearts, &c.

Fourthly, You must attend the Preaching of the Gospel; the Gospel is called the Ministry of the Spirit 2 Cor. 3:6. And you read that whiles Peter was Preaching the Word unto Cornelius and the rest, the Holy Ghost came upon them, Act. 10:44. Whiles Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word: So Gal. 3:2. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith! They received the spirit upon the hearing of the Gospel which is the word of faith: You read that all the works of the spirit, and all the graces of the spirit, and all the joys and comforts of the spirit are let into us by the Word; by that the spirit is pleased to convey himself.

First, His works: He enlightens our minds by the Word, he convinceth us of sin by the Word; I had not known sin, except, &c. Rom. 7. He humbles our hearts by the Word; When they heard these things they were pricked in their hearts, &c. Acts 2:37.

Secondly, His graces: Faith is by hearing, Rom. 10:17, so is Love, Patience, Repentance, &c.

Thirdly, His comforts: Thy Word hath quickened me, and thy Word hath comforted me.

By the Word men are Regenerated, brought into Christ, are made new creatures, &c.

**Quest. What is this walking, and keeping, and doing, concerning which you speak to us, which you say concerns God's people in Covenant?**

Sol. There is a twofold walking, keeping, doing &c.

First, One is Legal, which is the strict and exact, and punctual full obedience unto, or observation of the Commandments of God in every part, point, and Apex, and Jota as to all sorts of duties in all the measures of it, without the least breach or defect, in the whole course of a man's life; a continuance of all the things that are written to do them, as the Apostle speaks, Gal. 3. Thus none can walk, none can keep, none can do them; For

1. Grace is imperfect in every man (We know but in part, &c.) and if grace be imperfect, obedience cannot be exactly full.
2. No man but hath sin in him, and doth sin; In many things we offend all; and every sin is transgression of the Law; and where there is any transgression, there is not a perfect keeping.
3. The best are justified in and by Christ; wherein 1. His Righteousness is imputed. 2ly. For his sake their sins are pardoned; which needed not, if any man could perfectly fulfill and keep the Law.

Secondly, The other is Evangelical, whereunto four things do concur;

1. A setting up of the Law and Will of God, as the Rule to instruct and guide us in the whole course of the actions of our life: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, Psal. 119:105, marking what it commands to be done, and to be observed by us.
2. An endeavor to conform all our Actions unto the Rule, making conscience of all that is commanded us of God, an ordering of our conversations and steps according to the Word: Psal. 119. In precepts not to be careless and negligent, though of the least duty. In Prohibitions, not to be venturous, though on the least sin: But as the Israelites followed the Cloud of fire, moved when it moved, stayed

when it stayed; so should we put on to answer every command of God, and refrain upon every prohibition of God.

3. A walking and obeying in the Evangelical manner, or a performance of all duties in that Gospel manner as is required we should perform them.

1. Cordially: Affections should come into our duties; not only do the will of God, but delight therein: I delight to do thy will O my God, Psal. 40.

2. Impartially without exception: There must be a respect unto all God's commands, and a hatred of every evil way.

3. Resolutely: I and my house will serve the Lord, said Joshua. I have sworn and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments, said David.

4. Constantly: The statutes of God must be our path in which we walk; we must not begin, and then grow weary and break off, but hold on our course against all the temptations of the world, and of Satan, and of our own flesh, though struggling, and backward.

5. Sincerely with uprightness of heart: I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, said Hezekiah. This may be discovered thus.

1. If a man lose not the tenor of his desire and purpose, though in many things he fails, yet he holds his purpose to walk in God's statutes, and if at any time we slip, or step aside, we must speedily return to the path of life, the old and good way.

2. If real endeavors accompany and second his desires; I would obey, and I strive to obey.

3. If he attends the means to strengthen both desires and endeavors.

4. A right scope in all our duties: Not to merit salvation, not to seek justification, not to make amends to God for our former evil ways, not to set up ourselves as to our own praise; But

1. For God's glory; whatsoever we do, it must be done out of love to God, and for the glory of God.

2. For our own salvation: work out your own salvation, as a means, not as a cause.

3. For the good and benefit of others.

And cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments and do them. - Ezek. 36:27.

In these words you have two parts considerable.

1. A work or duty laid out for all the people in Covenant with God. [They are to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and to do them.]

2. A help promised unto them, to enable them for that work and service (I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you (or according to the Original, Quo faciam) by whom I will cause, or make you to walk in my statutes, &c.)

The work or duty which belongs to the people of God, is set forth in divers Metaphorical expressions, as walking in God's statutes; which notes the path of their steps, and the Rule of their conversation and work, likewise the progressive course of their obedience, and keeping of his judgments; By the judgments of God are meant his commands;

and by the keeping of them, two things are implied: 1. To make them dear unto us, to lay them up as our treasure, as a precious part of the will of God: And then 2ly. To conform ourselves unto them, to submit unto them as to our Rule, to live up unto them; Servare, & observare, &c.

And doing of them; This expression I conceive to be the explication of the two former, and it notes real and practical obedience unto God's statutes and judgments.

From all this, there are two Propositions, unto which I desire briefly to speak unto. viz.

1. That an obediential observation of God's statutes and judgments (or Laws, or Commandments) is required of people in Covenant with God.
2. That the people of God are to make progress, to proceed on, to persevere all their days, all their journey, in an obediential walking in God's statutes.

## CHAP. XIII.

1. Doct. That an obediential observation of the Law or Commandments of God belongs to all people in Covenant with God: He saith here of the people in Covenant with himself, I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them.

You read two things of the Saints or people of God.

1. One is, that they make a Covenant with God: Psal. 50:5. Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.

2. The other is, that they keep Covenant: Psal. 103:18. To such as keep his Covenant; and this he expounds in the following words, to those that remember his Commandments to do them.

When we enter into Covenant with God, what is it that we do? I suppose (if we do understand ourselves) that we do then take him to be our God; 1. In his Gracious Mercy. 2ly. In his Righteous Society; that he, and he alone shall be our Lord, our King to Rule and guide, and prescribe us laws, and we will be his people to hearken unto him, to be at his command, to obey his voice and will. Is any man so wild to make such a Covenant with God, or to think that God will make such a Covenant as this with him? I will have mercy and blessing from God, but I will not obey him; he shall be none of my Lord nor King. Or that God will yield to these terms, I will be yours for all blessings, but live as you list, do what you please, walk how you will, serve your lusts, regard not my Law? Did God ever make such a Covenant as this! Saith God to Abraham, Gen. 15:1. I am thy shield



and thy exceeding great reward. And Chap. 17:1. I am the Almighty God, I am able to do thee good, and will do so; but then he adds, walk before me and be thou perfect, q.d. I will be a God to you for blessing, and also a God over you for Ruling; I expect that you should walk uprightly before me (i.e.) observe my ways, my Commandments, and act them with sincerity of heart, not willingly disobey and prevaricate: So Exod. 19:5. If ye will obey my voice in doing and keeping my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. And (Verse 6.) Ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation.

But a little more to demonstrate this truth unto you, be pleased to consider these five particulars.

First, Those several Relations which fall upon all people who come to be in Covenant with God, and they are all such as lay obligations upon them to obedience, to walking in his Statutes: They are the children of God, and have God to be their Father: Now saith God to them that pretend to stand in this Relation, but walk disobediently, A son honoreth his Father, Mal. 1:6. And if I be a father, where is mine honor?

They are the servants of God, and God is their Lord and Master: Now saith he in the same place, a servant honoreth his Master; And if I be a Master, where is my fear? Should not a Lord and Master be feared? And what is it to fear God, but to have an awful respect to his Commandments, and a tender care to do his will? They are his subjects, and he is their King; he is the Lord that Reigneth over them, gives Laws unto them; and are not his Subjects a willing people in the day of his power? Do not his Saints humble themselves, sit down at his feet, and receive of his words? Doth not the fiery Law proceed from his right hand for them whom he calls his Saints? Deut. 33:2,3.

Secondly, The Covenant mercies and blessings, as their scope is to express the Rich bounty of God to his people; so likewise the end of them is to quicken constrain, and endear them unto duty and obedience; Psal. 86:12. I will praise thee O Lord my God with all my heart, I will glorify thy Name for evermore. Ver. 13, for great is thy mercy towards me. Psal. 130:4. There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. Deut. 10:12. And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul? Luke 1:74. That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear. Ver. 75. In holiness and righteousness. Rom. 12:1. I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Nothing more usual in the Scripture, than to press the people in Covenant to obedience by and from the mercies of the Covenant: The full and clear Revelation of the New Covenant takes in with it an express institution of obedience: Tit. 2:11. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Ver. 12. Teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world. The full and clearest Revelation of the new Covenant, was when Jesus Christ himself appeared in the world, and taught, and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven; and even thence is obedience chiefly urged: the Gospel all along pressing duties upon the people of God, to love the Lord their God, and to love their neighbor, and to walk as children of the light, Ephes. 5. And to be obedient children. 1 Pet. 1:14. And to be holy in all manner of conversation. Ver. 15. And to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, Ephes. 4:1,2. And to put off concerning the former conversation which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, Ver. 22. And to put on the new man which after God is created in

righteousness and true holiness. Ver. 24. And to walk circumspectly, Ephes. 5:15, or exactly unto the highest pitch of holiness and obedience.

Fourthly, The Mediator of the Covenant, concerning whom, you find

1. That he professeth that he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.

2. That he explicated the Law in the true and spiritual sense of it, vindicating it from the false glosses of the Pharisees, and pressing it in many branches upon us, as you may see in Matth. 5, from ver. 21, to the end.

3. Himself to be under the Law, and making special use of it in several parts against the temptations of Satan: It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, Matth. 4:7. And it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, ver. 10.

4. That he makes obedience the discovery of our real love unto him: Joh. 14:15. If you love me, keep my Commandments. Ver. 21. He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. Ver. 24. If a man love me, he will keep my words.

5. That it was one end of the giving of himself to death for us: Tit. 2:14. Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. 1 Pet. 2:24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness.

6. That his obedience unto the Law, is propounded as a pattern for us to imitate: 1 Joh. 2:6. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself

to walk even as he walked.

Lastly, The Covenant-Faith which is in every one of the people of God, as it carries them out to an election of God to be their God, so it carries them out unto subjection to God, unto obedience: Heb. 11:4. By faith Abel offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Ver. 8. By faith Abraham obeyed God. Faith eyes the Word of God for a Rule and warrant, and faith propounds unto us the encouragements of the word to quicken our obedience, and faith fetches strength from Christ to enable us in all our works of obedience. Having spoken these things for the demonstration of the Assertion, I shall now speak unto three Questions.

1. How this walking in God's statutes, and keeping of his judgments, and doing of them, may be fixed upon the people of God's Covenant, seeing they are all of them believers, and being so are no longer under the Law, but are freed and delivered from it.
2. What manner of obedience, or kind of obedience that is which is required, and to be performed by the people of God's Covenant?
3. Why these are in such a special manner thus charged with walking in God's statutes, &c.

**1. Quest. How this walking in God's statutes, &c. may be forced upon the people of God's Covenant, seeing they are all under grace, and believers, and not under the Law, as the Apostle expresseth it, Rom. 6:14. Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace?**

Sol. For a clear Answer unto this Question, I will briefly deliver my thoughts in these distinctions.

First, Concerning the Law of God, you know there were some of them;

1. Ceremonial, which consisted in Rites, and Ordinances, and Shadows, typifying Jesus Christ in his sufferings, unto which there was a full period put by the death of Christ.

2. Judicial, which respecteth the Jews as a peculiar Nation and Common-wealth, being made and fitted for them, as in such a particular polity: And all those Judicial Laws (especially these de jure particulari) are ceased by the cessation of that Nation and polity.

3. Moral; which are these set down in the Decalogue, and are called the ten words (or Commandments) which God spake and delivered. Of the ten Commandments (which we call the Moral Law) is the question to be understood, whether believers, or the people in the New Covenant are bound unto them.

Secondly, This Moral Law may be considered either 1. In the Substance of it; Or 2ly, in the circumstances of it.

If you consider the Moral Law in the substance of it; so it is;

1. An eternal manifestation of the mind and will of God, declaring what is good, and what is evil; what we are to do, and what we are not to do; what duties we do owe to God, and what duties we do owe to our neighbors; what worship God requires, and what worship God forbids: In this consideration the Moral Law never ceaseth in respect of any person whatsoever.

2. It discovers sin: For, Rom. 3:19. By the Law cometh the knowledge of sin: And the Apostle in Rom. 7:7. I had not known sin but by the Law; for I had not known lust except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

In this respect likewise, the Law is still in force even unto the people of God; it is the glass which shows them unto themselves, and the light which manifests the hidden things and works of darkness in them.

3. The Rule of life: For as the Gospel is the Rule of faith, teaching us what to believe; so the Moral Law is the Rule of manners, teaching us how to live; and as to this directing power, it is still of force and use unto believers: Psal. 119:105. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Ver. 133. Order my steps in thy Word.

But then secondly, the Law may be considered in respect of its circumstances, not as it is a Rule of obedience, but as it is a condition of life; and as thus considered,

1. It requires a personal and perfect obedience, and that under a curse: Gal. 3:10. Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all that is written to do it: Here now it ceaseth unto the people of God, the cursing and condemning power is abrogated; Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, Gal. 3:13.

2. It requires an exact obedience as a reason of Justification: Do this and live: Here likewise the people of God are freed from it; who (as Luther well speaks) shall not be damned for their evil works, nor yet shall be justified for their good works: but are justified by faith in Christ; and the matter of their justification,

being not inherent righteousness in themselves, but only the imputed righteousness of Christ: Thus you see in what respects the people of God are freed from, and in what respects they are still obliged by the Law: The Law hath not power to condemn or justify them, and yet it hath a power to direct and instruct them.

And that it hath such a power unto which we are to conform ourselves in obedience, may appear thus;

First, By that forementioned place in Matth. 5:17. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill: And in that Chapter he doth both interpret the Law, and commend and command unto his Disciples the duties of the Law. And surely it is no way probable that Christ would by his own authority so have confirmed the Law, had it been his purpose and business to have cancelled the Law.

Secondly, Paul in Rom. 13:8, that he might show and clear that in that one precept of love, He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law; produceth several precepts of the Law in ver. 9. For this Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not covet: And if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. All which were a fruitless proof, if the Law had nothing to do with the people of God; but utterly ceased to them as to point of obedience. In like manner in that place of James 2:8. If ye fulfill the royal Law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well; but if the Royal Law were abrogated, certainly they should not have done well to have observed it.

Thirdly, If the Moral Precepts were ceased as to the people of God, then God would have expressed in the delivery of them, a purpose

after some time to have revoked them, and to have exempted his people from further obedience unto them, or else Jesus Christ would himself have abrogated them as now unuseful; but neither of these do we find.

**Object. Yes, Christ saith in Luke 16:16. The Law and the Prophets were until John.**

Sol. The Law here spoken of is not to be understood de Lege Morali, of the direct and commanding Law of the Moral Law prescribing obedience, sed de lege Prophetante per figur as, as Rivet well observes.

Fourthly, What shall we say to that of Paul? Rom. 7:22. I delight in the Law of God after the inner man. And Ver. 25. So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God. And Chap. 8:4. That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. What shall we say to that of David? Psal. 119:1. Blessed are the undefiled who walk in the Law of the Lord?

**Object. But the Apostle saith, we are not under the Law, in Rom. 6:14. &c.**

Sol. First, One may be said to be under the Law in several respects.

1. For justification by the Law.
2. For condemnation by the Law.
3. For perfect and personal obedience to the Law.
4. For a slavish and servile constraint: In these respects the people of God are not under the Law; nevertheless for direction



and instruction to frame their lives unto the precepts of the Law, thus they are under the Law.

But secondly, the place to me expounds itself best of all: The Apostle there saith, We are not under the Law, but under grace; and this he gives as a reason why sin should not have dominion over them. We are not under the Law (i.e.) in such a state where there is only a command given against, but no power; but we are under grace, which is such a condition or estate where besides a command against sin, we have also a power given with that command which pulls down the dominion of sin: And verily all that can be concluded here, is, the comfortable estate of believers and regenerate persons, not in this, that they are utterly freed from the commanding Law of God, but in that they are now under such a gracious Covenant, where there is not only a Law to command, but grace also given to obey.

**2. Quest. The next Question is, what manner of obediential observation of God commands that is which concerns the people of God in Covenant.**

Sol. It is an Evangelical manner of obedience or observation, which hath four ingredients in it.

First, It must come from Gospel Principles, even from the life and strength of Christ; no man can walk without a Principle of life within him: It is a living work which proceeds from a living Principle: All the obediential works of the people of God are performed in the virtue of their union and communion with Christ; without me you can do nothing: Christ doth not only give the Law unto the people of God, but also he gives the Spirit unto them: Heb. 8:10. I will write my Law in their minds: He doth by his Spirit write them in their hearts, and makes them complying and willing to obey.

Secondly, It must come from Gospel motives, even from the mercy and love of God; the people of God do obey him rather as a Father than as a Judge, looking more at his goodness than at his severity: They shall fear the Lord and his goodness, Hosea. 3:5. And Psal. 130:5. There is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared. 2 Cor. 5:14. The love of Christ constrains them. And Ver. 15. He died for all, that they who live should not hence forth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them. The great love which God hath showed unto his people in Christ, inflames and swells their heart, and moves cares and endeavors to walk before him in all well pleasing.

Thirdly, It must come from Gospel-affections, especially from love and delight: O how love I thy Law! Psal. 119. If a man love me, he will keep my commandments, Joh. 14:23. The love of God (which the people of God enjoy) carries out their souls in all holy obedience unto the will of God; and so likewise they serve him with delight: I delight to do thy will O God, Psal. 40:8. And thy Law is within my heart, Psal. 101:1. Serve the Lord with gladness: The Commandments of God are not grievous unto his people; they say not What a weariness it is to serve the Lord! No, but as David, I rejoice in thy testimonies, and I will run the way of thy Commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart. It was Christ's meat and drink to do the will of his Father: O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! &c. There is a servile serving of God, which ariseth from a slavish Spirit, unwilling, backward, constrained by threats and blows; and there is an ingenuous, free, cheerful, delightful serving of God: As the people of God are volunteers, Psal. 110:3, of a princely spirit, as the word signifies; their duties though as to the rule are under a command, yet as to their hearts and manner of performance, they are a free-will-offering, they find so much sweetness and happiness in communion with God, and with a holy fervency of spirit; they are not indifferent,

cold, slothful, but fervent in Spirit, (boiling hot) serving the Lord, Rom. 12:11, their hearts are conjoined, and united in the duties of obedience, intent and intensive.

Fourthly, It looks at a Gospel-end, at the glory of God and Christ: Phil. 1:20. Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death. Ver. 21. For to me to live is Christ. Rom. 14:7. None of us liveth unto himself: for ver. 8. Whether we live we live unto the Lord. Natural men do act from themselves, and for themselves; but the people of God do act from Christ, and for Christ.

### **3. Quest. Why the people of God's Covenant are in a more special manner charged to walk in his statutes, keep his judgments, and do them?**

Sol. I will not insist on this, but briefly thus; the people of God should walk in his statutes, keep his judgments, and do them,

First, In respect of God; and here are three Reasons.

1. His Will: Psal. 119:4. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. 1 Thes. 4:3. It is the will of God, even your sanctification.

2. His Glory: They are called to show forth his praises: 1 Pet. 2:9 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, &c. Matth. 5:16. You are bought with a price to glorify God in, &c. 1 Cor. 6:20.

3. His gracious disposition towards his servants and people, which appears in four particulars.

First, In his concurrence; he passeth by many a failing in the performance of our duties: Micah 7:18. Who is a God like unto

thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage! Mal. 3:17. I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Secondly, In his acceptance; he will accept of a willing mind, 2 Cor. 8:12. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not: The servant that gained two talents; and the poor widow that cast in two farthings, were accepted.

Thirdly, In his assistance; as he commands us to walk in his statutes, so he puts his Spirit within us, to cause us to walk in them; underneath are the everlasting arms, said Moses: Deut. 33:27. And I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me, said Paul, Phil. 4:13.

Fourthly, In the recompense; Psal. 19:11. In keeping of thy Commandments there is great reward. Isa. 1:19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land. Rom. 2:10. Glory, honor, and peace unto every man that worketh good.

Secondly, In respect of the Statutes themselves; they are holy, and righteous, and good: The best way, and the safest way to walk in, are those which are pleasant to us, well-pleasing to God. The walking in the statutes of God, is the best way that any man can walk in, which appears thus.

First, It is the way which the only wise and good God hath consecrated: It is not a way of man's invention; it is not a way of Satan's delusion; it is the way of God which he himself commands, commends, approves, and likes.

Secondly, It is the best way to walk in for ourselves.

1. For a man's comfort and peace: Great peace have they which keep thy Law, Psal. 119:165. To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God, Psal. 50:23. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and sincerity we have had our conversation, 2 Cor. 1:12. The people of God do find his paths, paths of pleasure, and never meet with sorrow, but when they are wandering from them: Prov. 19:16. He that keepeth the Commandments, keepeth his own soul, but he that despiseth his ways shall die.

2. For a man's safety; you are sure of God's protection whiles you are in his service, and in his ways: Gen. 17:1. I am God Almighty, walk before me and be thou perfect; q.d. keep thou my ways, and I will keep thy safety.

3. For a man's honor: The service of God is our greatest liberty, and our greatest dignity: Deut. 4:6. Keep therefore and do these statutes; for this is your wisdom and understanding in the fight of the Nations which shall hear of these statutes, and say, Surely this Nation is a wise and understanding people.

3ly. In respect of the people of God themselves, which have so many obligations upon them from their God; 1. His Truth. 2ly. His Mercy. 3ly. Giving Christ for, and to them. 4ly. Giving his Spirit to them. 5ly. Shedding his love in their hearts. 6ly. Daily and hourly blessings. 7ly. The many sweet experiences found by them in the ways of obedience. 8ly. The bitterness met with when starting aside and wandering, &c.

Fourthly, Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord, blessed are they that keep his testimonies, Psal. 119:1,2. Holy obedience or walking in God's statutes, is a testimony of our

effectual calling to Christ, of our salvation with him: Rom. 6:4. We are buried with him by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we should walk in newness of Life. Ephes. 4:21. If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus. Ver. 22. Put off the old man, &c. Ver. 24. And put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Chap. 5:8. Ye were sometimes dark, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of that light.

#### SECT. I.

1. Use. Are the people of God charged and bound to walk in the statutes of God, and to keep his judgments, and to do them? O how few people then hath God? Where is the man that doth obey his voice? Who doth indeed take any heed to walk with God in his statutes? Who orders his steps according to his Word? Some there are that instead of giving an ear unto all the Scriptures, and to all the Ordinances, and to all the Statutes and Commandments of God, they are beyond the Scriptures, and beyond Ordinances, and beyond the Law, or Statutes of God, and they cry out against men as Legalists who press obedience, and as Antichristian and favoring of works: I do indeed believe that there are many Antichrists, amongst us, and fear the ὁ Ἀντίχριστος that great Antichrist is too much amongst us, ὁ ἄνομος, The Apostle describing the great Antichrist, 2 Thes. 2:3, saith that he is ὁ ἄνομος, an Exlex sine lege, one who doth trample down the Law of God, &c. Many others there are, who though they be not Antinomians in opinion, yet are so in their practice; like those in Psal. 2:3. Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us: Particular Libertines, who will have no Lord over them, and

will walk after the lusts of their own hearts, and despise the statutes of God: Hose. 8:12. I have written unto them (concerning Ephraim) the great things of my Law, but they were counted a strange thing. Beloved, take but a short view of God's statutes, and of men's walking, and we shall confess that few there are that walk in his statutes.

The statutes of God respect 1. Himself. 2ly. Our Neighbor.

1. Himself, in the glory of his Nature, of his Worship, of his Name, and of his Day; O but how few walk in these statutes!

1. The ignorant, that know not God.

2. The Atheists, that acknowledge not God.

3. Unbelievers, that trust not God.

4. The profane that love not God, nor fear him.

5. The superstitious, and idolatrous worshippers.

6. The cursed swearers, and forswearers.

7. The rabble of Sabbath-breakers, who make the day of God the day of their idlest recreation, or profaneness, &c.

2. Our Neighbor, requiring honor, and subjection, preservation of their names, and goods, bodies, life's; who walk in these statutes?

We rail against those above us; and despise and oppress those beneath us: It is the common trade to traduce, reproach, bely, and slander one another; and for theft, and adulteries, and murders, &c.

Nay, step down to the Evangelical commands of Faith in Christ, of repentance from dead works, of newness of obedience, of regeneration, who walks in the paths of faith? &c. Nay look upon the paths that most men walk in, and we may verily conjecture that men (generally) are turned Atheists. One walks in the path of Blaspheming, another in the path of Heresy, another in the path of idolatry, another in the path of Drunkenness, and Whoredom, &c. as if there were no God that ever did appoint Laws and Statutes for the sons of men, or as if it were at our pleasure to observe them or to reject them. If one of us should come into a Country and behold every man walking after the light of his own eyes, doing what seems good unto himself; we would say there is no King, and there are no good laws, or there is none that acknowledgeth and regardeth them. And so when we see the generality of men amongst ourselves, kindling sparks of their own, and walking in the light of them; and as for God's statutes, to say as they in Jeremiah, as for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto it; why! Certainly men are turned Atheists, they acknowledge not God in his Sovereignty, nor in his Laws: Now what shall I say to these men?

Here two questions.

1. Whence is it that men (generally) walk not in God's statutes?
2. What is the misery of such?

First, they are wicked and ungodly; they have nothing of Christ, or grace, or spiritual life in them; the Law of God was never written in their hearts; children of disobedience are children of wickedness; Rom. 8:7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be: They were the vilest of the



Gentiles who walked in the vanity of their mind, and were alienated from the life God, Ephes. 4:17,18.

Secondly, They are children of wrath; they that walk according to the course of the world, are children of disobedience, Ephes. 2:2. And of wrath, Ver. 3. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, Ephes. 5:6. Consider that passage in Amos 2:4. Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Judah and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the Law of the Lord, and have not kept his Commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after which their Fathers have walked. But Ver. 5. I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem. Read at your leisure the dreadful judgments and plagues which God threatens for disobedience: Lev. 26, from ver. 14, to ver. 40. But if you will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these Commandments. And Ver. 15. If ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, &c. I will, ver. 26, appoint over you terror, and consumption, and the burning ague that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart, &c. And ver. 17. I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you, &c. yea and the disobedient shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and they that forget God shall be cast into hell.

**Object. But you will say, this is dreadful indeed.**

Sol. I answer, be not deceived, God will not be mocked; he is righteous thus to recompense the sinner and disobedient: For

First, They that refuse to walk in his ways, do go against the very light of nature: A natural light will yield unto these Principles.

1. That there is a God.
2. That a God may give Laws.
3. That the Laws of a God are just and holy.
4. That just and holy Laws ought to be obeyed: God challengeth and requires nothing from his creatures which unbefits a God to command, or beseems his creatures to regard.

Secondly, They that refuse to walk in his statutes, they are proud, and scornful, and daring sinners; it is one of, the highest expressions of pride, and affront done to God, to turn our backs from him, and to set ourselves against him, renouncing his authority over us, and denying all honor unto him.

Thirdly, It is an insufferable provocation for any creature to refuse to walk in the statutes of God, and yet at the same time to walk after the commands of the Devil, and his own wicked heart.

**Object. But it is impossible for any man in the world to walk in the statutes of God, and to keep them.**

Sol. To this I answer.

Impossible is not the very reason why wicked men walk not in God's statutes; but the true reason in them, is, enmity against them; they have a nature which cannot endure to be subjected to the Law of God, but is at defiance with it, q.d. of the holiness and righteousness in it: Indeed in disputation, to cast a blind, and to gainsay, and to flatter, upon an excuse for profaneness or slothfulness, this is pretended and urged; O it is impossible, and in many things we sin all: But that is not a reason or ground, why wicked men walk not in God's statutes or ways, but in their sinful ways; the very reason

indeed is this, their wicked hearts do hate God's holy and righteous statutes, and do love darkness rather than light, Joh. 3.

Secondly, If it were absolutely impossible, how is it that we read of all the people of God that they have walked in his statutes and ways? Enoch did so, so did Noah, so did Abraham, so did David, so did Zacharias, and Elizabeth, so did Hezekiah, so did Paul, Acts 23:1. I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

Thirdly, There is a twofold walking in God's statutes; viz.

1. Legal; which is such an exactness of obediential conformity, that there is not the least deviation from the rule, not the least obliquity, or transgression, or failing, or shortness, but the full tale of duty for matter and for manner is performed; this I confess is actually impossible for any man, yea for the best on earth.

2. Evangelical; which consists. 1. In the application of all the statutes of God as holy and good. 2ly. In the exaltation of them; as the Rule to guide our lives, and the Paths wherein we will walk. 3ly. In the love of them, delighting ourselves in them. 4ly. In a humble and sincere endeavor to keep them all: This walking in God's statutes, and keeping of his judgments, is not impossible; and there is not a godly man on earth who riseth not to this: Heb. 13:18. We trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly.

Fourthly, If this Evangelical walking in God's statutes be impossible to any man, this ariseth not from the nature of the statutes of God, but from the wickedness of man's own nature, which he should beseech the Lord to heal, and change, and renew by his grace, and then the statutes of God would not be grievous unto him, much less would they be impossible; he should quickly find that of Christ to be true: Math. 30. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

And cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them. - Ezek. 36:27.

## SECT. II.

2. Use. The second Use which I would make of this Point, that the people of God under the Covenant of grace, are to walk in his statutes, and to do them, is this, That as we are to approve ourselves to be the people of God, that we make it our care and business to order our conversations according to his Word, to walk in his Statutes, to conform ourselves in all our ways to the obedience of his will: And for the better carrying on of this Use, I desire to speak unto three Questions.

1. How a man must be qualified, that so he may be willing, and in some measure able to walk in the statutes of God, and do them?
2. What mistakes a man must take heed of in the performances of duties of obedience to God's Laws and statutes?
3. What rules are to be observed in walking in God's statutes, and how one may perform acts of obedience, or spiritual duties in such a manner as God will accept of them?

**1. Quest. How a man must be qualified, that so he may be willing, and in some measure able to walk in the statutes of God, and do them?**

Sol. There are six Qualifications as to this.

1. A Credence, that there is a God who hath given Laws unto men, which every man is enjoined to obey.
2. A Knowledge of the Laws of God which do concern him to keep or obey.
3. A Sanctified will, or renewed heart.
4. An Evangelical faith.
5. An Unfeigned love of God.
6. A Humble spirit.

1. A Credence that there is a God who hath given Laws unto all the sons of men, and they are bound to keep and obey them.

If this Principle (as I have expressed it) be not granted, it is in vain to offer anything concerning walking in God's statutes, and keeping, and doing of them. If a person denies

1. That there is a God, unquestionably he doth therein deny all the Laws or statutes of God, and likewise all obedience unto his laws: and hold
2. That God hath no authority to prescribe Laws unto his creatures, or that he never did constitute any Laws prescribing and limiting his creatures, but hath left every man to walk in the ways of his own heart.
3. Though he hath set Laws and Rules of life, yet his creatures are at their own liberty to obey them, or not obey them, if he obey them it is well; and if they please not to obey them, there is no sin or danger.

I say such Atheistical Positions as these do utterly void all the sovereignty of God, and obligations of man, and are the foundations of all wickedness and disobedience; therefore of necessity if any person would walk in the statutes of God, and do them, he must be really and fully convinced of these three Principles.

1. That there is a God, a true and living God, the Maker and possessor of Heaven and Earth, who is the Lord and Sovereign of all men; to whom the authority of making laws for them doth of right belong; for he indeed hath the Sovereignty and highest power.

2. That he hath given Laws or statutes unto all the sons of men, in which he reveals his mind, will, and pleasure concerning them, what he would have them to do, and what he would have them to avoid.

3. That those Laws or statutes of his, are Obligations upon men; they do not only teach what is good and evil, but bind us also to do that good, and to decline that evil: The Lord God being bound to uphold his own will and glory, and having threatened all transgressors of his Laws, and revealed his wrath against them, and hath punished them, and still hath in readiness to avenge the disobedience of men.

Secondly, When you do believe that there is a God who hath authority to prescribe Laws unto you, and that he hath enacted and published them for all men to take notice of them; then must you give diligence to know what his Laws are concerning you, and to understand them, that you may be able to say concerning yourselves what the Apostle spake of others, This is the will of God concerning you. Psal. 119:27. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts. Ver. 18. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold the wondrous things

out of thy Law. Ver. 12. Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me thy statutes. Isa. 2:3. Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways.

Now here briefly are two Questions.

**1. Quest. What kind of knowledge of God's statutes is requisite towards our walking in them?**

There is a threefold knowledge of them.

First, A knowledge of apprehension, which is partly;

1. Literal; this is the least and weakest part of our knowledge, when a man can say, or read, or hear the words of God's Laws, and recite them word by word, yet without understanding the hiddenness of the Laws themselves; as many say the words of the Lord's Prayer, who yet understand not the meaning of that prayer: So do many say the words of God's Laws or Commandments, who yet, &c.

2. Spiritual; and this is of that Law which is in the Law; it is a knowledge of the true meaning and purpose of any Law or statute of God: Many know literally, who yet know not spiritually, so as to dive into, and reach the meaning of God. e.g. Thou shalt have none other God's but me, Exod. 20:3. These letters and words are known by many, and yet the sense of them is known only to a few, namely that we must set up the true God only for our God, and make him the only object of our trust, and love, and fear: Now look on this Law in the true sense and spiritual interpretation thereof, as particularly binding our souls.

Secondly, A knowledge of approbation: Though a man doth know the spiritual part and intent of God's Laws, yet if his soul rises up against

them as cruel, as unjust, as vain, and unprofitable, such a knowledge as this (conjoined with dislike and exception) will never conduce to our obedience or walking in them, but rather to disobedience; to the knowledge of apprehension join the knowledge of approbation; our judgments must comply with, and acknowledge that Divine Excellency and equity in the statutes of God: Rom. 7:12. The Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good. Psal. 119:138. Thy testimonies which thou hast commanded us are righteous, and very faithful.

Thirdly, A knowledge of Application; we must know the statutes of God, and approve of them as righteous and good, and also we must apply the righteousness and goodness of them to ourselves (i.e.) that they do concern every of us in particular, as obliging of us, and good for us.

As Eliphaz spake to Job; Job. 5:27. Lo this we have searched, so it is, hear thou it, and know thou it for thy good: So say I, you must hear and know the statutes of God, how righteous they are, how good they are, how blessed they are, what a command and power they have, and this you must apply unto yourselves, not only as belonging to others, and speaking to others, but as belonging also to yourselves, to order your lives by them: Psal. 119:4. Thou hast commanded to keep thy precepts diligently. Ver. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! When you know that Commandment, Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord in vain; or that Commandment, Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day, &c. You must know these Commandments as respecting you, and obliging you, that you must not swear, and that you must not break the Sabbath, but that you must know the Name of God, and sanctify the day of God, &c.



**2. Quest. What can knowledge contribute towards a walking in God's statutes, &c? For many know them, and yet do not, &c.**

Sol. To this, take briefly these Answers.

First, Though possibly a man may know the statutes of God, and yet not walk in them, yet that knowledge is no cause of it: Knowledge is in itself a help and furtherance to walking (as the light is to working) it is not any hindrance at all; that which hinders knowing persons from obedience, is not the light of their knowledge, but the lust of their corrupt affections which bear down their knowledge.

Secondly, Without knowledge of the statutes of God, that which we call duty or obedience, is neither practical nor acceptable.

1. It is not practical: Knowledge is a necessary previous quality unto acts of duty. It is impossible to obey the will of God, if we know not the will of God: Can a servant do the will of his Master who knows not the will of his Master? Our obedience (in Rom. 12:1) is called a reasonable service; and rational it cannot be without knowledge; without knowledge it is rather brutish than reasonable.

2. It cannot be acceptable: The Apostle saith in Heb. 11:6. That without Faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him: But faith there cannot be without knowledge, there cannot be Faith for the acceptance of duty, unless first there be a knowledge of God's Command of that duty.

Thirdly, There is an aptitude of knowledge of things to be done, to put us upon the doing of those things: For knowledge is a Spiritual light, and spiritual light it is not only Representative, but also operative; it will work upon the conscience, and will, and affections to draw them up to that performance of what is known: This you see in enlightened sinners, who are made to see the will or commands of God, that the light hath an influence upon their hearts and consciences and services, to excuse or condemn them, and so still it doth until they do imprison or extinguish that light.

4. At least knowledge may serve you thus far, to put you upon prayer, to seek the Lord to give you a heart to walk in his statutes: If it be not able to make you to walk in his statutes, yet it is in some measure conducing to lead out your desires to the Lord to write his Laws in your hearts, and to cause you to walk in his statutes.

Thirdly, As you must get the knowledge of God's statutes if you would walk in them; so likewise you must get your hearts and wills sanctified. Our walking in God's statutes, is styled newness of life: Rom. 6:4. That we should walk in newness of life; and a service in newness of Spirit, Rom. 7:6, implying the necessity of a new spirit towards a new life: You know that to the walking in God's statutes, there must be 1. A subordination of our wills to God's will; God's will must not go one way, and our wills run another way: If our wills be contrary to his, this is a plain disobedience: But now to reduce our will to the way of God; this requires holiness or renovation in our wills, forasmuch as the carnal will is enmity to the Law of God, Rom. 8:7. 2ly. A conformity or similitude; our walking and God's Precepts must agree; what is to be found in God's Commands, that must be found in our practice, else it is not a walking in his statutes; you do

not set them up as your Rule, as your Copy, if you do not commensurate your actions by them, and to both these, holiness of heart is required: For the heart must be sanctified and renewed, or else it can neither yield up itself, nor conform itself to that holy will of God; consider that passage of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1:2. Through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience: why doth not the Apostle say, election to obedience, but through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience? Not that we are not elected unto obedience, but that there can be no obedience without the sanctification of the Spirit; As there can be no action of life without a principle of life; so there can be no actions of Spiritual life, without the great principle of holiness in the heart; and when God puts that holy disposition into our hearts, this will as sweetly incline us to walk in the statutes of God, as we were wont to be inclined to walk in ways of wickedness when we were under the power of an unholy and sinful disposition.

Four things a man shall find when once his heart is indeed sanctified by the Spirit of God.

1. An abhorring of every evil way contrary to God's statutes: I hate all false ways, saith David, Psal. 119:104. A way of wickedness is no way for a holy heart.
2. A Compliance with every good way, and path appointed by God for us to walk in: I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, Psal. 119:128. And ver. 173. I have chosen thy precepts.
3. A singular propension of his heart to walk in the ways of God: I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end, Psal. 119:112.

4. A special delight in those statutes of God, and in walking in them. My soul hath kept thy Testimonies, and I love them exceedingly, Psal. 119:167. Thy testimonies are my delight, and my counselors. Ver. 24 I will delight myself in thy statutes. Ver. 16. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches, Ver. 14.

O sirs, the Law of God is against a wicked heart, and a wicked heart is against the Law of God! That is holy, but his heart is unholy; for that there is no agreement between them, but a perpetual enmity and contrariety; the Law threatens his sinful lusts and ways, and his heart despiseth and opposeth the Law q.d. it is holy, and therefore contrary to his unholy heart. And therefore of necessity this unholiness must be taken away (and no other way can it be removed but by the sanctifying of the heart) before a man can or will walk in God's statutes.

Fourthly, If you would walk in the statutes of God, then you must get an Evangelical saith, as Christ spake in another case unto that troubled man, Mark. 19:23. If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth: that say I concerning walking in God's statutes; if we could believe, had we faith, and could we act it aright, our obedience would be possible to us, and acceptable unto God.

That there is a necessity of this faith, and likewise an efficacy, for our walking in God's statutes, may thus appear.

1. It is that grace which unites us unto Christ, in whom there is a fullness of grace, and likewise a fullness of strength: As we have no grace but what comes from Christ, so we have no strength but what comes from him; without me (saith Christ: Joh. 15:5) ye can do nothing; if we can do nothing without Christ, then certainly we cannot obey, we cannot walk in God's statutes without him; and

therefore faith is necessary for this obediential walking, because without Christ we can do nothing, and because without faith we have nothing to do with Christ.

2. It is the grace of life: I live (saith Paul, Gal. 2:20) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God: We never live (Spiritually) until we do believe; for Christ is our life by faith; upon this account faith is necessary to our obediential walking, because such a walking is impossible without a spiritually vital principle.

3. It is that grace by which we do receive the Spirit: We receive the promise of the Spirit through Faith, Gal. 3:14. But without the Spirit there is no possible walking in God statutes; because all the power and might that we have to do any good (as you may shortly hear) comes from the presence and assistance of the Spirit, who is in a soul all in all, in all the good which we do perform.

4. It is the grace which applies all the promises of help and strength, and which brings in all your assistance from Christ: You know that God doth promise his help for our work: Zech. 10:12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his Name, saith the Lord; and so here in the Text, I will cause you to walk in my statutes, Ezek. 36. What have you to draw without of these wells but faith? Here is your work, there is your help, and it is yours upon believing: And so for the assisting power of Christ, you can do nothing without it, as you have heard; and therefore Paul speaking of his abundant labor in the Gospel, saith, Yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me, 1 Cor. 15:10, this likewise becomes yours upon believing; it is faith which engageth Christ, and draws him in to assist and enable you for every work which you are to do.

5. It is the grace which doth encourage our hearts to walk in God's statutes: Gen. 4:7. If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? Isa. 56:7. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine Altar. What an encouragement is this to be walking in the statutes of God, to be obeying of his will, to be much in duties, when we know by faith that our prayers, and tears, and weak duties shall be accepted upon the altar for Christ's sake! Mal. 3:16. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. By all this you may see how necessary faith is for to enable us to walk in God's statutes; therefore pray much for faith.

If you would walk in God's statutes, then you must get an unfeigned love of God: Deut. 30:6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all their heart, and with all their soul. Ver. 8. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. Exod. 20:6. Showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my Commandments. Paul reduceth all obedience unto love, when he calls love the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13:8. And so doth Jesus Christ, who reduceth all the Commandments to love, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Joh. 14:23. If a man love me, he will keep my words. Men grumble at the keeping of Gods Laws, and at walking according to his statutes; they look at them as grievous and burthensome to them, and undelightful; are weary of praying, weary of reading and hearing the Word, weary of the Sabbath, when will it be at an end, weary of every good work, though never weary of sinning. What is the reason of this? The reason is, because they do

not love the Lord, and therefore they are weary of his statutes and obedience; whereas did they love the Lord, all communion with him, and all services done unto him, would be pleasing and delightful; our works of duty would not seem unto us a servile burden, but a gracious privilege, and special favor, that we might freely approach to God, and be employed as servants unto him.

**Object. Only here take heed of a mistake that you do not look on love to God as the rule of your obedience, but only as a sweet inward spring or principle of it?**

Sol. Some (who would cancel the Law as to believers) would make our love to God the rule of all our obedience to God; but this is not sound doctrine: For;

1. That which is a part of our obedience, cannot be the rule of our obedience: Now love is a part of a man's obedience as well as faith and fear, &c.
2. No rule of man's obedience must be imperfect, but perfect and full; now our love is imperfect, and therefore it cannot be the rule of our obedience.

Sixthly, If you would walk in God's statutes and do them, then you must get humble hearts, and tender hearts: It is with our hearts as with metals digged out of the earth, which are impure and hard, and as so, of little or no use, but when they are melted and purged, they are then capable of being useful and being serviceable vessels. Thus it is with our hearts, whiles they are unbroken, and hard, and proud, they are rebellious, disobedient, reprobate to every good work: Exod. 5:2. Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Psal. 119:21. Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed which do err

from thy Commandments. Jer. 44:16. The proud men (Chap. 43:2) spake, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But when the Lord gives unto men humble and tender hearts, now they will close with, and submit unto God's statutes, and to a walking in them: Deut. 33:3. All his Saints are in thy hand, and they sat down at thy feet; everyone shall receive of thy word. Lord, said Paul (when the pride and rage of his spirit was off, and himself himself) what wilt thou have me to do? Acts. 9:6. You read in James 4:6, that God gives grace to the humble. And Psal. 25:9. The meek will he teach his way, &c. Hence saith Christ, Matth. 11:29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; intimating unto us that there is no taking upon us the yoke of obedience, until we first learn of him the lesson of lowliness of heart: An humble and tender heart is wholly at God's disposing, and ready for his service, most afraid to offend and dishonor him, and most ready to give audience to every part of his will, and to do it, and to bring him honor and glory in the whole course of a man's life: Beseech the Lord to give you this humble and tender heart without which you will neither regard God nor his statutes.

**2. Quest. What mistakes are we to take heed of in walking in God's statutes? Or in the performance of our duties of obedience unto him?**

Sol. There are these things which you must take heed of in your walking, and in your performance of duties.

First, You must take heed of formality, and resting in the opus operatum, in the mere doing of duties commanded. There are two parts of duties; there is the body of it, and there is the soul of it; there is the work, and there is the manner of working. As in Prayer, there



are the words of prayer, and there is the Spirit of Prayer; and in hearing of the Word, there is the mere hearing, and there is the right hearing, or the spiritual hearing of the Word. Now we must take heed that we content not ourselves with the mere outward doing of any duty, because

1. God requires more than the mere outward work: My son (saith he) give me thy heart, Prov. 23:26. And Christ saith that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth, Joh. 4:4.

2. God Abhors and rejects the mere outward service: Isa. 29:13. Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, and have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by precepts of men: Ver. 14, therefore behold I will proceed to do a marvelous work amongst this people, a marvelous work, and a wonder; for the wisdom of the wise men shall perish, &c.

Now there are four things which demonstrate that men do perform duties in a formal manner, and content themselves with the mere opus operatum.

1. One is the facility of their obedience: To perform any one duty, to make any one prayer in a spiritual manner, will cost us much care and watchfulness, many workings of heart, many workings of faith, and fear; but to perform duties in a carnal, formal way costs a man nothing; if he can but read, or say his prayers, this is all, and there he rests.

2. A second is, the deadness of the services: It is a service without any heart at all; the understanding acts not, and the will acts not, and the affections act not in it; the man confesseth sin

without any grief of heart for sin, and even prays for grace and mercy without any longing desires, or faith in Christ or the promises to obtain it.

3. A carelessness of service: The formal man minds not God, nor any communion with him, and minds not prayer, and minds nothing beyond prayer, whether his own heart be right or no, and whether God regards him, and answers him, this he minds not.

4. A fruitlessness of doing: Nothing comes of the formal work of duty; the man saith a prayer, but no good comes of it, and he hears, but no good comes of it, still he prays, and still he hears, and still he reads, and still he is drunk, and still he swears, &c.

Secondly, You must take heed of neutrality in walking in God's statutes; neutrality is an indifferent participation of both extremes; it hath something of the one, and something of the other, as luke-warm water, hath something of heat, and something of cold: So the man who is guilty of neutrality in walking in God's statutes, he hath one foot in the ways of God, and another foot in the ways of wickedness, he halts between two Opinions; he is not only for God, nor only for Baal, 1 King. 18:21, he is not altogether for God's commands, nor altogether for sins commands, but he divides himself betwixt God and his sinful lusts; he will pray, but withal he will swear; and he will hear the Word, but withal he will be drunk; he will do many things that are good, but withal he will do many things that are wicked. Now take heed of this; God cannot endure it. If God be God, follow him: 1 King. 18:21. You shall walk in my statutes, saith God here (i.e.) you shall set me up alone, and my commands alone, and my ways alone. Zeph. 1:5. I will cut off them that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham. Rev. 3:16. Because thou art luke-warm, and neither

cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Matth. 4:10. It is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Thirdly, You must take heed of partiality in walking in God's statutes: We say that *Lex est copulativa*; God doth not say you shall do this, or do that, you shall fear me, or you shall love me, you shall keep my Sabbath, or you shall not take my Name in vain; no such matter, but the Law is conjunctive, and doth require obedience to every commandment of God: Jam. 2:11. For he that said do not commit adultery, said also do not kill; now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the Law. We read that Jehu did many things which God commanded in order to the destruction of the house of Ahab; but yet he disobeyed God in following the sin of Jeroboam, which tended to the destruction of his own soul: And so Herod heard John the Baptist, and did many things, but yet he kept Herodias his brother Philip's wife. Right obedience is impartial obedience, and he who regards one Commandment of God out of Conscience; he doth likewise regard every Commandment of God; for there is the same authority stamped on all the Commandments: Therefore it is but hypocrisy to regard some of God's statutes, and to disregard others: Some men stand much for obedience or duties to the second Table, but they mind not the duties of the first Table; they seem to make conscience of lying, and stealing, and killing, and adultery; but they make no conscience of swearing, and taking the Name of God in vain, and breaking the sabbath; some seem to make conscience of lesser duties, but they make no conscience of greater duties, and so others & a contra: But God hath not given unto us such a liberty to pick and choose our work; if the Lord commands us the smallest or the greatest duties, we are to yield obedience to the one and to the other, not neglecting the least, nor laying aside the greatest: He that is

unfaithful in the least, will be unfaithful also in the greatest; and he that is faithful in the greatest, will be also faithful in the least; it is a truth that sins of omission will damn a man as well as sins of commission; therefore take heed of partiality in keeping of God's statutes.

Fourthly, You must take heed of resting or relying upon any of your works or duties; you must endeavor obedience unto God's Law, but you must beware of placing your confidence upon that obedience: You must pray, and read, and hear, and mourn, and repent, and walk holily and humbly with your God; and you must live soberly, and righteously, and godly, and fear the Lord, and love the Lord, and obey his voice, and when you have done so to your utmost, and to your best, then must you cast your Crowns to the ground, and weep that you have served your God no more, and no better, and cry out with the Publican, God be merciful to me a sinner! And with David, Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified, Psal. 143:2. And with him, Domine lava, quae, lachrymas meas! If you advance your duties or works of obedience unto a condition of life, to be the matter and reason of your justification before God, and say, Lord, these are my righteousness's, and for these I look to be justified and saved, why! Now as Peter said to Simon Magus, Thou and thy money perish with thee; So say I, now thou and all thy duties will perish together: For

1. God commands not works of duty from his people, that they should thereby be justified, but that thereby himself might be glorified; not as reasons of life, but as testimonies of love and thankfulness.

2. You pull down Jesus Christ, and faith in him, if you set up any works of yours for life or justification; Christ is no Christ unto

you and his righteousness is no righteousness unto you, if you seek to set up your own works and put confidence in them: Gal. 5:4. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace.

3. It is foolish and damnable so to do: For when you have done all that you can do, you are but unprofitable servants: The least duties that ever you have performed have enough in them to damn you: There is much sinfulness, and much weakness, and much shortness in them, which if God should mark, you could never stand before him: Remember this for a certain truth, that he who would come to heaven, must take heed of his good works, as well as of his evil works; they will damn him; and if he place his confidence upon his good works, they will destroy him: Tit. 3:5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.

Fifthly, You must take heed of performing duties, or obeying God's statutes for false ends; As 1. To recompense God. 2ly. To give him satisfaction for the evil that you have done. 3ly. To offer them up as purchasers of mercies and blessings. 4ly. To look on them as your propitiation and peace-makers. 5ly. Only to quiet and still your consciences. 6ly. Out of vain-glory and to please men.

First, You must not perform duties, nor present them to God as compensations or recompense unto God for the blessings and benefits which God hath vouchsafed unto you: There is a difference between thankfulness for blessings, and requitals for blessings; we ought to be thankful unto God, and to return praises and obedience after the receipt of his mercies; offer unto God thanksgiving, Psal. 50:14. And praise is comely for the upright, Psal. 33:1. But to recompense God again by any good

that we can do, for any good that he hath done, this may not be, and this cannot be: Job 35:7, said Eliphaz to Job, If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand? V. 8. Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man. Psal. 16:2. My goodness extendeth not to thee; q.d. Thou art not benefited by any good works of ours, &c. I cannot add anything thereby unto thee, we receive all from thee, but can give nothing unto thee by which thou mayest be bettered; for thou art an infinite being, and therefore we can add nothing to thee.

Secondly, You must not do any good work, thinking thereby to satisfy God for your evil works: Many people when they have committed sin, and injured and dishonored God, then they fall a praying, and a reading, and a hearing, and put on to works of piety, and charity, and their intention or end in doing of these duties is to make God amends, and to make up the wrong which they have done him, supposing that the good which now they do, will balance the evil which they have done, and satisfy God: Now though this be true, that our sinning's do injure God, and therefore its reason that after our sinning's we should be much humbled, and be more circumspect in our walking, and more diligent and upright: Yet to act all these as satisfactions to God for the sinful injurious works which we have done against him, This is 1. Foolish. 2ly. Sinful.

First, It is foolish, forasmuch as nothing that we can do, can amount unto a satisfaction for the evil that we can do; Because

1. All the good which we now do, we ought still to have done; and that which was still a duty, can never be a satisfaction.

2. There is more evil in the evil that we have done, than there is good in the good which we do; our sinful evil is perfectly evil, and our best good is but imperfect good: The evil that we do against God, deserves hell; and the good which we do, deserves nothing; the evil which is done needs infinite mercies to pardon it; and the good which we do, is so mixed with our sinfulness, that that also needs mercy to pardon and accept it; and that which needs mercy cannot be a satisfaction.

Secondly, It is sinful: For this is to take upon us the work of a Mediator, to whom alone that work of satisfaction doth pertain; and he must be both God and man, or else he could not have satisfied for our sins: Now to presume that our own imperfect obedience is able to satisfy God for our sins, and to clear all our accounts and reckonings between him and us, what is this but to lay aside the perfect satisfactions of Christ the only Mediator, and to set up our own weak righteousness as sufficient to compensate the Justice of God.

Thirdly, You must not offer up any performances of yours as causes of mercy and blessings; you must pray, and you must mourn, and you must repent, and you must obey the voice of the Lord your God, and you must walk in his statutes and do them: and if you do so with upright hearts, God will meet you with mercy and blessings: Nevertheless you may not look on any performance of yours as causes meriting and purchasing any blessing unto you; remember that excellent passage in Psal. 25:10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his Commandments and his testimonies. Yet Ver. 11. For thy Name sake pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. Here is mercy and truth for them that keep his Commandments; and then here is not our obedience, but his Name the cause of our mercy; not for my obedience sake, but for thy Name

sake pardon mine iniquity, &c. So when Daniel fasted and prayed in an extraordinary way for mercy and for deliverance out of the Babylonian captivity, he impleads not those works as causes of them, nay as so he rejects them: Dan. 9:17. Now therefore O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. Ver. 18. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the City that is called by thy Name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.

There are four things to be observed about mercies and blessings.

1. The Efficient Cause; and that is only God's own love, and grace, and mercy; his own glorious love is the only efficient cause of all our blessings whether spiritual or temporal.
2. The Final Cause; and that is only God's own glory; all is from his mercy, and all is for his glory; he is the first, and he is the last; out of the sea of his mercy they come, and into the sea of his glory they do return.
3. The Meritorious Cause; and that is Jesus Christ, who by his blood hath purchased all things for us pertaining to life and godliness.
4. The means by which, not causes for which they are obtained and enjoyed, and such are our holy performances and walking's, unto which God hath promised abundance of mercies and blessings, and we shall enjoy them, not Ration facti, for the worthiness of our doings, but Ration promissionis, for the goodness and faithfulness of his promise unto our upright doing and walking.



Therefore take heed of looking on any doing, and walking as meritorious causes of mercies and blessings: For;

1. All the good we can do, is but what we ought to do; and no duty of man can be meritorious with God.
2. All the good we do, is done by the strength of Christ; therefore it cannot merit, seeing it is done not by our own strength, but Christ's.
3. All the good we do, finds acceptance only in and for Christ; our prayers are accepted in him, and our services are accepted in him; and therefore they merit nothing of themselves.
4. All good services must be done in faith, or else they cannot be pleasing to God, Heb. 11:16. Now, Faith and the merit of man's works are utterly inconsistent.
5. Lastly, All the blessings which you shall ever enjoy, you must take them out of God's promises, or Covenant of grace; and no gift flowing from that Covenant of grace but it is freely given unto us.

Fourthly, You must not look upon any performances, services, acts of obedience done by you, as propitiations, as able to make peace with God for the sins which you have committed against God. When we have sinned against God, we must humble our souls, and repent, and pray unto the Lord to pardon us, and to be reconciled unto us, and to take away iniquity, and to be at peace with us: But these works done by us (though never so penitential and holy) they cannot take off our sins, and they cannot be our peace. O no! The provocations raised by our sins are too high, and too great for any work of ours to compass: Though God will not pardon your sins, nor be reconciled unto you,

unless you do repent, pray, and seek his face, and believe; yet 'tis not repentance, and 'tis not prayer, and 'tis not faith, that takes up the differences, that reconciles you to God. It is only Jesus Christ, He is our peace, Ephes. 2:14. And he is the propitiation for our sins, 1 Joh. 2:2. The chastisement of our peace was laid on him, Isa. 53:5. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, 2 Cor. 5:19. We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. 5:10. And by him we receive the atonement, Ver. 11.

**Object. But do we not read that God hath pardoned the sins of his people, and hath spoken peace unto them upon their humbling's, and returning's, and prayers?**

Sol. Yes, we do upon these works, but never for these works; these did not make peace, but Christ it was who made peace; these did not purchase forgiveness of sins, but the blood of Christ it was which did purchase that; therefore take heed you set up none of your obediencial performances in the place of Christ; perform them you must if you would have mercy and peace; but do not rely on them, but on the merits of Christ only to procure your peace.

Fifthly, You must not walk in God's statutes, or perform holy duties only to still and quiet your conscience; you must perform them out of conscience, but you must not perform them only to quiet conscience.

In two cases some men set upon works of obedience only to still and quiet conscience.

1. One is the case of education and custom: They have been brought up religiously, and have been accustomed to read, and pray; and if at any time they do neglect and omit these duties, conscience is upon them and upbraids and disquiets them; and

they are afraid to neglect them, lest conscience will question and trouble them.

2. Another is the case of transgression; when men have committed some great sin against God, thereupon conscience becomes impatient, and accuseth, and condemns, and terrifies them; and now they fall a praying, and mourning, and confessing, and reforming, but all this is to quiet conscience, and they do find sometimes that under these performances, their consciences are a little allayed and quieted, and for that end do those take them up as a charm to allay their consciences; and when their consciences are quieted, then they lay aside strictness of walking in God's statutes, and all sincere care of obedience, and are ready to transgress again. O take heed of this; this is but hypocrisy, and this will end in hardness of heart at the last: He that performs duties only to quiet conscience that it shall not accuse him for sin, will at length venture upon a course of high transgressions against conscience, and will turn his troubled conscience into a seared conscience.

Sixthly, You must not perform your duties for any self or vain-glorious end; It was Ephraim's folly that he brought forth fruit unto himself, Hos. 10:1. It was Jehu's sin that he sought himself rather than God in what he did; and it was the Pharisees hypocrisy that in their fasting and preaching and abundances, they looked at the praise of men; verily saith Christ, ye have your reward, Matth. 6:5, all that you look at is the praise of men; and all that ever you shall receive, is but the praise of men; for their sakes you did these things, and from them take your reward; you did them not with a respect to God's glory; for his sake, and therefore you shall have no acceptance, and no recompence from him at all.

**3. Quest. Now follows the third Question, viz. What Rules we must observe in our walking in God's statutes, so that we may please him, and our obedience may be accepted of him?**

Sol. Beloved! This question is of very great use unto us: It is not enough that we do the things which God requires, but we must have a care to do them so as that God may be pleased, and so as what we do may be accepted: Col. 1:10. Walk worthy of the Lord in all pleasing. Heb. 12:28. Let us have grace that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Chap. 13:24. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight. Chap. 15:5. Enoch before his translation had this testimony that he pleased God.

Remember (by the way) these three hints.

First, Many men do not mind the pleasing of God, nor his acceptance in what they do; they bring their gift to the Altar and there they leave it, but whether God accepts it at their hands, and be well-pleased with what they have done, they mind it not.

Secondly, Many think that if a good work be done, God must needs be pleased with it. What! God commands Prayer, and yet not accepts of it, nor be pleased with it!

I answer, God requires the manner as well as the matter; and the work done is not accepted if it be not done aright; did not the Lord command sacrifice, and did not Cain sacrifice? Yet God had no respect to him nor his offering, Gen. 4:5. Did not God command prayer unto the Jews? Yet saith, Isa. 1:15. When you spread forth your hearts I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when you make many prayers I will not hear; why so? For your hands are full of blood;

therefore David saith (Psal. 66:18) If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Thirdly, it is a great judgment, when neither a person nor his works are accepted with God and please him not; when the Lord saith, my soul hath no pleasure in him, and I regard not his praying's, nor his fasting's, nor readings, nor hearings, nor any good he doth: If God regards not thee nor thy good works, how doth he abhor thee and thy wicked works; if he will condemn thee for them, what will he do unto thee for these? Many ignorant superstitious creatures have high thoughts of their good meanings, and of their devout serving of God, and place all their confidence upon them: But when they give up their accounts, they will find that none of these were pleasing to God, nor accepted of him: Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you, saith Christ.

These things being thus premised, I will now show unto you;

1. How a man may so perform his obediencial works, that he may please God, and they may be accepted.
2. How he is to walk in God's Statutes, so, &c.

**1. Case. How a man must perform obediencial works, so that he may please God, and that they may be accepted of God.**

Sol. For this, take these answers.

First, He must be in Christ; It is a sure rule, That the person must be accepted before his works can be accepted: Now no persons are accepted, but so far only as they are in Christ: He hath made us accepted in his beloved, saith the Apostle, Ephes. 1:6. If the Lord

looks on any person as out of Christ, what shall he find him? What shall he behold in him? Nothing but a sinful cursed enemy, an object of his justice and wrath; an offending and offensive, displeasing and provoking creature, and he cannot but loath him, and what comes from him; only in and by Christ doth he look upon us with grace and favor.

Secondly, He must have the Spirit of Christ: For, they that are in the flesh, cannot please God, Rom. 8:8. The Apostle in the precedent verse saith, That the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be: whence he instances in this verse, That they that are in the flesh cannot please God: A wicked unregenerate man defiles every good work which he takes in hand: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Saith Christ, Matth. 7:16. Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit, ver. 17. That of Solomon is pertinent to our purpose, Prov. 15:8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight. And ver. 29. The Lord is far from the wicked, but he heareth prayer of the Righteous. By all which you plainly see that a person must be sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, if he would have services or performances pleasing to God, and accepted of him; if God sees not something of his own work in our works, he accepts them not; but that cannot be unless our work comes from his Spirit within us, &c.

Thirdly, He must worship God in Spirit and in truth; this our Savior delivers in Joh. 4:23. The true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. And ver. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth. A bare external bodily service the Lord utterly dislikes; if the soul and heart come not within our duties, they are of no account to God; Spiritual service is proper for

God who is a Spirit, and this pleaseth him: Rom. 1:9. God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit. Ephes. 6:18. Pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

Fourthly, He must perform all his duties of obedience in Faith; For without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11:6. Now to perform our duties in faith, implies;

1. That we know and discern the will and command of God, concerning the duties which we do perform unto him: This is a certain truth, That what God requires not, that God accepts not: He appoints all the paths of obedience unto the sons of men, and will not be obeyed according to our mind, but according to his own mind; and whatsoever we do, if we do it not with faith (i.e.) being not persuaded that this is that which God requires of us, it shall not be accepted; For Rom. 14:23. Whatsoever is not of Faith, is sin.

2. That we rely upon the grace and strength of Christ, to walk and perform the duties commanded: For without him we can do nothing, Joh. 15:5. It was a good speech of Bernard (upon that passage in Cant. 8:5. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon his beloved?) Frustra nititur, qui non innititur; no good can be done, but by leaning on Christ; from him is the strength of your sufficiency, and not from yourselves.

3. That we offer them up to God in the Name of Christ, resting on his merits, and not on our own duties; on his doings, not on our own doings, and expecting acceptance for his sake: Joh. 14:13. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do. Ver. 14. If ye shall ask anything in my Name, I will do it. Col. 3:17. Whatsoever ye shall do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus. The prayers that were offered up with the incense upon the Altar were pleasing, Rev. 8:3, and came up with acceptance, Ver. 4. The

brethren were kindly used for Benjamin's sake; and David showed respect to lame Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake: All our services and duties are pleasing to God, and accepted of him, not for their own sakes, but for Christ's sake.

4. That whatsoever we do in the way of obedience, let it be done to the glory of God: 1 Cor. 10:31. Do all to the glory of God. For Rom. 11:36. Of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen.

**2. Case. Now I come to show you the choice Rules which do concern us in walking in God's statutes; or the manner how we must walk in them, if, &c.**

Sol. The Rules which I will propound, all of them shall be taken from the Word of God, and they are these.

First, We are to walk in them willingly: As Ephraim is said in a contrary sense to walk willingly after the command, he was not compelled or forced, but freely of his own accord gave up himself unto idolatrous worship: So should we in a true spiritual sense, willingly walk after the commands of God: The willingness of our hearts is all in all in the duties of obedience; and the more of that, the more precious and acceptable is our obedience to God's statutes: 1 Chron. 28:9. And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. q.d. Look well to this, for God takes special notice of this, and looks more at this than anything else: Psal. 110:3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. This is the choice Character of the people of Christ, they shall be a willing people; the word signifies they shall be voluntaries, freely offering themselves, and freely serving without hire and pay; people of a



princely spirit, and magnificent, as if all their acts of obedience were their own free-will offerings. Carnal men are but so many hirelings, they are coacti & serviles; not servi but serviles; men of a slavish spirit, they are forced and driven to their duties out of fear of wrath and punishment, and out of terror of conscience; their hearts like not God, nor his statutes, nor doing of them, they look on spiritual duties as their grievances and burdens: But the people of God are a willing people, they obey and serve him with a willing mind, with a readiness and freeness of Spirit; and well they may, for they do discern and find that in their duties and obedience they have communion with God through Christ; they speak to their God, and their God speaks to them.

**Object. How may one know that he willingly walks in God's statutes?**

Sol, Thus;

1. When he rather chooseth them, than any other ways to walk in; election is an act of the will: Josh. 24:15. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; but I and my house will serve the Lord. Psal. 119:173. I have chosen thy precepts.
2. When our obedience unto them springs from a love of them: Psal. 119:167. My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly; all the service of love is a willing service.
3. When we find a sweetness in them, and in our walking in them: Psal. 119:72. The Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. And ver. 127. I love thy Commandment above gold, yea above fine gold. And ver. 14. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches.

4. When the great desires and requests of his soul are, that God would enable and enlarge his heart to walk in them: O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Psal. 119:5. And teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end, Ver. 33. And give me understanding and I shall keep thy Law, yea I shall observe it with my whole heart, Ver. 24. Make me to go in the paths of thy Commandments, Ver. 35. Incline my heart to thy testimonies, Ver. 36. I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, Ver. 32.

5. When he is not weary of well-doing; but his heart still holds out and is in its element when walking with God, and accounts it a special favor and happiness to maintain communion with God.

Secondly, We should walk in God's statutes seriously, carefully marking what they require of us, and conscientiously endeavoring to conform our lives and actions unto them; David calls this an ordering of our conversations aright, Psal. 50:23. And an ordering his steps in the word; Order my steps in thy word, Psal. 119:133. As an Artificer puts every stone in the building according to rule and line: Or as one who goes in a narrow path 'twixt dangers on either side, he hath a care how he sets his feet: So a Christian should take heed unto his ways, and direct them by the Word; he should set and square them by the rule: Solomon calls this a pondering of our path; Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established; turn not to the right hand nor to the left, Pro. 4:26,27. To ponder, is to weigh and to consider well of what we are about to do, whether it be agreeable or disagreeable to the will of God; what the work or way is, for the nature of it, and scope, and end of it. Thus should we ponder the path of our feet (i.e.) the ways wherein we walk, and all the works we have to do; and have a care that they be established (i.e.) set upon a good foundation, and really allowed by God, and commanded in his

Word; and then we should go on in those ways without swerving to the right hand or to the left: A seriousness of consideration how God would have us to walk, what his will is concerning us, and then a seriousness of observation, conscientiously to do what God would have us to do, and to walk as God would have us to walk; this is the right and acceptable walking in God's statutes.

Now there are four Reasons why we should thus seriously and conscientiously consider the statutes of God, and every step of our walking;

1. Because there is not any step, not any one action or work which we do, but God hath either honor or dishonor by it; for either it is good, or it is evil; either it is conformed unto his will, or it disagrees with his will; if it agrees with his will, this conduceth to his honor; if it doth disagree, then it is evil, and brings dishonor upon him: And should we be serious and conscientious in everything wherein the honor or dishonor of God are concerned?

2. Because there is not one moral work of ours, but it hath our peace, or comfort, or our trouble and discomfort in its hand: Let the good we are bound to do be greater or lesser, if we do conscientiously observe and act it, there will ensue peace of conscience upon the right acting of it; Great peace have they that keep thy Law, saith David, Psal. 119:165. And this is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that we have had our conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity, saith Paul, 2 Cor. 1:12. And so on the contrary, let our wandering or swerving from God's statutes by sinning be never so little, there is enough in that little to disquiet conscience, and to cause trouble unto us: If the foot tread awry but one step (though a man fall not into the

dirt) yet the small irregular motion doth cause much pain: So the irregularity or inconformity of any one action may disquiet conscience, and may cost us a great deal of sorrow and trouble; Ergo.

3. Because every individual work which we do, it is a step to eternity, either to a blessed, or to a cursed eternity: Though men think not of it, yet every motion or action done by them is a step towards eternity: as every step that a traveler takes, brings him forward to his journeys end: When a man walks in paths of righteousness, or in God's statutes, the further he goes, every new step that he takes, brings him nearer to a blessed eternity. And when a man walks in ways of wickedness, every step that he takes, every new commission of sin carries him nearer to a cursed eternity; the more he sins, the nearer he is to hell.

4. Because we must be accountable to God in the day of judgment, even for every work which we do. Eccles. 12:13. Fear God and keep his Commandments. Ver. 14, for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Mark, every good work, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, shall be brought to judgment; there is not any one good work which a godly man doth, but it shall be brought into judgment, and God will recompense and requite it; even the giving of a cup of cold water, shall not lose its reward: And there is not any one evil work which the ungodly man doth, but it shall be brought to judgment, and he shall be punished for it; and God will execute judgment upon all, and convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, Jude ver. 15. Therefore it doth exceedingly concern us, seriously to walk in God's statutes; seriously to consider what he would have us to do, and how we

should walk, and conscientiously to observe, and conform all and every one of our steps and actions of life unto his Word.

Thirdly, We should walk in the statutes of God fully (i.e.) in all ways of obedience commanded us of God; there should be a commensuration twixt our walking and God's commands: Deut. 5:35. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you. Josh. 22:5. Take diligent heed to do the commandments, and the Law which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his Commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul. Jer. 7:23. But this thing commanded I them, saying, obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you. Psal. 119:6. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy Commandments. Luke 1:6. Zechariah and Elizabeth walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless: 1 Tim. 2:12. That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

**Object. But some will object, This is a hard saying; what, walk up to every statute of God! They are very many, and do require so many duties to God and to man; it would make our lives grievous unto us to be thus strictly bound; in some things we could be content, but to walk in all is too strict.**

Sol. I confess it is strict, especially to our corrupt hearts; nay any one Commandment of God, and any one part of obedience thereunto is too grievous and strict for a carnal heart. Put the carnal man (who thus complains, and excepts against full obedience unto all God's

statutes) I say put him upon walking in any one statute or Law of God, and he will grumble against that one as much as against all. e.g.

Put him upon the sanctifying of the Sabbath, tell him he must rest upon that day from all his labors, and that he must set that day apart for God alone, and wholly spend it in holy religious duties public and private; now he cries out, O what a burden and wearisomeness is this! What, no recreations, and no visiting's, and no worldly and vain discourse on that day! What, nothing but praying, and hearing, and reading of the Word, and singing of Psalms, and heavenly meditations, and discourses in our families! Flesh and blood cannot bear this, indeed it cannot; nor shall flesh and blood ever inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 15:50. Again, put a man of a carnal heart but to exercise religious duties in his family, to pray daily, and to read the Word, and to instruct those that do belong to him, and for whom he must give an account to God, the man's heart presently riseth against this, and this is grievous, and he shuffles; it should be done indeed, but I have no leisure, and I have no gifts, or parts to do these works. Beloved, it is a sure truth, that whatsoever a carnal man pretends against universal obedience to all God's statutes, his heart is for no obedience at all, but hath an universal enmity unto all and every Commandment of God.

But now more distinctly to answer the Cavil for partial obedience, and to confirm the Truth for full and Universal obedience, consider these six Particulars.

First, They that are for a partial obedience to God's Commands, and for a walking in some of his statutes only, they do break asunder the Bond and Reason of all obedience: All obedience is to be founded upon the Authority and will of God, because God (who hath authority over all his creatures) doth will and command us to obey his voice, to

walk in his statutes; for this very reason do we stand bound to obey him: And if we do obey him upon this reason, then must we walk in all his statutes, for so hath he commanded us; and if we will not come up to this, but will walk in what statutes of his we please, then do we renounce his will as the obliging reason of our obedience, and do set up our own liking and pleasure as the reason thereof.

Secondly, Nay secondly it tends to plain Atheism: For by the same reason that you slight the will of God in any Commandment; by the same reason you may despise his will in every Commandment, for every Commandment of God is his will, and it is holy and spiritual, and contrary to our sinful lusts, and if this be the reason why such and such Commandments of God will not down with you, then by the same reason none of them must be of authority with you.

Thirdly, It is an audacious charge against God himself, as to his wisdom, or power, or goodness; those statutes of God which you will not come up unto, either they are righteous as the rest, and are good as the rest, or they are not: If they be also righteous and good, why should we not walk in them as in the rest? If they be not righteous and good, O what a blasphemous charge is given against God in prescribing unto him anything that is not righteous and good? And likewise in making his will (which is the rule of righteousness and goodness) to be partly righteous, and partly unrighteous, to be partly good, and partly bad?

Fourthly, There is not any one statute of God, but it is good, and for our good; Ergo we should walk in all his statutes: Deut. 5:25. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you. What one path hath the Lord commanded us to walk in, but as it concerns his own glory, so likewise it concerns our good? Is it not good for us to love

and fear the Lord, and to put our trust in him, and to worship and serve him after his own mind and will, and to honor his glorious Name, and to sanctify his day? How many blessings hath God promised unto such? And to honor our Parents, and forsake all those sins mentioned in the Negative Precepts, &c.

Fifthly, Our hearts must be perfect with the Lord our God: Deut. 18:13. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. And Gen. 17:1. Walk before me, and be thou perfect. Now how can our hearts be said to be perfect with God, if we do prevaricate with him? If in some things we will obey him, and in other things we will not obey him; if we walk in some of his statutes, but will not walk in all his statutes; if in some part we will be his servants, and in other parts of our lives we will be the servants of sin.

Sixthly, Lastly, Either we must endeavor to walk in all the statutes of God, or else we must find some dispensation and toleration from God, to free us, and excuse us, and hold us indemnified, though we do not walk in all of them; now what one Commandment is there from obedience whereunto God excuseth any man? Or will not punish him for the neglect of obedience unto it: The Apostle saith, That whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all, Jam. 2:10. (i.e.) If he prevaricates with God as to any one particular Commandment of his, his heart is naught, he is guilty of all, he hath really no regard of any of the rest of God's Laws. Therefore for the Lord's sake, consider of this all of you that hear me this day, and let your souls be humbled within you for your loose and unfaithful walking in God's statutes: One will not pray, another will swear, another will not set up religious duties in his family, another will not keep the Sabbath day holy, another will cheat and over-reach his neighbor, another will lie and speak evil, and



back-bite, &c. Is this to walk in all the statutes of God? Is this fully to walk in all his ways, &c.

**Object. But it is impossible for any man on earth to walk in all God's statutes, and fully to do his will.**

Sol. I answer, there is a twofold walking in all the statutes of God;

First, One is Legal, when all is done which God requireth; and all is done as God requireth; There is not any one path of duty, but we do walk in it perfectly and continually; thus no man on earth doth, or can walk in all God's statutes, or fully do what he commandeth; for in many things we offend all: it was but a proud, vain self-delusion in that young man who said, All these things have I kept from my youth.

Secondly, Another is Evangelical; which is such a walking in all the statutes of God, and keeping of them, as is in Christ accepted of, and accounted of as if we did keep them all, (this walking in all God's statutes, and keeping of them all, and doing of them all, it is not only possible, but it is also actual in every freely believing and repenting person) and it doth consist in these Particulars.

1. In the approbation of all the statutes and Commandments of God: Rom. 7:12. The Commandment is holy, and just, and good. Ver. 16. I consent unto the Law that it is good. Psal. 119:128. I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right.

2. In a conscientious submission unto the authority of all the statutes of God: Every one of them hath an authority within his heart, and over his heart, he stands in awe of every one of them, and hath a spiritual regard unto them all: Psal. 119:6. I have respect unto all thy Commandments.

3. In a real delight in all the statutes or Commandments of God: Psal. 119:47. I will delight myself in thy Commandments which I have loved.

4. In a cordial desire to walk in them all: Psal. 119:8. I will keep thy statutes; and O that my ways were, &c. the desire of our soul is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee.

5. In a sincere endeavor to keep them all; a man doth put out himself in all the ways and parts of obedience; he doth not willingly and wittingly slight or neglect any Commandment, but is striving to conform himself thereunto: As a dutiful son doth to all his Fathers commands, so your right Christian makes conscience, &c.

**Quest. But here it may be demanded, Whether we must show an equal respect unto all God's statutes and precepts; and do sin, if we do show more respect to some of God's Commandments, than unto others of them?**

Sol. This being granted that we must show respect unto all God's statutes; I answer, that it is not necessary, nor are we bound to express the same equal respect to all God's Commandments. For although all the Commandments of God be equal in respect of authority and Sovereignty of the commands, yet in respect of the things commanded or forbidden, and in respect of the strictness of the charge laid upon us for the doing or not doing of them, some are greater than others: Matth. 22:36. Master (said the Lawyer to Christ) which is the great Commandment in the Law? Ver. 37. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Ver. 38. This is the first and great Commandment. 1 Sam. 15:22. And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the

voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams. Matth. 9:13. Go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

**Quest. Which of God's Commandments should we have most special care to walk in, or to observe?**

Sol. I humbly conceive, that our special care should be;

First, Of those which do principally and immediately respect God's Glory: Summa ratio in summo fine.

Secondly, Of those which do most absolutely and necessarily respect our own salvation; as Regeneration, Repentance, Holiness, Faith.

Thirdly, Of those which are the bond and sinews of all Religion, upholding it in the power and practice of it; as the sanctifying of the Sabbath.

Fourthly, Of those which do most concern ourselves, and such as are under our charge; as family-duties.

Fifthly, Of those which do require and enjoin righteousness and mercy unto others, and preserve public society.

Sixthly, Of those which do concern the greater sins which should be most carefully avoided.

Fourthly, we should walk in God's statutes, and keep, and do them affectionately; we should affect the acts of obedience, and be affected in them; Suppose that a man did walk up to every statute of God, yet if this were not done affectionately, all were nothing. Now there are

four affections with which we should perform every service or duty that we do unto God.

1. Love and delight. 2ly. Joy. 3ly. Fear. 4ly. Zeal.

First, With Love and Delight: We must love the Lord and his statutes, and the duties which he requires from us, and take delight in obeying, and doing his will: Psal. 119:97. O how I love thy Law! Ver. 167. My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly. Psal. 40:8. I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart.

Secondly, With joy and alacrity: Psal. 119. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches. Psal. 100:2. Serve the Lord with gladness. Our walking in God's statutes should be our meat and drink; we should find more satisfaction, and soul contentment, and refreshing when we are doing the will of God, and are enjoying communion with him, than we do find or take in any earthly enjoyment whatsoever.

Thirdly, With fear: Serve the Lord with fear, Psal. 2:11, when ye are a performing any duty to God, ye must do it with a;

1. Reverential fear: Thou shalt fear this glorious and fearful Name, the Lord thy God, Deut. 28:58. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the Saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him, Psal. 89:7. Pray and hear with fear and trembling.

2. Humble fear of our own sufficiency, and of our own performance, left anything should fall in with our duties by which God may be offended, and our service of him may miscarry, &c.

Fourthly, With zeal, or fervor of spirit: The people of God must be zealous of good works, and zealous in good works; fervent in spirit serving the Lord, Rom. 12:11. It was said of Jehoshaphat, that his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, 2 Chron. 17:6. And of Josiah that he made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes with all his heart, and with all his soul, &c. 2 Chron. 34:31. See also 2 King. 23:25. Wrestling and striving in Prayer, attend earnestly in hearing: We must not walk in God's statutes with careless, slothful, indifferent spirits, but with heightened, and lively, and enlarged spirits, doing his will with all our might and strength, bringing out all the might and power that we have in his service, stir up our graces and our hearts.

Fifthly, We should walk in God's statutes uprightly and sincerely: Gen. 17:1. Walk before me and be thou upright. And 1 Kin. 3:6. David my Father walked before thee in truth and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee. Isa. 38:3. Remember now O Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, &c. 2 Cor. 1:12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.

**Quest. But here now is the great Question, how one may know that he walks uprightly in God's statutes?**

Sol. There are five discoveries of this.

First, The prevalent motive which alone sufficeth to his obedience, and that is the will or command of God; if a man be upright, and walk with an upright heart, then he will, and doth act and move upon the sole account of God's command; that alone is reason enough and will prevail with him for obedience. There are several Motives which

induce men to do good works; some do respect ourselves, and are drawn from a respect to our credit, and profit, as do such a work, and perform such a duty, and you shall have honor amongst men by it, and you shall gain much by it; these considerations are the prevailing Motives which men of unsound hearts to some things which God requires, as it was with Jehu, &c. And some are drawn from God himself, only from his Commandment, and this is sufficient, and this prevails with men of upright heart: Psal. 119:4. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. Ver. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Mark how his heart is drawn out to obedience upon the mere command of God: Thou hast commanded us, &c. Isa. 2:3. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. Mark, there is no more considered to move to walk in his paths than this, he will teach us of his ways (i.e.) he will make us to know that this or that is his will and command concerning us. Paul relates that it was the earnest prayer of Epaphras for the Colossians, that they might stand perfect, and be filled with all the will of God, Col. 4:12. It is not Compleri, but Repleri, *πεπληρωσθαι*: Some look upon that word as Metaphorical (to be filled with the will of God) as the sails of a ship are filled with wind, which is enough to carry the ship in voyage; so it is enough when the will of God fills our hearts, and that carries them out to duty; and David hath a singular expression in Psal. 119:6. When I have respect unto all thy Commandments; you know that to have a respect unto a thing, is this, when that of all other sways most with us, as when a Master commands a servant, he will do such a business, because he respects him, and at his command he will go and come, though he will not at the command of any other; this was David's temper, he had respect to God's Commandments; they had authority over him, he had a regard to them; therefore consider well what is the Motive which induces you to pray, to hear, to do any other good duty; is it God's

will or Commandment alone? If it be not so, you walk not, you act not uprightly.

**Object. But will some reply, This is something difficult to discern, forasmuch as God's command and our own interests may meet, they may concur sometimes in some actions to be done; and now it will be hard to know whether we act upon the command of God alone.**

Sol. There are two things which show that it is God's command alone which sets us on to our duties.

1. When there is no reward or external encouragement presented to set us on to the performance of duties.
2. When our hearts hold on and set upon the duties amidst all dangers and discouragements, and to our own external prejudice, as Moses was obedient with afflictions.

Secondly, The simplicity of the end; when a man doth sincerely serve the Lord, or walk uprightly in his statutes, he doth (in all the good actions done by him) look at God's glory; he doth them not for self ends, to advance or exalt himself; but he doth them with a single respect to God's glory, to exalt and lift up his Name: As Paul spake, We preach not out ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, 2 Cor. 4:5, we propound not, we intend not the honor of our gifts, and abilities, and pains, but the honor of Jesus Christ; and as he spake in Phil. 1:20. That Christ may be magnified: Thus is it with every man who walks uprightly, and does things with an upright heart; he doth in all his ways seek and intend the praise and honor of God, and not himself; I seek not myself saith the Apostle, I seek not my own profit: 1 Cor. 10:33. And none of us liveth to himself, and none of us dieth

unto himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord, Rom. 14:7.

On the contrary, they that walk hypocritically with a false heart, they do set up themselves and not God, Hose. 10:1. Israel is an empty vine bringing forth fruit unto himself, Matth. 6:1. &c. They gave alms, prayed, fasted to be seen of men. A carnal man, so that he may enjoy his own safety, liberty, ease, profit, he cares not what becomes of God's glory; let the Gospel sink or swim, let the Ministry perish, let a Nation be brought to confusion, let the Ordinances of Christ, and truth of Christ be contemned and destroyed, let all wherein God's honor or glory are concerned, be trod underfoot, he cares not, for he respects himself and not God, &c.

Thirdly, The singleness of the path: when a man walks in God's statutes uprightly, his path of walking is only the way of God's Commandments; he hath no other path but that, but one God, and but one mercy, and but one heart: Isa. 26:7. The way of the just is uprightness. Psal. 139:23. Search me O Lord, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts. Ver. 24, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. The way or path of every man is not that particular action or work, but it is his general and habitual course of life, and that is (to him that walks uprightly) the course of holiness and righteousness.

Fourthly, I might add other Characters, but I shall pass them over; only take one more, and that is Diligence; He who walks uprightly in God's statutes, doth walk in them heartily and diligently; he gives up his heart, and life, and desire, and care, and strength to do the will of God, to serve him, to obey him: this is his great business, the main work that he hath to do, and he doth it with all his heart, and with all his soul; not negligently, and carelessly, as a servant doth eye-



service: he doth not slubber over duties, as if any were good enough for God; he knows that cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord negligently, Jer. 47:10. He is very intent, and taken up with the work which God commands, not only to do, but so to do it, as may be most pleasing to God, and conducing to his glory, when he prays, hears, receives the Sacrament, &c.

And cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. - Ezek. 36:27.

I Have finished the first Proposition from these Words, viz. That even the people of God within his Covenant of grace are to walk in God's statutes, &c. I now come unto the second Proposition, viz.

## **CHAP. XIV.**

2. Doct. That the people of God are to make progress, to proceed on, to continue, and persevere all their days in an obediential observation of God's statutes: (Ye shall walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, &c.)

To walk in God's statutes is a Metaphorical expression, taken from those who do walk in a journey, who are still moving on in their path or way from place to place, until they come to their journeys end: So the people of God, they are not only to enter into the way of obedience, but they must hold on their whole life, they must go from strength to strength, from step to step, until they come unto the end of their life: Job 17:9. The righteous shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

A threefold continuance is required of our obedience.

First, For the matter; still doing the work of our Master, ordering all our steps by his Word; exalting his rule, keeping to his paths, not weary, wandering or revolting.

Secondly, For the manner, not abating or decaying at any time; in;

1. Our integrity of intention.
2. Our loveliness of affection.
3. Our diligence of action.
4. Our watchfulness of observation.
5. Our forwardness and delight.
6. Strictness in our obedience.
7. In our valor and resolution.

Although we do not meet with;

1. Much intrinsical opposition.
2. Much extrinsical discouragement and dangers, yet still to hold on; none of these things move me, said Paul, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, Acts 20:24, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness to Canaan.

Thirdly, In a further advancing, as to our graces, and as to our services, being more zealous, more steadfast, more abounding in the work of the Lord; bringing forth more fruit in our old age: Prov. 4:18.

The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The sun riseth in the morning, and it holds on its motion or course until it comes to the height: And so the just man goes on in his course, further and further, until he comes to perfection, which is his end and rest. The Apostle calls this the running of a Race, 1 Cor. 9:24, and Heb. 12:1. Let us run the Race which is set before us: when men do run a race they make no stop or stay, but they are still passant in their motion, never rest until they come unto the goal for, &c. Therefore he saith of himself, that he was following after it, Phil. 3:12. And reaching forth, ver. 13. And pressing forward, ver. 14. So David, Psal. 119:33. Teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, and I will keep it unto the end. And ver. 44. I will keep thy statutes continually, forever and ever. Ver. 112. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always even unto the end. We read of Job, (that upright man, who feared God, and eschewed evil) that he offered Sacrifice and Burnt-offerings for his sons, and thus did Job continually, Job 1:5. The same we say of our obedience to God's Statutes; it is not a transient work, but it is a continued course; it is not the work of a day, or of a year, but it is the work of a life; we must serve God in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our life, Luk. 1:74,75.

Now I will give you some Reasons why they should do so, why they should continue and persevere unto the end in doing the will God, in walking in his statutes.

The Reasons are these.

First, The Bond of the Covenant twixt God and them, wherein there is, 1. A mutual Agreement. 2. The date of the Agreement. The Agreement is that God will be their God, And that they will be his people: God will be theirs, and they will be his: They will serve him

and he will bless them. The date of this Agreement is Everlasting, I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, I will never turn away from them to do them good, and I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall never depart from me: Jer. 32:40. Psal. 48:14. This God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.

Hence I infer two things.

1. If the Relation 'twixt God and his people doth still continue, then the obligation still continues; if they do still own him for their God, they must still obey and serve him as their God.
2. If the Covenant takes hold of God to bless them and do them good, it doth by the same reason take hold on them still to serve and obey their God: It were absurd to think that the obligation should be only on God's part, and not on our part; or that it should be at all times on God's part to do us good, and only at some time on our part to do him service.

There are three things considerable in the Statutes or Commands of God.

1. There is a Breadth in them; for they are many and do require manifold duties, and our hearts and lives must have a respect unto them all.
2. There is a Height in them; they are Laws of perfection, and we should strive to come up fully unto them, to the utmost of them.
3. There is a Length in them, they extend in their Authority and power from the first day of life to the last minute of breath; and our obedience unto them should be constant unto them: saith

the Apostle Rom. 7:2. The woman that hath an husband, is bound by the Law to her husband so long as he liveth: So say the people of God who are in Covenant with him and take him for their Lord and Husband, they are bound to obey his laws, and walk in his statutes prescribed to them as long as the husband lives, at least as long as they shall live. Thus you see that the people of God are to hold on and to continue unto the end in the duties of obedience; it must be the work of their whole life to walk in God's statutes.

Secondly, The force of God's Law: The moral law of God (for of that I only speak) it is an Eternal law, it is not Temporary, and Cessant, set up to be of force for a time only: No, it is a fixed and standing Rule, and hath authority over us, not for some part of our life, but for all the days of our life: and we are to order not only some part of our conversations, but our whole conversations according unto it; order my steps in thy word, Psal. 119:133. We do find that the laws or Commandments of God, some of them are affirmative, and some of them are negative; the affirmative do bind us Semper, and the negative do bind us Semper & ad Semper. There is no time dispensed with to sin against God, no time to take the Name of God in vain, no time to commit adultery, no time to kill or steal, &c.

And though the affirmative precepts do not bind us at all times as to particular acts, yet they do still bind us to some acts of obedience: As though God will at sometimes dispense with sacrifice, yet then it is in case of mercy: As if a fire should break out on the Sabbath day, God suffers us to omit his own worship; but this is that we might observe him in acts of mercy at this time: Well then! The Law of God is never out of date, and therefore our obedience should be never out of date. This Command lies upon us for our whole life, and therefore obedience lies upon us for our whole life.

Thirdly, There is still an imperfection upon us, and therefore still there is need of further obedience. Take me the best Christian on earth, there is still imperfection upon him; and there is nothing which he doth, but still he may do it better. He doth not so believe on God, but he needs still to believe, and still to believe better. He doth not so love his God, but he needs still to love his God, and to love him more. He doth not so sanctify a Sabbath, but he needs still to keep the Sabbath day holy, and to keep it more holy. He doth not so pray and hear and mourn, but he needs still to pray and hear, and to pray and hear better. He doth not so mortify his sins, and reform his heart and life, but he needs every day to be mortifying his sinful lusts, and reforming and mending his heart more and more, further and further. Artificers who are building of a house, they have work enough every day for them to do, until the house be finished: So the Christian who is building up for Heaven, he hath work still to do until he comes to heaven; he is not perfect, nor are his works perfect, he is but doing, he hath not done his work till he hath done his life. 4. Progressive and continued obedience, that is the true and right obedience; that is the obedience.

1. Which comes indeed from love of God: A friend (saith Solomon) loves at all times: They who do truly love their God, will still obey their God:

2. Which comes from the Law written in the heart, set up there, and delighted in there.

3. Which as it agrees wholly with God's will, so it tends altogether to God's glory: God hath more dishonor by the Apostate who turns away from the Commandments, then ever he had honor by his temporary walking in the Commandments.

A faithful Christian who walks with God all his days, his whole life brings glory to God.

4. Which God delights in: he takes pleasure in it; the upright are his delight; And he loves the faithful, but if any man draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him. Heb. 10:38.

5. Which God will Reward, Rev. 2:10. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Math. 10:22. He that continueth unto the end shall be saved. It is a pious expression of Chrysostom, Non cepisse, but perfecisse, virtutis est; Nec incipientibus sed perseverantibus Corona tribuitur.

6. Which answers to the obedience of Christ; Christ's obedience was Satisfactory, and herein we cannot imitate him: and his obedience was exemplary, a pattern for our obedience, and herein we are to imitate him.

And there are three things in his obedience, to which our obedience should be answerable. 1. Willingness and readiness. 2. Fulness. 3. Steadfastness until he had finished the work which his father gave him to do: And thus should we do, not only begin, but also finish and work to the end. 2. Tim. 4:7. I have finished my course, said Paul.

We should persevere or continue our obedience unto the end, still walk on in God's Statutes; because of that exceeding loss which will befall us, if we should give over our obedience, and turn away from God's Statutes.

There are three unspeakable losses which will follow to Apostates, who break off with God in duties of obedience.

First, A Loss of Honor: Saith Christ to the Church of Philadelphia, Rev. 3:11. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown: Intimating that the Crown were lost (which is the greatest dignity, and honor, and reputation) if she were not steadfast; Demas hath forsaken us, and embraced this present world; what a dishonor was this to Demas? The Apostle Peter speaking of Apostates who turned away from the holy Commandments delivered unto them. 2 Pet. 2:21. That it is happened unto them according to the proverb, the Dog is turned to his vomit again, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: What a shame is it to be like a dog, or a sow? &c.

Secondly, A Loss of all the Duties and good works that hitherto they have done. Apostates make shipwreck, 1. Of Faith. 2. Of Conscience. 3. Of all their former obedience: All the Prayers which they have made are lost; and all their Hearings are lost; and all their Religious services and performances. Ezek. 18:24. When the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned, and in his sins that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

Thirdly, A Loss of their Souls and Happiness. Apostates lose all their hopes of Heaven; there are dreadful places for the proof of this. Isa. 1:28. They that forsake the Lord shall be consumed. 2. Chron. 24:20. Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. Heb. 10:26. If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin. Ver. 27, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.



Sixthly, We cannot be better employed then in a constant and continued walking in God's Statutes: It is an employment like that in Heaven. This is indeed to live, and rightly to improve life; It is the Honor of life, and Comfort and Safety of life.

First, Our Honor; saith David, Psal. 16:8. I have set the Lord always before me. And Psal. 73:23. I am continually with thee. Fidelity in service is an honor to any man, much more in his service unto God.

Secondly, Our Comfort. Psal. 106:3. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doth righteousness at all times. Upright and constant obedience brings in a revenue of constant peace in confidence thereof, and affords unto us a constant confidence towards God. Psal. 119:165, Isa. 32:17. The work of righteousness shall be peace. 1 Joh. 3:21. If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God: Ver. 22. And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, q.d. we keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

Thirdly, Our Safety. You are never more safe then when you are in God's way: The path of obedience is the path of Safety. Prov. 13:6. Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way, but wickedness overthroweth the sinner. 16:17. He that keepeth his way preserveth his soul: 19:16. He that keepeth the Commandments, keepeth his own soul: But he that despiseth his ways shall die. Eccle. 8:5. Whose keepeth the Commandments shall see no evil things. But look on the very employment of life in the whole course of it, can it be better employed or spent then in an obediential walking with God? There cannot be a better master then

God, nor a more choice employment of our life than in his service: Communion with God is our happiness in this life, and in the life to come. Psal. 84:1. How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of hosts! Ver. 2. My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. Ver. 3. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee. Ver. 10. A day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, &c.

Seventhly, The further you proceed in walking in the paths of God's Commandments, the better you shall find it to walk in them.

There are four things which may demonstrate this:

1. Because the farther that you proceed in the ways of God, the clearer knowledge you shall attain to, both of God and of his ways; the more we do obey him, the better we shall know him, and love him, and be beloved of him. Joh. 14:21. He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.

2. Because the further we proceed in the ways of God, the further testimony shall we have from conscience that our hearts are upright. There is (you know) much of our happiness or unhappiness, in the testimony of conscience; and upright walking gives a great advantage unto conscience to speak on our behalf. Psal. 119:1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord, and ver. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and seek him with the whole heart. Now affectionate walking, and steadfast walking, do show that our hearts are upright in walking.

3 Because the farther we do proceed in walking in God's statutes, the more sweet and heavenly experiences shall our souls meet with. Still you meet with promises, but if you make farther progress, you shall meet with the fruits and effects of those promises. Psal. 25:10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenants and his testimonies.

4. Because the further that you do proceed to walk in God's Statutes, the nearer you are to the journeys end, and to the crown of life: It is but one style more, and then I am at my fathers house; but a few steps more, and then Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Math. 25:21.

Thus you see the point demonstrated; that the people of God are to make progress; they are to move on, they are to persevere all their days in the path of obedience or in walking in God's Statutes.

True, will some say, thus they should do; but who of them ever did thus? There are none of them but we find them some time or other out of the way.

I Answer.

First, Although it be so, yet it should not be so; all their steps should be in the ways of life.

But Secondly, All that are sincere, they do so, they are still walking on in the Statutes of God. I told you lately, that particular actions do not denominate any estate; it is the course of actions which doth denominate our walking. Though a wicked man doth sometimes a particular good, yet this man still walks in his iniquities, because the course of his life is spent in the path of sin. So though a good man, doth sometimes a particular evil, yet this man may be said still to

walk on in the Statutes of God, because that path takes up his course of life. When a man is traveling a journey, though he doth sometimes stumble and fall into the dirt, yet he is said to be a traveler, and to go on in his journey, because he lies not in the dirt, but gets up and away he goes; so &c.

Thirdly, The aberrations of weakness do not nullify or evacuate a continued progress in walking: Infirmities God passeth by, and puts them not into the account. Now therefore things which show that the deviations of God's people are the fruits only of weakness:

1. One is, that they do principally depend upon the subtlety and sudden power of Satan's temptations.
2. A Second is, that they would not do any evil: The evil that I would not do, I do, saith Paul.
3. A Third is, their cries, and tears, and complaints: They are in this particular like the lost Sheep, or a lost Child.
4. A Fourth is, that they must and do return into the right way again.

#### SECT. I.

Should the people of God walk in God's Statutes (i.e.) make progress in them, and move forward and hold on, and persevere in the obedience of them all the days of their life? Against this duty four sorts of men deeply offend; e.g. 1. All Inconstant Professors. 2. All Declining Professors. 3. All Non-Proficients. 4. Especially all Revolvers, and Apostates.

First, All Inconstant Professors; to whom that may be applied, spoken of in Hosea 6:4. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee! O Judah, what shall I do unto thee! For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. You have many Professors like unto Ephraim and Judah, who in their distresses inquired early after God; they take up duties, and then they will pray and hear, and reform, and obey the voice of the Lord: O how many hollow-hearted Christians are there who in their sickness and troubles of Conscience, and outward straits and fears, will seek unto the Lord and serve him, and walk in his ways; but as soon as fears, and straits, and sickness, and dangers are off, they fall presently from God, and from his ways, and from walking in his Statutes! The sun consumes the morning cloud, and dries up the early dew: So when ease and prosperity and safety appears, then an end of praying, of mourning, of repenting, of doing for God and walking in his ways.

Secondly, All Declining and luke-warm Professors: Such I mean that have been forward, and high and zealous in holy duties; but they are fallen low, and flat, and careless, and negligent of them. The time was that they were full of cares and desires, and of spiritual fervor and vigor: O how they have prized the ordinances! How did they abound in duties of obedience! How much of their time did they lay out in meditation, in praying, in reading, in hearing in reforming themselves, in instructing their families, in watching over themselves and their ways! O they durst not neglect their duty, any opportunity, nor come near any iniquity. But now the case is altered with them, there is not that fear of God in them, nor tenderness of conscience, nor forwardness of obedience; their wine is turned into water, and their fervor into deadness; they have no regard, nor mind, nor heart to walk at all in God's Statutes and ways; they shut up the Church doors, and cast away Bibles, and renounce all duties, regard not

Scripture, regard not ordinances, regard not duties: O the Lord work upon thine heart in time, for thou regardest not thine own soul.

Thirdly, All Formal Non-proficiency; such I mean who keep still to their circle, and move like a horse in a mill; so much as they have taken upon them of Religion, so much they will stick unto; they will neither abate nor rise, neither go backward nor go forward, they know enough already: Some outward duties they do: but if you will press them a jot higher, then you are precise; you cannot possibly persuade them to proceed on to humble their heart, to mortify their lusts, to yield to God in inward sanctity, &c.

Fourthly, But above all they offend most, who turn Apostates and Revolters; who like Hymenaeus and Alexaender, make shipwreck of faith and a good Conscience.

1 Tim. 1:19,20. Or like the Galatians, begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh. Galatians 3:3. Or like those in Peter, who after that they knew the way of righteousness, did turn away from the holy Commandments delivered unto them. 2 Pet. 2:21. Beloved, there are three sorts of men in the world.

1. Some never would endure to look or walk in God's Statutes, but resolve to walk in their own sinful ways; these are profane Atheists.
2. Some will take upon them to walk in God's Statutes so far as consists with their own ways and lusts; these are hypocrites.
3. Some make an entrance and a little progress, but do after a while renounce them, and fall off to their own lusts.

Now here give me leave to open three things unto you.

1. The principal cause, why some men hold not on in walking in God's Statutes, but break off and turn Apostates.
2. Their great sin in so doing.
3. The great danger and judgment.

1. The principal cause why, &c.

First, The Spiritual strictness which they do meet with in God's Statutes, which they did not pre-consider, and which their loose hearts cannot bear. It is with many professors as it is with many lazy and idle servants, who frame unto themselves a reputation and benefit to be in such and such great men's families, but meeting there with diligent and constant pains, they presently give up their place and service. So many Christians fancy unto themselves, an easy obedience to God, and think that any kind of serving God will suffice, but when they come to find that God will not be pleased with easy and formal performances, but he will be served in Spirit and in truth, that we must mortify every sinful lust, and that we must seek and serve him with our whole heart, and come up to all the duties of obedience, though crossing our profits and delights; now they complain and murmur, as they in Joh. 6. This is a hard saying, and turn away from the Commandments, as too heavy a yoke for them to bear, rather liking their old ways of wickedness and looseness.

Secondly, Secret Hypocrisy of heart, this is another cause why men do not continue and persevere in the way of obedience, but do revolt and fall off. Job 27:10. Will the Hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God? Sometimes he will call upon God, but always he will not, for his delight is not in God.

There are four things in every Hypocrite:

1. His sinful heart was never changed by Grace.
2. His Soul was never mortified to all sin.
3. His Heart could never comply with all which God requires.
4. He never did Obey God out of love to God, intending only the Glory of God, but still had an eye unto himself, seeking his own praise and advantage in the world.

And every one of these is a sufficient ground of revolting; and what principle is there of perseverance in the ways of God, where no grace at all is planted in the heart? Is it possible that the Commandments of God should be sure of us, when sin hath the dominion over us? Or can he hold out in obedience, whose heart did never like obedience? And of necessity his heart must break with God, who doth prefer himself before God.

Thirdly, External Difficulties and troubles: The Apostle saith, that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. 3:12. We may say of walking in the way of God's Statutes, what they spake to Paul of the way of Christianity, it is everywhere spoken against. Acts 28:22. There is no traveler in the way to Heaven, but shall meet with barking curs, with many scoffs, reproaches, contempt's, indignities, injuries, hazards, losses: But many men neither can, nor will suffer these things: they set a higher value upon their own names, and ease, and liberty, and plenty and safety, than on their Souls and God's Commandments. When the young man heard of selling all, and taking up the cross, and following of Christ, he took his leave of Christ, and of the way to Heaven. Many travelers are taken from their journey when foul weather appears, although they were forward when the sun did shine forth, &c.



Fourthly, Sordid unbelief; There are three things which some men do not believe.

1. That the way of obedience is a necessary path to life.
- 2 At least, that much obedience, and constant or continued obedience is that path; some little service, for a little time (if men have any to spare) perhaps is; but to spend a whole life in holy walking, &c.
3. That God is true in his promises of protection and benediction, in case of conscientious and constant obedience; they do verily think that by this course they shall be losers: If they did not sometimes work and sell on the Sabbath day, why they should lose their custom; and if they should deny visits on that day, they should displease their friends, &c.

O these unbelieving hearts of ours! Not without cause said the Apostle, Heb. 3:12. Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Tell men seriously who is the God of blessings, and God of mercies; in whose power is it to make great. Is it not God who blesseth, and the man shall be blessed? And who curseth, and the man shall be cursed? And read you not expressly of his blessings promised to the obedient, and his curses to the disobedient? And is not God faithful in his promises, and true in his threatening's? Hadst thou faith, God should have better obedience; and didst thou give to God more upright and steadfast obedience, God would give unto thee more plentiful and abundant blessings: If thou couldst say that latter part with David, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, then mayst thou confidently say with him, Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Psal. 23:6.

2ly. Their great sin in Revolting, and giving over walking in God's Statutes.

There is a Question which I have read somewhere of Infidels, and Heretics, and Apostates, which of them do sin more heinously? And it is Resolved, that the Apostate is the greatest sinner of them: defection is a greater sin, then the negation of subjection; because in defection or Apostasy,

1. More of God is rejected, and the Apostate sins more against God;
2. Having received the knowledge of God and his ways.
3. And likewise breaks asunder more bonds which lay upon him to continue his obedience.

And indeed the Apostle speaking of Apostates, delivers three things concerning them, which do set out their sins unto amazement, Heb. 6:6.

First, One is, that its impossible to renew them again unto repentance: How great is that sin which doth so harden the hearts of men, that he doth never repent of it, nay can never repent of it, nay that it is impossible to renew him again to repentance!

A Second is, that they crucify to themselves the Son of God; they deal with Christ as the Jews did, who rejected and crucified him: O what a sin is this to crucify the Son God, and to crucify him a fresh, to pierce his heart and to shed his blood the second time!

The third is, that they put him to open shame; they themselves do put a reproach and contempt upon Christ, and cause others so to do; as if Christ were not a master fit to be followed, and his ways were

not worth our regarding, and that the poor world and our base sins are rather to be regarded and embraced, and followed then the Lord Jesus, and his precepts, and his ways. And take one thing more; that never did any fall off, or turn away from walking in God's statutes, but he grew far more wicked then ever he was before, and likewise a desperate enemies to the ways of God.

3ly. Their great danger and judgment.

This I shall show unto you in three Particulars.

First, Revolters or Apostates are judicially given up to the great power of Satan: The Lord doth in his just judgment give them over unto Satan that he should rule them, and that they should be his sworn servants who will break off with God, and refuse to serve him any longer: Mat. 12:44. That unclean spirit returned unto his house from whence he came out. Ver. 45, and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and enter they in and dwell there, and the last estate of that man is worse than the first.

Secondly, They are judicially given up to the power of their sinful lusts, they grow worse and worse; they having cast away the cords, and all fear of God there is no wickedness but they are ready to obey it, and they do now go on in their daring ways of bold profaneness with seared consciences.

Thirdly, They are judiciously given up to the powers of damnation; therefore it is said that they draw back unto perdition, Heb. 10:39. And the soul of God hath no pleasure in them, Ver. 38. O what a dreadful condition is this, to forsake the path of life and heaven, and to turn back to walk in the path of death and Hell!

Fourthly, They are many times (in their life) given up to exceeding terrors of conscience and despair: You may read this in Judas, who turned back, and what horror did that poor creature fall into? He forsook his Master, and left the path of life for a few pieces of silver, but what got he by this! He leapt out of the ship into the Sea, he could never meet with rest or peace afterwards, but conscience brake in pieces, and did so pursue him with guilt and terror, that thereupon he fell into absolute despair, and made an end of himself: The like you read of Spira, who revolted from the truth, and the path of Evangelical obedience after clear convictions, and secret warnings of Conscience; but what befell him? O he presently fell into terror of conscience and despair, and never could recover the least hopes of mercy to his dying day.

Fifthly, They are many times punished by some extraordinary judgment here on earth: Take an instance in Israel and Judah, they gave up to walk any longer in God's statutes and ways, they forsook God and his Laws, and what came of this? Why, God forsook them, and gave them up to their own heart's lusts, and at last overthrew them with an utter destruction, and scattered them over the face of the earth. So you read of Joash, who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the Priest, 2 Chron. 24:2. But afterwards, Ver. 18. He left the house of the Lord and served Groves and Idols; but what befell him for this? You read of two great judgments that did befall him, one in verse 24. That the Syrians came in with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a great Host into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord; so they executed judgment against Joash: The other is in ver. 25. His servants conspired against him, and slew him.

## SECT. II.

2. Use. Should the people of God continue, proceed on, and persevere in walking in God's statutes? Then you who are the people of God, give me leave to offer unto you

1. A few Cautions about your walking.
2. A few exhortations concerning our walking.
3. A few encouragements for your walking (continued walking) in God's statutes.

### 1. The Cautions about your walking.

You see that it is your duty to walk on, to proceed, to persevere in walking in God's statutes; therefore take heed unto yourselves and beware of four things.

First, Beware of slothfulness and carelessness at any time in doing the will of God, or in walking in his ways: Rom. 12:11. Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. When a man doth a business slothfully, he doth it with a slight spirit, he doth not put out himself, not his strength, he hath no care in doing of it, he doth it not with a serious and diligent spirit, but remissly, and indifferently, as one not affected about what he doth, nor addicted unto it; saith the Apostle, Heb. 6:11. We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence unto the end. And Ver. 12. That ye be not slothful. Here he opposeth diligence unto slothfulness, &c.

Now there are these Reasons why you should beware of slothfulness in any act of obedience, or in any work which God commands you.

1. Because it is the work of God; a work that the great God enjoins you, and in which his eye is upon you; will not the servant eye and mind his work when his master commands, and his Masters eye is upon him?

2. Because it is a work for God; it is to be done not only with a respect of congruity as may best answer his will, but also with a respect of sincerity, as may best advance his glory; should we be slothful, negligent, careless, indifferent in any work of such a nature wherein we are employed of God? &c.

3. Because you do but lose time; little or nothing will be done if you be slothful; Solomon saith in Prev. 18:9. He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster: the great waster brings a fair estate to nothing; so a slothful person brings a good work to nothing; at best, your work can never be well done if you do it with a slothful heart.

4. Because in all holy working and walking you still go forward: Psal. 24:3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Sin still remains and works strongly against us; so doth the world, and Satan, and unbelief, and carnal fear, and arguments against tide and wind; and you will be carried back if you be remiss and slothful; any difficulty that you meet with will discourage you, and take you off; difficulties and oppositions you will meet with, and they will prevail if you be slothful: Prov. 15:19. The way of a slothful man is as an hedge of thorns, but the way of the righteous man is made plain: (i.e.) when a slothful man is to do a work, there is still some rub or offense in the way, and he cannot carry it on, but finds it too sharp and painful and troublesome; whereas were his heart righteous, his way would be plain, it would appear more free, and open, and easy: Prov.

22:13. The slothful man saith There is a Lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

5. Because you will never be able to held out in walking in God's statutes, but will certainly revolt and apostate if you give way to slothfulness; indeed an accidental slothfulness may befall the child of God in his way to heaven; but if you give way to a willing and habitual slothfulness, it is a sign that your hearts are wicked, that really you are not for God, and cord ally you have no delight in him, or in his ways, but there is some other object which your hearts do more mind and regard.

Secondly, Beware of slowness in walking on in God's statutes; some of you need many arguments to awaken and stir up your hearts unto duties; and others do need many Goads to quicken their hearts unto a greater speed and forwardness in duties: The Apostle speaks of some, that when for the time they ought to be teachers, yet they had need that one teach them again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God, these went on very slowly. Many Christians are to blame in this, they move on but slowly.

1. In points of knowledge, they know but a very little more of the mysteries of salvation, (of Christ, of the Covenant of Grace, of regeneration, of the objects of faith) after twenty or forty years hearing, then they did before.

2. In points of practice; after many years their sinful lusts are no more mortified, and their graces are no more strengthened, and their ability (to deny themselves, and to live by faith, and to suffer afflictions, and to be more heavenly and profitable in their conversation) is little or nothing raised and improved. I would have these to consider,

First, That this slow walking, is very disproportionable to the means which God vouchsafes unto them, and to the expectations of God; for to whom much is given, of them much shall be required; the greater means and helps should be answered with the greater fruits and returns.

Secondly, it is very uncomfortable unto your own souls; little fruit differs but a little from no fruit: and it is a thousand to one, but your hearts will be often shaken and puzzled about the truth of your Spiritual condition, that you never had grace in the truth and power of it, which works so weakly and so slowly, that almost all your life long you have got so little ground over your sins, and hardly advanced to one grace more then you had before.

Thirdly, It is very unanswerable to the course of humble, and solid and serious Christians; David made haste and delayed not. Psal. 119:60. And saith he, Ver. 32. I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart: And Paul was pressing and reaching forward. Phil. 3:13. And the kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, said Christ. It is shameful unto us, Matth. 11:12.

Fourthly, Nay look on many Christians behind us in time of their calling, setting out after us, yet as Ahimaas out-went Cushy, or as John out-ran Peter to the Sepulcher: so these of later standing than ourselves in Christ and grace, have left us far behind them, in Knowledge, in Faith, in Love, in Tenderness, in Exactness, in Zeal, in Fruitfulness, &c. As the Apostle to the Hebrews, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, Heb. 12:12, so say I unto you, stir up the heart, and drive not on so heavily, (as if this were the way you had no pleasure in) but put on with



more life, and care and speed: For this purpose remember five things.

First, Are you not in the way to Heaven? O how our souls should fly thither! Indeed there is reason why we should be slow unto what is evil, because that leads to Hell: And so on the contrary, there is all the reason in the world, to be still setting forward and foremostly walking on in the Statutes of God, for they are the way to Heaven, where all your happiness and all your treasure, and your desires or hopes are laid up forever.

Secondly, It was a long time before you set your foot in the path of God's Commandments, and therefore you had need to make haste.

How many years did you walk in the vanity of your minds, and in darkness, and in wantonness and rioting? Why it is but of late days that God hath changed your hearts and turned your feet; you had a long time to dishonor God; and will you not therefore improve the present time the more to honor him? In your times of sin and death you laid out all your years with all greediness to damn your souls; and should you not now be as quick, as enlarged in improving, and contending, and striving, and hasting how to save your souls!

Thirdly, It may be but a very short time (yet a little while saith Christ) that you have to walk in God's Statutes, and therefore serve him with all your strength, and run the race that is set before you.

**Quest. Some may put the Question, why God is pleased to conceal the length of a Christians walk or journey to heaven, and never makes it known to any one whether long or short?**

Sol. Surely one reason thereof may be to stir up our care, to put on with all our might, and to work and walk whiles we have day.

Fourthly, Especially considering that as the time is short, so we have much work to do in that time. O how the Factor bestirs himself, rises early, and goes to bed late, casts up; carries out, orders this, looks to that, when he hath but a little time before he must go home and give up his account! This is our condition; ere long we must go home to our Master, and we have much work lying on our hands, and but a very little time; I say much work to do for our God, and for our souls, and all this work is of eternal consequence Ergo, we had need to double our diligence, and to mend our pace; a slow pace will rid but little ground.

Fifthly, Make all the haste you can, you will hardly fulfil your work, and get over all your ground: You shall find that the best Traveler of us all when he comes to die, he shall find very much work lying on him which he should have done, but now cannot: O I should have been more watchful, more humble, more believing, more zealous; redeeming more time, done more for God, done better for my soul, done more good in my place.

Thirdly, Beware of unevenness in walking in God's statutes. O let me not wander from thy Commandments, said David, Psal. 119:10. And Ver. 117. Hold thou me up and I shall be safe, and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually: order my steps, and let no iniquity, &c. Ver. 133. So Solomon in Prov. 4:25. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look strait before thee. Ver. 26. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Ver. 27. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Beloved, there is a twofold unevenness in our walking in God's statutes.

1. One is habitual and general; and this is when a person pretends to walk in God's statutes, and sometimes in some particular actions doth walk therein, but then, look on this man in the General course of his life; and so he walks not in the ways of God, but in the ways of ungodliness; of this man I speak not.

2. Another is particular and actual, and this is when a person is even and right as to the course of his walking; but in this or that particular of life he doth step aside and wander; he breaks out into some great transgression or other, as you read of David, and Lot, and Noah, &c. into lesser irregularities: this is not a total revolting or Apostasy, but it is a particular sinful deviation and aberration, from which they return again by repentance: Nevertheless let all the people of God beware of all and every particular unevenness in their walking; for this is not to proceed and hold on in walking in God's statutes.

There are three things contrary to our going on, &c. viz. 1. A standing still. 2ly. A going over. 3ly. A going aside, though it be but a step into another contrary path, yet this one step is opposite to going, and it is a hindrance to our going on; we lose so much of our progress, as we step aside from the right path.

Secondly, There is not the least sin which a man commits, but first it is a leaving of the right way; and next it will cost him some time to get out of that wrong way, and to return again into his right way: That one sinful aberration perhaps may draw and entice him further out of the way, or if it doth not, it must cost him much humiliation of heart, and many tears and prayers to recover and reduce him again.

Thirdly, It is a very folly to be at any time uneven in our walking: for either you intend to go on in your error, or to come off from it; if you will go on in your sin, you will be damned; if you see reason to return

from it, why did you at all embrace it? Nay the folly appears yet more; for whiles you did steadfastly walk on in the paths of God, you did unquestionably possess and enjoy peace, and by stepping out of those paths, you lose your peace, and must pass through much bitterness before you can possess that peace of which you by sinning have dispossessed your souls.

Fourthly, The Christian Traveler hath no sufficient cause to misplace one step, or to step aside to any un sinful action; and my reason is this, because he may find enough in the paths of God: In my Fathers house there is bread enough, &c. still to satisfy him, and much better than in any sinful or irregular way.

1. Here he hath protection and safety enough; The Lord himself is his guide and shield.
2. Here he hath pleasure enough, even the joys of the Holy Ghost, unto which the pleasures of sin for a season are not to be compared.
3. He hath profit and benefit enough; for in keeping God's Commandments there is great reward: No man gets any things by any sin, but as God loseth by it much honor, so he himself loseth much of his dignity, and of his comfort, and of his safety, and of his integrity, &c.

Fourthly, Beware of weariness and faintness in your walking in God's statutes: There is a twofold weariness as to a walking in the paths of God.

1. One ariseth from contrariety of Spirit and dislike of those ways: Mal. 1:13. Ye said also, Behold what a weariness is it! And ye have

snuffed at, it saith the Lord of Hosts. Isa. 43:22. Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; thou hast been weary of me O Israel.

2. Another ariseth from dispondency of spirit, by reason of the many discouragements and troubles befalling us for our walking in God's statutes, and faithful keeping of them: As you read of Elijah when Jezebel threatened to take away his life, 1 King. 19:2, the good man hereupon did faint, and was discouraged, and therefore saith he, Ver. 4. It is enough O Lord, take way my life, for I am not better than my Fathers. Jer. 20:8. The Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. Ver. 9. Then I said I will not make mention of him, nor speak anymore in his name, but his words were in my heart as a burning fire, &c. Now though this kind of weariness be apt to put itself upon us, yet we should put it off by prayer, and by faith: we should not be weary in well doing; the Apostle presseth it twice, Gal. 6:9, and 2 Thes. 3:13. And I will give you four Reasons why we should not be weary, and faint, and discouraged, although we see little good of all the pains which we take, and although we meet with evil for good, reproaches, scorns, and crosses, when we are most careful to walk with God.

First, because the Lord doth appoint these things; he will have them to befall us, to try our love, and faithfulness unto himself, and true zeal for him, and to exercise our faith and patience, and to do us good: If evil men did know how much good the people of God do get by their wicked words and carriages towards them, I am persuaded that they would forbear much more in this kind; little do they think that the people of God (upon these occasions) do more search their hearts and ways, and do the more humble their souls, and are more in prayer, and are more watchful over their ways, &c.

Secondly, Because nothing that you meet with from men can make the least diminution of any true comfort unto you, e.g.

1. It cannot abate one jot of your happiness: Your happiness consists in the fruition of God to be your God in Christ; and this sun doth shine in the midst of all storms; let men disgorge themselves and throw out all the filth they can; yet God is your God and Father, and loves and owns you, Rom. 8:35, to 39.

2. It cannot hinder any peaceable testimony of your conscience: let men's speeches and censures, and dealings be never so bitter and base, yet you have still the Testimony of conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity you have had your conversation, 2 Cor. 1:12, all is well and cheerful here.

3. It cannot prejudice any acceptance of your holy walking's or workings with your God at all; God doth not accept of you, because men do approve and commend you; nor doth God disrespect and disapprove, because men do disapprove and condemn you; but as Peter spake in Acts 10:34. I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. Ver. 35. But in every Nation he that fears him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.

4. It cannot deprive you of your reward of well-doing: whatsoever hard entertainment you may find with men, regard it not, your reward is sure from the Lord: 2 Tim. 4:7, Isa. 49:4. Then said I, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain, yet surely my judgments is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

Thirdly, Because all these discouragements come only from wicked persons, and the basest sort of them, who watch for your halting, and would rejoyce to see you turn away from walking with your God;

Observe and consider seriously who they are that set themselves against you, and still strive to make your hearts weary, and your hands faint, and would baffle you in your holy walking in God's statutes; why, they are either Papists, or Popishly affected, or Hypocrites, or some Apostates, or a company of Whores, or Whoremongers, or drunkards, or swearers; and should your hearts faint for these men whom God abhors, and a civil person would scorn to be a companion unto them? Should such a man as I flee? Said Nehemiah, Chap. 6:11. I will be yet more vile, said David, 2 Sam. 6:22.

Fourthly, Because all these discouragements are the common lot and portion of all the people of God, yea of Christ himself: Therefore seeing we are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, &c. Heb. 12:1, let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Ver. 2, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### SECT. III.

Secondly, Now follows the Exhortation to the people of God concerning their progressive walking in God's statutes, to use all the means.

1. Of continuance and perseverance in walking in God's statutes, that they may steadfastly hold out unto the end.

If you would hold out unto the end in a right walking in the paths of God's Commandments; then

First, Be sure that you get your hearts to be really and soundly mortified and crucified. But unto what will you say? I answer,

1. Unto every sin, that you hate it with a perfect hatred, with such a hatred as will never admit of Reconciliation and friendship, with such a hatred as will make you to contend against it, and delight in the destruction of it; if there be any one sin in you which you will allow, favor, connive at, spare, and deal gently with you shall never be able to continue steadfast in a right walking: That one sin will be a withdrawing bias, and a corrupt humor which will break out and make you to halt and slip aside.

2. Unto all the world, you must be able to say with Paul, The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, Gal. 6:14, or else you will never continue and persevere in, &c. The Apostle Paul saith that the love of money is the root of all evil, which whiles some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, 1 Tim. 6:10. And the Apostle Peter speaks of some who forsook the right way, and were gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Boser, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, 2 Pet. 2:15. And Solomon speaking of the man who makes haste to be rich, that man shall not be innocent, Prov. 28:20.

3. Unto self, self-ends, self-delights, self-ease, self-advantages, self-confidences, self-respects; or else believe me, that polity will prevail with you above conscience; you will walk else only so as the sun shines.

Secondly, Lay in solid and effectual convictions concerning the paths of God's Commandments;

1. That it is certainly the way to life.



2. That there is a peremptory necessity incumbent on us to walk in that way.

3. That to leave or desert that path, is assuredly to desert our happiness.

4. That you yourselves are at present in that way of life.

5. That it had been better for you never to have know the way of righteousness, than after that ye have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto you.

Thirdly, You must maintain an entire love of God, and of his ways: if your love be faithful, your walking with God will be constant and steadfast: There are four effects of entire love.

1. It knits the heart very fast to God, makes us to cleave unto God.

2. It finds sufficient satisfaction, and full delight in God alone, Psal. 73:25.

3. It will strive to walk in all well-pleasing before God.

4. It can endure all and part with all for God; and many waters cannot quench it, Cant. 1:8. O get this entire love of God, the love of God for God! You cannot be found sure until you be held fast in the bonds of love; hold out in love, and you will hold out in obedience.

Fourthly, Preserve a tender conscience; a tender conscience is a spring to uprightness, and a guard unto steadfastness; when a man's conscience is kept tender, his foot will be kept even: For;

1. Whether the sin be great or small, open or secret, he dares not venture on it: A tender conscience binds when God binds, and restrains when God forbids; How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God, saith Joseph!

2. A tender conscience looks at, and exalts the will of God above all outward loss and gain; and outward safety and danger are no arguments to a tender conscience. But doth God command or forbid it? Is this work pleasing or displeasing to God? Will it bring honor or dishonor to God? These are the only prevailing Arguments and Motives to a tender conscience: Acts 20:23. The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. Ver. 24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy.

3. A tender Conscience will preserve God's favor, and its own peace: O the favor of God, the manifestations of his love, the enjoyment of him in kindness and peace; these are precious hours and days unto a person of a tender conscience, he would not willingly part with them, nor forfeit them for all the worlds profit, nor for all the pleasures of sin; and therefore he is very serious, and very studious to walk in God's statutes always, even to the end, knowing that any voluntary swerving, or sinful wandering will lose him the joy of his salvation, &c.

Fifthly, Keep up a daily fear: Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, Prov. 23:17. Blessed is the man (saith Solomon, Prov. 28:14) that feareth always.

There is a twofold fear necessary to make us continue steadfast in God's statutes.

1. A fear of ourselves, of our own sufficiency to maintain our walking: O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, saith the Prophet. Jer. 10:23. This humble fear will make you to be much in Prayer, and be much in a watchful jealousy over your hearts, and to be much at the Ordinances, and all these will make you more constant and steadfast in walking, &c.

2. A fear of God, a reverential fear of his presence; O what care and diligence will this work within us? Not to offend in anything, not to neglect his will at any time: Job 31:4. Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps? Prov. 5:20. Why wilt thou my son be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? Ver. 21. For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings? If we could keep up this reverential fear of God's continual presence with us, that his eyes are still upon us, this would keep in us, 1. A real and cordial walking; we would act in all our duties with our very hearts and souls. 2. A constant care to walk in all well-pleasing before him.

Sixthly, Keep up a continual life of faith, and this would carry you on to your journeys end: The Apostle saith that we walk by faith, and that we stand by faith: you cannot step one step without faith (without me ye can do nothing, Joh. 15:5.) And could you exercise faith, you would finish the whole course of obedience: Therefore every day set faith on work, still remember the Covenant of your God, Jer. 32:40. I will not turn from them to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me: And Ezek. 36:27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk, &c. Zech. 10:12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name. Isa. 40:31. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as

Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not be faint; and your interest in Christ, who is your Head, and is filled, that he may fill his Members with continual grace, and with continual strength by his Spirit for all their works and services which they are to perform.

7. Hold fast to your first choice and resolution: when you did choose God to be your God, and his ways to be your ways, you did discern such a superlative excellency and happiness in them, that you became fully resolved to walk in them, whatsoever danger and loss should befall you; yea you saw with Moses that the very reproaches of Christ were greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt, Heb. 11. And with Paul, that the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. 8:18. That there was enough in God, and in his service, and in his reward, infinitely to recompense all your afflictions, losses, and sufferings whatsoever. Hereupon you resolved (in the strength of Christ) to go through thick and thin (come favor or dishonor, come good report or ill report, come liberty or bondage, come life or death) to close with God and his ways, to walk in them, to live and die in them: O keep up this resolution still, faint not at all. God is the same God, his ways are the same for excellency, necessity, and peace; his promise of reward the same; often think of these, and they will quicken and strengthen your heart to walk on, and to hold out to the end.

2. The second part of the Exhortation is not only to hold on with constancy in walking in God's statutes, but to move on with more exactness, and with more fruitfulness, and more diligence and industry: Psal. 92:12. The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm tree, he shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Ver. 13. Those that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. Ver.

14. They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing: This was the special commendation of the Church of Thyatira, Rev. 2:19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first. These Christians are choice and precious Christians who walk more holily, more humbly, and more accurately, and more vigorously in their course and journey to heaven, who the nearer they come to the center, do move with more speed and zeal, renewing and doubling their care, and pains, and services, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

**Quest. But now the Question is, What should we do that we may attain to this?**

Sol. I would propound some helps for this, viz.

First, Be often comparing your ways or walking's, and God's word together; your work and your rule together: The Scholar who eyes the copy much, and compares his writing with that, he will much mend his writing thereby: So the Christian, who eyes the word of God much, and compares his daily walking with that rule, he will see daily reasons to reform his heart and mend his walking's. As for the doing of any work, it is the safest course first to consider what warrant we find in the word of God for the doing of it; so when we have done any work, it is best to bring the work back to the word of God again, and observe wherein we have answered the word, commanding and directing of us for the matter and manner of our obedience.

O how much weakness? How many failings? How many wanderings shall we then find out? How little of prayer in praying? How little of hearing in hearing? How little of Godly sorrow in mourning? How little of faith in believing? Enough shall we find still to humble our

souls; enough shall we find still to provoke us to more integrity, to more affectionateness, to more exactness and diligence.

Secondly, Often compare your present walking with your former progresses: So many years ago (I took it) that God called me by his grace, and then I became sensible, and mournful, and diligent, and watchful; so and so much I got of Christ, and so much faith, and so much love; so and so did I put forth myself in the several ways and services for God's glory; such and such delight did I take in himself, in his word, in his ordinances, in his people: so much power against such a sin, and so much victory over the world, and so much strength for such a duty. But O my soul! What is thy present standing? And what is thy present growth? The time is gone much forward, art thou gone more forward? It is a grief to be no more than thou wast; but it is a shame to be less than thou wast. God hath vouchsafed thee more helps to farther thee, more opportunities to advance thee, more mercies to encourage thee, more experience to quicken thee, more afflictions to mind thee; and yet, alas! Thou art so far from exceeding thyself, so far from out going thyself, so far below and behind thyself, that I find thee more hampered with corruptions, and more entangled with the world, and more flat in thy affections, and more dull and careless in thy services, and less circumspect and fruitful in thy walking.

Thy last works and walking's are so far from being more than thy first, that indeed they are far less than they, Why? Here is less sense of sin; and less sorrow; and less fear; and less desires after Christ; and less delight in the ordinances of Christ; and less watchfulness over thyself; and less done for God and for thyself, and for thy family; thou art now more dull, and more dead and weak in grace; longer in time and less in growth. O Lord, pardon me, and heal me; awaken and quicken me: I am ashamed; make me as good, nay make

me better than ever I was; O that I could go, that I could run, that I could out run, that I could move faster, and better (for the time to come) in the ways of thy Commandments, &c.

Thirdly, Be much in the remembrance of four things.

1. Of your God in his goodness to you every way; He hath been good unto your souls; how much mercy and grace hath he shewn to them? Of his great mercy they are quickened, and they are pardoned, and they are upheld, and they are comforted; think of these fruits of mercy, and then provoke your souls to more love, to more obedience, to more cheerfulness, to more forwardness, to more fullness of holy and heavenly walking: He hath been good unto your bodies and outward estates; your life is still preserved, your portion is still maintained, your table is still spread and your cup runs over: O who would not, and who should not be endeared and be enlarged in the service of such a God: he is willing and ready, and delights to do men good; he is constant in love and mercy, faithful in his promises, abounding in compassion, faints not nor is weary, but rejoiceth over me to do me good with all his heart, and with all his soul; will never leave me, will be my God and guide to death: And shall not I answer much love with much love, infinite mercy with abundant duty, freest kindness with exactest service; more blessings with more obedience! Should I be straightened when he is enlarged!

2. Of yourselves as to your wants and imperfections: do not mind so much what you have attained, but what as yet you fall short in, and have not attained; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before (saith Paul in Phil. 3:13) I press toward the mark, ver. 14. O there are many miles yet more to go than ever yet thou hast

gone; and much more to be done, than ever thou hast done; and much more to be attained, than ever yet thou hast attained. How many measures in every grace are yet wanting! How many corruptions need yet to be mortified! How much strength, how much stability in knowledge and faith, how much evidence, and certainty, and peace, dost thou still need? How much is wanting in every duty, in every service, in every work? Did you remember and consider these things, your hearts would bestir themselves, would put forth themselves with more vigor and activity, &c.

3. Of your great accounts; we are but stewards, and we must everyone give an account to God of our stewardship, of what we have received, and of what we have done. If we have been standing all the day idle, if we should be found unprofitable servants, what sad accounts should we give up? All the time that God hath given us, we must be accountable to God for; for the long time of life, and for the long time of grace; and how we have redeemed time, and how we have passed the time of our sojourning here; what helps we have had, and what progress we have made. Certainly we would give up a good account, and a full account, and a comfortable account, our accounts with joy. Think much of this, and this will make you more serious in all your walking; more watchful over your words, more accurate in all your doings, more conscientious and complete in all your duties. For we must give an account for every sermon, and for every prayer, and for every ordinance, and for every work, and for every step of our life; did we believingly remember this, we would be more faithful, and more fruitful.

4. Of the great reward at last; of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory: of that crown of life; O how would this put life and quickness, diligence and forwardness into us! 2 Peter 3:12.



Looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. 2 Cor. 4:16. For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Ver. 18. For we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 1 Cor. 9:25. They strive to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

Fourthly, Look on the fore-runners, on the people of God, set forth for examples unto you in the Scriptures, what progress they made; how laborious they have been, and how they have gone from strength to strength. Psal. 84:7. What fruits they brought forth from the day that they heard and knew the grace of God in truth. Col. 1:6. What carefulness, what diligence, what zeal, what exactness, what forwardness, what laboriousness do you see in them!

Set the example of a David before your eyes, and the example of a Paul before your eyes! Who did fulfil the whole Law of God, rejoiced to run their race, &c. Yea and set the examples of your present Christians, who are also forerunners as to you, many of whom you see to live with much faith, to walk with much integrity, to act with much fear and zeal, to spend and to be spent in the service of their God: Do not look on those that are behind you, but on those that are before you. O what exactness is there in their obedience! O what joy in conscience! O what joy in death! Such examples will serve to quicken, and enlarge, and encourage you.

Fifthly, Embrace and improve the society of persons truly godly: I am a companion (said David, Psal. 119:63) of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts. And saith Solomon (Prov. 13:20.) He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise.

There are three things in the society of godly persons which may advance us to a better walking in God's statutes.

1. One is the goodness of their instructions and exhortations; the lips of the wise disperse knowledge, Prov. 15:7. Exhort one another daily, Heb. 3:13. Let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works, Heb. 10:24. And these are of great force to work upon us: See Eccles. 12:11. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the Masters of Assemblies: And they are edifying, they build us up in Knowledge, and Faith, and Fear, and Love, and Zeal.

2. Another is the efficacy of their prayers; they do strive and wrestle for one another with God in Prayer: Col. 4:12. Epaphras who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

A third is, the virtue and power of their conversations; as in wicked company there is ordinarily an infecting virtue to dead and poison our hearts, and to corrupt our manners; so in godly company, there is ordinarily a perfecting virtue to better our hearts and lives. One may see much humility, and see much meekness, and see much tenderness of conscience, and see much love and fear of God, and such a serious and careful ordering of every work and way of carriage, such bewailing of their wants, such endeavoring's after more perfection, as leaves an impression upon our hearts to go home and do so likewise.

3ly. The encouragements to walk on in the statutes of God, with uprightness and steadfastness all our lives.

First, As God requires a life of obedience, so he promiseth a reward of eternity of blessedness: Rom. 2:7. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life. Chap. 6:22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. How should this encourage all our hearts to abound and persevere in all the paths of obedience! Never to think of going back to Egypt, but to go straight on, still to walk in God's statutes, and to put forward with all our strength, seeing at the end of our journey there waits for us no less than eternal life and blessedness.

The travelers to heaven do meet with a double blessedness.

1. One is in their way or journey: Psal. 119:1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord. And ver. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies.

2. The other is as the end of their journey: Rev. 14:13. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Beloved! Admit your lives to be long, and your duties of obedience to be many and hard, yet two things may still encourage you, viz.

1. You are but doing still your Masters work.

2. You shall ere long receive your Masters reward: A short time of life in the date of your service, but eternity is the measure and date of your recompense: We say that *finis dat amabilitatem mediis*; a corruptible crown makes men to run a race that they may obtain it, 1 Cor. 9:25. How much more should an incorruptible Crown draw forth all our strength, and earnestness, and perseverance to enjoy it? *Fugiendum* (said Cicero) *ad charissimam and patriam; ibi pater, ibi omnia; we*

should even fly to our heavenly Country where our Father is, and all blessedness: Aeterna requies Aeterno labor; Eternal happiness is worth Eternal pains: And should we think much to take a little more pains to be possessed of it! A right Christian will take a great deal of pains to gain but a small glimpse, a sight of God's gracious love and favor; and should not we insist with all our power on all the ways of obedience, that we may at length come to a full, and perfect, and eternal sight and fruition of our God in heaven?

Secondly, Though your work be much, yet your helps for that work are more: 1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Here was more abundant labor, but here was also more abundant grace which enabled him for that labor; the work which we are to do, is for God, and the strength to do the work by, is from God. It matters not how great, nor how long our duties of obedience must be, as long as we have sufficiency of assistance still to aid us, and still to carry us on.

**Object. Helps! Will some say, what helps have we for our walking in the statutes of God?**

Sol. I will tell you what helps you have.

1. You have all the helps of the Ordinances of Christ which are of power still to direct, and still to quicken you, and still to resolve you, and still to strengthen you, and still to comfort you, and still to uphold you, and still to enlarge and perfect you, and still to root and establish you: How often are your hearts refreshed by them? How often are your hands made strong by them? How often have your souls been satiated and replenished, and restored, and as (as it were) renewed and revived by them?

2. You have all the helps of all the people of God on earth; all their prayers every day are trading for you: Thou art still preparing for every one of the people of God, and all the people of God are still wrestling for thee; Lord help them! Lord keep them! Lord forsake him not! Lord strengthen and uphold him! Lord carry him on to the end! Lord keep him by thy power, through faith unto salvation! And let me tell you that the prayers of the righteous and faithful are mighty and prevalent with God.

Thirdly, You have all the helps of Jesus Christ: I can do all things (saith Paul) through Christ that strengtheneth me, Phil. 4:13. You have the help of his prayers, for he ever lives to make intercession for you, Heb. 7:25. Of his Spirit, who helps your infirmities, Rom. 8:26. Mortifies your sins, ver. 13. Quickens your hearts, Joh. 6:36. Upholds your souls, Psal. 51:12. Guides and teaches you, strengthens and enables you, as you have heard lately when I discoursed of the works of the Spirit.

Fourthly, What shall I say more? You have the help of God himself: Zech. 10:12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his Name. Phil. 2:13. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. And Phil. 1:6. It is he that hath begun a good work in you, and will perform (or finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, If you fail not in obedience on your part, you shall never fail of comfort on God's part: A constant expense of obedience, will bring in a constant revenue of joy and comfort: Acts 9:31. The Churches walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Psal. 119:165. Great peace have they that keep thy Law. There is no man living, who hath true comfort, or who meets with more comfort,

than he who walks closely and steadfastly in the ways and statutes of God.

1. He hath comfort in his God: Psal. 50:23. To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God. And Isa. 64:5. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways. And Psal. 11:7. The righteous Lord his Countenance doth behold the upright.

2. He hath comfort in his conscience: 2 Cor. 1:12. This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in godly sincerity we have had our conversation. Isa. 38:3. I have walked before thee in truth with a perfect heart, &c. A loose disobedient person, though his mouth be filled with laughter, yet his conscience is filled with gall and wormwood; but the conscience of an upright and faithful person is filled with peace and joy.

3. He hath comfort in the hardest and sharpest of all his services; Matth. 5:11. Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Ver. 12. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. 2 Cor. 1:4. Who comforteth us in all our tribulations. Ver. 5. For as the suffering of Christ aboundeth in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

4. He hath comfort in the worst of times; when troubles, and fears, and desolations over-spread the world, Jer. 16:33, yet even then can he find peace and rest in Christ, and can joy in the God of his salvation. Hab. 3:18. Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness. Psal. 112:4. God is his sanctuary and refuge, Psal. 46:1,2.

5. He hath comfort in death itself: The righteous hath hope in his death, saith Solomon, Prov. 14:32. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's, Rom. 14:8.

Fourthly, though your weaknesses in obeying are many, yet sincerity of obedience is still accepted, that which God principally looks at in our services of him, is our heart (My son give me thy heart, Prov. 23:26) and the uprightness of our hearts; his eyes are upon the truth; and he is a God that takes pleasure in uprightness, 1 Chron. 23:19.

A man is sincere in obedience, when 1. He intends the glorifying of God in what he doth. 2ly. When he serves God with a willing heart. 3ly. When he puts out all the present strength and might of his soul in doing the will of God.

Now although this person falls very short of perfection in his works of obedience, and many failings accompany his duties, yet God passes by them, and takes no notice of them, will not reject, but will accept of them, and of his weak services. And there are three Demonstrations of this.

1. God (whom he serves with his spirit) is his Father, and of a very merciful and gracious nature: Psal. 103:13. Like as a Father pities his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Mal. 3:17. I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

2. He hath made many indulgent promises to him: Isa. 30:19. He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. Chap. 56:7. Even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and make them joyful in my house

of prayer, their burnt-offerings and their sacrifice shall be accepted upon mine Altar, &c.

3. Jesus Christ bears away all the iniquities of our holy offerings, and by his merits procures the acceptance of all our services: Rev. 8:3. He is that Angel that stood at the Altar having a golden censer, who had much incense given unto him, that he should offer it with prayers of all Saints, upon the golden Altar which is before the Throne. Ver. 4. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the Saints ascended up before God out of the Angels hand. Now this is a singular Encouragement unto us to hold on steadfast in our walking in God's statutes, never to be weary in well doing; For our labor is not in vain in the Lord; not any work of obedience is lost, not a Prayer, not a tear, not any one work performed with sincerity of heart, but it is graciously accepted.

Fifthly, There is no safety in going back from walking in God's statutes, and there is no hazard in going forward, and holding on unto the end.

First, There is no safety in going back from walking in God's statutes: For this only is the path of life, and the path of salvation; he that turns from it despiseth his own soul; he is lost, he is out of protection, out of blessings, out of promised good, and shall be sure to meet with curse, and wrath, and destruction.

Secondly, There is no hazard in going forward, and holding out unto the end: You cannot hazard;

1. Your souls by it; for he that keepeth the Commandment keepeth his soul.



2. The recompense you expect by it; for he that continues to the end shall be saved.

3. Your safety by it; for God is a Sun and a Shield unto them that walk uprightly, Psal. 84:11. The Lord is with you whiles you are with him, 2 Chron. 15:2.

4. Your honor by it: Those that honor me I will honor, 1 Sam. 2:30.

5. Any outwardly blessing by it: For Prov. 3:23. The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just. Prov. 28:10. The upright shall have good things in possession. And ver. 20. A faithful man shall abound with blessings: There is no death, but life; no curse, but blessing; no danger, but safety; no loss, but gain in walking in, &c.

Sixthly, Though we meet with many oppositions in the steadfast walking, yet you have higher and greater encouragements to the certainty of that way.

There are four things which do show that the walking on in God's statutes is the true way to heaven.

1. The holiness of it.

2. The warrantableness of it.

3. The aim of the traveler.

4. The universal opposition made against it by Satan, by all ungodly men, and by the remaining corruptions in every man's heart; it is the opposed and discouraged way.

Nevertheless you have higher and greater Encouragements to hold on your walking in the way of God's statutes, e.g.

1. The excellency of the way itself, it is the way of God, and the way of life, and the way of holiness, the way of Christ, the way of peace and rest.

2. The company of travelers: The best men that ever were upon earth, did choose this way to walk in; Enoch walked with God, so did Noah, and so did Abraham, and so did all the excellent Kings mentioned in Scripture, David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah; and so did all the faithful Prophets of God, and so did Christ, and all the faithful Disciples, and so do all the Saints of God who are the excellent on earth, and so did all the souls which are now glorified in heaven; should not this encourage you to hold on your course in walking in God's statutes! All that are now in heaven have gone on in this course, and all that shall come to heaven do so: It is the path of the just, still the living walk in it.

3. The delight of God: The Lord himself loves you, and owns you, and takes pleasure in you, approves of you, and commends you; there was no King like Josiah, &c. Seest thou my servant job? &c. Psal. 147:11. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him. And Psal. 149:4. The Lord taketh pleasure in his people. And Prov. 11:20. Such as are upright in their way are his delight.

4. The promise of God: O how many, and how choice, and how sweet! Isa. 41:10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Ver. 11. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish. Rev. 3:8.

Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word. Ver. 9. Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

5. The actual comforts, encouraging's, and refreshing's from the Lord, Acts 23:11. And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer Paul, &c. Psal. 94:19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul. Ver. 18. When I said my foot slippeth, thy mercy O Lord held me up.

Seventhly, You cannot serve a better Master than your God; therefore continue steadfast, walking in his statutes, and doing of his work: Mich. 7:18. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, &c. Hose. 2:7. I will return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now.

There are four Masters; and of necessity we must serve one of them: 1. Satan. 2ly. The world. 3ly. Our sinful lusts. And 4ly. God himself: Are you not ashamed to compare these Masters unto God? And their service unto his? God is the best Master.

1. For authority. 2ly. For dignity. 3ly. For liberty. 4ly. For the service commanded. 5ly. For privileges. 6ly. For present benefit. 7ly. For future reward. Other Masters are base and cruel, and their service is bondage, and their pay is destruction; but God is a gracious Master, and helpful, and beneficial, and blessed, and therefore, &c.

Eighthly, Although you do many times halt, and are drawn aside, and go astray, yet your God (whom you serve) will be merciful unto you; he will not forsake you, nor cast you off, but will recover and pardon you.

There are three unspeakable mercies which the Lord shows unto all his people in Covenant.

1. One is, that he pardons all their old sins in which they walked before they came into Covenant with him; he blots them all out, and will never remember them anymore, casts them all into the depth of the Sea.

2. A second is, that he will look after them, and seek, and find them, and bring them home again, when they lose themselves by sinning, and wander from him: Psal. 119:176. I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant. And did not the Lord indeed seek and find David, when he exceedingly strayed in the matter of Uriah! He sends Nathan after him with such a message as convinced, and humbled, and turned him again; and so when Peter went astray, Christ looked back upon him; he did not leave him, but touched his heart and turned him; as he in Luke 15:4, that had an hundred sheep, when he had lost one of them, he went after that which was lost, until he found it: Thus is it with the Lord; if any of his servants should lose themselves, yet the Lord will not lose him, he will not cast him off (The Lord, saith Samuel, will not forsake his people for his great Name sake, 1 Sam. 12:22) but will send after him such a message by his Word, or by afflictions, or by conscience, or by his own Spirit, that he shall come back again: Hose. 2:6. I will hedge up thy way with thorns, &c. Ver. 7. Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband, &c.

3. A third is, that he will accept of them again into love and favor: Hose. 14:4. I will heal their back-sliding's, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. Jet. 31:19. Surely after that I was turned, I repeated; &c. Ver. 20. Is

Ephraim my dear son! Is he a pleasant child! For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.

9. A ninth Encouragement for you is this; the Lord (in whose ways you walk) doth stand by you, to strengthen you, his eyes are upon you for good, he doth behold all your works, and labors, and pains, and is sensible of all your injuries, and sufferings, and troubles: 1 Pet. 3:12. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. Ver. 13. Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good? 2 Pet. 2:9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. Rev. 2:9. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty; but thou art rich; and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not. Ver. 10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer, &c. 2 Cor. 4:17. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

10. Lastly, Your time of walking, and working is almost at an end; your day is ending, and it is but a little time more, and then he that shall come will come; your life is near expiring, and your reward is hastening: Rev. 22:11. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Ver. 12. And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.

#### SECT. IV.

3. Use. The last Use from this, That the people of God are to walk in his statutes, and to hold on in that course all their days, shall be of

persuasion unto us all in general, unto three things.

1. To repent of, and to forsake our sinful walking's.
2. To approve of, and to like of this walking in God's statutes.
3. To yield up your hearts to God, and to make some essays of walking in God's ways.

First, To repent of, and to forsake all our former sinful walking's: It is high time to awake out of sleep, Rom. 13:11. The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banqueting's, and abominable idolatries, 1 Pet. 4:3. I will present four Arguments to persuade you to hearken unto this counsel.

1. You may have mercy if you do so: Isa. 55:7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. So Ezek. 18:21. If the wicked will turn from all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, &c. Ver. 22, all his transgressions which he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness which he hath done he shall live.

2. You will certainly perish if you do not so: Prov. 1:29. For they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. Ver. 30. They would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof. Ver. 31. Therefore they shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devises. Ver. 32. The turning away of the simple shall slay them. Gal. 6:7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Ver. 8. He that

soweth unto the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

3. You live under the Gospel, which teacheth us to deny all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and that we should live godly, soberly, and righteously in this present world, Tit. 2:11,12. It is enough for Heathens to walk wickedly, and profanely; This I say and testify in the Lord (saith Paul, Ephes. 4:17) that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds. O how unworthy is this of the Gospel! And what an aggravation of guilt is this, to walk in whoredom and drunkenness, in, &c.

4. The farther and the longer you walk in your sinful ways, the more do you dishonor God, shame the Christian Religion, harden and fear your Conscience, make way to be given up to a reprobate mind, and increase your own dreadful damnation! Therefore remember yourselves, and consider your ways; do not venture your souls desperately, but take time to make a right judgment of the ways wherein you walk.

1. Compare them with the Word of God; what God saith of them, how he forbids and threatens them.

2. Observe them in their proper tendencies, whether these sinful ways do carry you; what will be the end and ways of them; Rom. 6:21. The end of all these things is death.

3. Behold them in the woeful effects of them; in wicked men dying, what horrors, and terrors, and despairs they have raised in their consciences! O that we had never been born! O that we had never lived! O that we had never lived thus! What will become of us! &c.

4. Take notice of their fruits in your own consciences; many times when you have been sick, when you have been alone, what bitter things have they spoken unto you? What dangers? What fears? What presages of wrath? What terrible condemnations? And thereupon fall down and beseech the Lord to turn your hearts and feet from these paths of death.

Secondly, get a clearer knowledge, and better liking of the ways of God: *Scientia non habet inimicum praeter ignorantem*; if you knew God a right, you could not but love him; and if you knew his statutes and ways a right, you could not but approve of them. Do not take testimony from the enemies of God and of his ways, nor from your own carnal and unregenerate heart which is at enmity with the Law of God: But be so far persuaded as to believe God himself who cannot lie, concerning those statutes of his, and our walking in them, how he commands, commends, approves, blesseth, and rewards all that do walk in them; yea give some credit unto those who have experimentally travelled in them, what they have found of, and in them; whether ever they found the like comfort, peace, delight, safety, blessing, and happiness: At least give credit unto their death-bed-testimony (when men are most solemn, and serious, and conscientious) how much sweetness they then do find; what rejoicings in Conscience, and what hopes and confidences towards God, &c.

Thirdly, Resolve (at least) to make some assay and attempt, set a foot in this way, lay aside sin, and take up holiness, reject wicked company, fall in with good society; leave off profaneness and vanity in thy person and family, and set up the practice of godliness in both, and try what will come of mourning for sin, of forsaking of sin, of calling upon the Name of God, of conscientious keeping of one Sabbath, of one days enjoyment of Christ, &c. thou shouldest find



that of David to be true, one day in thy Courts is better than a thousand, Psal. 84:10.

**1. Object. But men say, that if we walk in God's statutes, we shall meet with many crosses, and afflictions; nay the Scriptures say so.**

Sol. True; He that will be my Disciple (saith Christ) must take up his cross and follow me, Matth. 16:24. But

First, This is a part of the way to life: Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, Matth. 7:11, there's Heaven at the end of it.

Secondly, Christ himself endured the cross for you, why should you not bear it for him?

Thirdly, It is better to meet with crosses in the ways of God than with curses in the ways of sin, here, and hereafter; affliction is nothing to malediction, and molestation is nothing to damnation.

Fourthly, They are but 1. Outward crosses and troubles. 2ly. Temporary; not inward in conscience, nor eternal in hell. 3ly. Such as consist with peace in Christ, Joh. 16. And joy in conscience, Rom. 5:3.

**2. Object. But men say, We shall lose all delight, and mirth, and pleasure, &c.**

Sol. 1. Only sinful pleasures, which 1. Are unlawful. 2ly. But for a season. And 3ly. Bitter in the latter end. And 4ly. Many times mixed with terror in the enjoyment.

2. You may still enjoy any outward lawful enjoyment, delight, and pleasure.

3. But you shall meet with better delights, and pleasures, and joys; with divine pleasures, delights in God, comforts of the Holy Ghost, assurance of mercy, experience of God's loving-kindness, joy unspeakable and glorious, and peace that passeth all understanding.

4. You shall meet with other delights, 1. More Prayers for your souls. 2ly. More powerful that enter into the Conscience. 3ly. More safe and lasting.

**3. Object. But we shall not enjoy that liberty which once we did, to do, and speak, and walk as we pleased?**

Sol. 1. You mean, that you may not be so wicked as you were! No marvel!

2. That was not your liberty, but your bondage and slavishness to your own lusts, and to the lusts of men; you are shrewdly hurt indeed that you are forbidden and restrained, so that you may not be suffered to dishonor God, and wound your consciences, and undo your souls, and run to hell.

3. If you would enjoy liberty indeed, then become the servants of God, and walk in his ways: If the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed, Joh. 8:36. Now your shackles, and fetters, and prison doors are broken open: we are freemen in a spiritual sense, when we are freed from sin: Rom. 6:18. Being then made free from sin, we became the servants of Righteousness: We are freed from all slavish fears by reason of sin; when we receive the free spirit of liberty, we become a voluntary people to serve the Lord with newness

of spirit, and freeness of spirit: Psal. 116:16. O Lord, truly I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds.

**4. Object. But men will disesteem us, neglect us, cast us out of their favor, and reproach us, if, &c.**

Sol. 1. It is their sin to do so; but it is our duty to walk as God would have us to walk.

2. What men will do so? None but ungodly men who speak evil of us, because 1. We run not with them to the same excess of riot. 2. A goodly conversation is a reproach to their ungodly life, and shames them.

3. Regard not the praises of men, but the praise of God; this you shall be sure to meet with; he will own you, and honor you, though men do not: Psal. 27:10. When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord shall take me up. The Pharisees reviled and cast out the blind man cured by Christ; but Christ met with him, and owned, and saved him, Joh. 9:35,36, &c.

4. You will give a fair account to God that you feared man more than God: Lord, I should have walked in thy ways, but, &c.

**5. Object. Then I will walk in these statutes hereafter.**

Sol. 1. Hereafter may be too late: God's command is for all our days, and for the set time whiles it is called today, &c.

Secondly, Continuance in sinful ways will harden your hearts in them, keep up the love of sin, and render the ways of God more distasteful unto you.

Thirdly, And God may in judgment give you up to your own heart's lusts, to walk in the counsels of them, because you do not hearken unto him: See Psal. 81:11,12.

**6. Object. But I have assayed, and can make no work of it.**

Sol. First, Because you assayed slightly, and not with all your heart.

Secondly, And because you assayed in your own strength.

**7. Object. But it is a great work however to walk in God's statutes, and what shall I do for power to enable me to walk in them?**

Sol. God who requires us to walk in his statutes, doth promise to give us power; I will cause you to walk, &c.

And cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them. - Ezek. 36:27.

These words (as I have heretofore observed) contain in them two parts.

1. The work or duty which concerns the people of God; (viz. to walk in his statutes, &c.) this Subject I finished the last Lord's Day.
2. The help or sufficiencies for all that work and duty (I will cause you to walk in my statutes) whence observe.

## CHAP. XV.

Doct. That the people of God have the promise of God to enable them to walk in the statutes of God; I will cause you, &c. Zech. 10:12. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his Name, saith the Lord. Phil. 2:13. It is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. Isa. 26:12. Thou hast wrought all our works in us. Chap. 45:24. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.

For the opening of this excellent and comfortable Truth, I will show unto you five things.

1. The many parallels 'twixt God's command of our duties, and God's promise of help for these duties.
  2. The parallels 'twixt promises to, and instances in God's people.
  3. The several ways how God doth cause or enable his people to walk in his statutes and do them.
  4. How far the Lord doth engage his strength of grace to enable his people to walk in his statutes.
  5. The Reasons both in respect of God, and in respect of his people, why he will cause them to walk in his ways, or statutes, &c.
1. The parallels 'twixt God's commands and his promises, or 'twixt the duties commanded by him, and the helps promised to enable his people.

First, The Lord commands his people to know him, and his ways: 1 Chron. 28:9. Know thou the God of thy Father, &c. And God doth promise to cause them to know him: Jer. 24:7. I will give them a heart to know me that I am the Lord. And Jer. 31:34. They shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.

Secondly, The Lord commands his people to trust upon him: Psal. 62:8. Trust in him at all times. Isa. 26:4. Trust ye in the Lord forever, &c. And God doth promise to enable his people to trust on him: Zeph. 3:12. I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord.

3ly. The Lord commands his people to fear him: Deut. 6:13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him. So Deut. 8:6. Thou shalt keep his Commandments, and walk in his ways and fear him: This likewise hath God promised unto his people: Jer. 32:40. I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall not depart from me.

Fourthly, The Lord commands his people to love him: Deut. 11:1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Psal. 31:23. O love the Lord all ye his Saints! And God doth promise to give them a heart to love him: Deut. 30:6. The Lord thy God will circumcise the heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

Fifthly, The Lord commands his people to pray unto him, and to call upon his Name: Call upon me, Psal. 50:15. Pray without ceasing, 1 Thes. 5:17. I will that men pray everywhere, 1 Tim. 2:8. And the Lord hath promised to give unto them a spirit of prayer: Zech. 12:10. I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace, and the Spirit of supplication.

Sixthly, The Lord commands his people to mourn for their sins, and to loath their sins, and to turn from their sins: Isa. 22:12. In that day did the Lord call to weeping, and to mourning. Jam. 4:10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord: And this God doth promise to give unto his people: Zech. 12:10. They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only son, &c. Ezek. 7:16. They shall be on the mountains as the Doves of the valleys, all of them mourning everyone for his iniquity. Psal. 97:10. Ye that love the Lord hate evil. Rom. 12:9. Abhor that which is evil: This also is promised: Ezek. 36:13. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations: Ezek. 18:30. Turn yourselves from your transgressions. Hose. 14:1. Return unto the Lord: All this is likewise promised to be given unto the people of God: Isa. 30:22. Ye shall defile the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornaments of thy molten images of gold, thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence. Jer. 24:7. They shall return unto me with their whole heart.

Seventhly, The Lord commands his people not to suffer sin to reign in them: Rom. 6:12. Let not sin reign in your mortal body: And he promiseth that sin shall not reign in them: Rom. 6:14. Sin shall not have dominion over you.

Eighthly, And he commands his people to make to themselves a new heart, and a new spirit: Ezek. 18:31. Make you a new heart, and a new spirit: and he promiseth to give these: Chap. 36:26. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.

Ninthly, What shall I say now? The Lord commands his people to walk in his statutes, 1. Impartially. 2ly. Willingly. 3ly. Affectionately. 4ly. Uprightly. 5ly. Steadfastly: And all this he doth promise to cause them to do.

1. Impartially: Deut. 30:8. Thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his Commandments.

2. Willingly: Psal. 110:3. They people shall be willing in the day of thy power.

3. Affectionately: Isa. 60:9. Who are these that flee as a cloud, and as the Doves to their windows! Zech. 8:21. The inhabitants of one City shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts; I will go also.

4. Uprightly: Jer. 31:9. I will cause them to walk by the Rivers of water, in a strait way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, &c. Isa. 61:8. I will direct their work in truth. Zech. 8:3. Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth. Isa. 30:21. Their ear shall hear a word behind them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

5. Progressively, and steadfastly: Job 17:9. The righteous shall hold on in his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. Isa. 40:30. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

2ly. The parallels 'twixt God's promises, and experimental instances, wherein you may find that God hath enabled his people there to walk



as he hath promised.

First, He hath enabled them to know him: Gal. 4:9. After that you have known God, or rather are known of God. 1 Joh. 5:20. He hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true. 1 Joh. 2:21. I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it.

Secondly, They are enabled to trust upon him: Psal. 9:10. They that know thy Name will trust upon thee. Psal. 18:2. The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer, my God and my Strength, in whom I will trust. Psa. 22:4. Our Fathers trusted in thee. 25:2. My God, I trust in thee. 31:1. In thee O Lord, do I put my trust. 52:8. I trust in the mercy of God.

Thirdly, They are enabled to fear him: I fear God, said Joseph, Gen. 42:18. One that feareth God, said God of Job, Job 1:1. They that feared the Lord spake one to another, Mal. 3:16. I fear the Lord thy God, said Jonah, Chap. 1:9. The Churches walked in the fear of the Lord, Act. 9:31.

Fourthly, They are enabled to love the Lord; so David, Psal. 116:1. I love the Lord. And Psal. 18:1. I will love thee, O Lord my strength!

Fifthly, And they are enabled to pray unto him, and to call upon him: David, Hezekiah, Daniel, Paul; and to mourn for their sins; David, Peter, and Mary Magdalene; and to hate sin, David, Paul, Psal. 119:104. I hate every false way; and to forsake sin, Hose. 14:8. And 1 Thes. 1:9. Ye turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God, and Rom. 6:22.

Seventhly, And so for all the rest of the Particulars, you have clear instances that the people of God have been enabled to walk willingly,

constantly, affectionately, uprightly, and steadfastly in his ways.

3ly. The several ways how God doth cause or enable his people to walk in his Statutes, and to do them.

He doth cause them to walk in his Statutes,

First, By giving unto them his Spirit, who doth;

1. Change their hearts, and infuseth into them all Holy and Heavenly Graces, which are so many inward principles enabling them to acts or works of obedience; as our sinful and corrupt principles make us willing and ready to walk in the ways of sin; so holy and spiritual principles do make us willing and ready to walk in paths of righteousness.

2. Excite and quicken their hearts, and stir them up to works of obedience by secret motions and workings, and by setting the Commands and Promises of God upon their hearts with strong impressions, by which they are led out unto a willing, and cheerful, and upright performance of obedience.

3. Comes in with his Special and Immediate Assistance to all the works which they are to do; he helps their infirmities, and guides their feet, and strengthens their hands: The servants of the Lord are strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man. Ephes. 3:16. In the day when I cried unto thee, thou heardest me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

Secondly, By giving faith unto them, and enabling of them to live by faith in all their particular walking's and workings: Beloved, there is a living by faith for mercy, and there is a living by faith for duty.

A man lives by faith for duty when he goes out of himself, as insufficient to afford him strength to perform it, and applies himself unto, and relies upon Jesus Christ, and the promise to give him the ability, because this and that duty or work of obedience the Lord requires of me, (suppose it be to mortify sin, or to walk in some parts of new obedience) and I find myself insufficient and without strength thereunto, hereupon I do by faith

1. Apply myself unto Jesus Christ, in whom is fullness, and who filleth all: Lord Jesus, without thee we can do nothing; and if thou be pleased to strengthen me, I can do all things: O give strength unto thy servant; thou art my head, and the head is to give help and strength to the members of the body for all the works which they are to do: I rely upon thee, thy grace is sufficient, let thy power be made manifest in my weakness: Why, such an act of faith as this, such a living by faith on Christ, will find strength to cause us to do the work which God requires at our hands.

2. Unto the Promise of God, wherein God hath graciously engaged himself to be an all sufficiency unto his people, and to be their strength, and to strengthen them, and to work all their works in them and for them: Hereupon the weak Christian goes to God when he is to perform any work of obedience, and he relies upon him by faith; my God will help me, I have his promise to subdue iniquity, and I have his promise to cause me to walk in his Statutes and to do them. Lord! Faithful art thou who hast promised, and thou art able and willing to perform whatsoever thou hast promised: I have no might nor power to do this which thou commandest, but in the Lord there is righteousness and strength. O Lord, remember thy promise, Remember thy word upon which thou hast caused thy servant to hope: Be thou the help and strength of my soul; work in me to will and to do of thy good pleasure. Psal. 119. Upon this the Lord hears,

and answers his servants, and fulfills their desires, and becomes their strength and all sufficiency.

Thirdly, By meeting them in their way and work with special Evidences and Testimonies, and fruits of Love and Peace, and Acceptance and Joy. Isa. 64:3. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways. 56:7. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar. Joh. 14:21. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. Now when the traveler in the ways of God's Statutes, meets with these sweet fruits, and tastes, and manifestations of love, and peace, and joy, they do make a strong impression upon his heart; they do contribute a special strength unto him to walk on in those good ways. Neh. 8:10. The joy of the Lord is your strength. Psal. 116:2. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

Fourthly, By holding out unto them, and assuring them of the great reward of happiness for all who do walk on in his Statutes.

Beloved, three things are certainly true.

1. That there is a Reward for the righteous; God will render eternal life to them that continue patient in well-doing. Rom. 2:7.
2. That it is lawful for the Christian traveler to look at the great Reward: Moses had respect unto the recompense of reward. Heb. 11:26. What God doth promise freely to give unto his people, upon that they may lawfully look.

3. That great Reward propounded, and promised, and assured, hath an influence upon their hearts, it doth work strongly upon their heart that they faint not, that they give all diligence unto the end, that they take heed unto their ways, that they keep on in the path of life; it makes them to run and to strive that they may obtain an incorruptible crown. 1 Cor. 9:25,26, and that eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. 4:17.

Fifthly, By Revealing his Arm in his Ordinances, and blessing them with Power and Strength unto his people; David speaking of the Ordinances, saith, Psal. 84:5. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them. Ver. 7. They go from strength to strength.

You find many Attributes given to the Ordinances of God, they teach and direct us, they enlighten and convert us, they uphold and strengthen us, they quicken and comfort us, they animate and encourage us, they raise and revive us, they edify and build us up; all these effects they do produce, when the Lord is pleased to accompany them with his presence and blessings: And experimentally we find them unto our souls; God teacheth us by his word, heals us by his word, helps us by his word, revives, and quickens, and enlargeth, and strengthens us by his word; we walk in the light of it, and run in the strength of it, and conquer in the power of it, and renew our might in the comfort of it, and hold up by the promises of it; and are still more and more able to do the work of God, by the several influences from the word of God: The ordinances of God do weaken our corruptions, and strengthen our graces, and comfort our consciences, and bear down all discouragements and oppositions; they do enable faith in God, and inflame love to God, and preserve fear of God, and kindle zeal for God, and increase our

delight in God; and all these do cause us to walk in the Statutes of God, and still to do them.

4ly. How far forth God doth (in his promises) engage the strength of his grace, and help to cause his people to walk in his Statutes and do them.

To this I thus answer; When God doth promise to cause his people to walk in his Statutes, and to do them, he doth thus far engage himself.

First, To show them his ways, and to teach them what they are to do, and how they are to walk. Isa. 2:3. Many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his ways. Psal. 25:8. Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in their ways. Ver. 9. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. Psal. 32:8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye. Isa. 30:21. Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way walk, ye in it.

Nay he teaches in particular what they are to do. Titus 2:11. The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Ver. 12. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly in this present world.

Nay, and he teaches them not only as to the matter, but also as to the manner of their walking's. Ephes. 5:8. Walk as children of light. 4:1. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

Nay yet more particularly.

Walk in Love. Ephes. 5:2.

Walk in Wisdom. Colos. 4:5.

Walk Circumspectly. Ephes. 5:15.

Walk Humbly with thy God. Micah 6:8.

Walk in the Spirit. Gal. 5:16.

Walk according to the Rule. Gal. 6:16.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked. 1 John 2:6.

Secondly, To bring or enter them into his ways: The Lord doth promise not only to take them off from their old sinful ways, (Jer. 3:17. They shall not walk any more after the imaginations of their evil heart) but also to walk and to know, and approve this way to walk in. Psal. 143:8. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk. 85:13. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the ways of his steps. 119:30. I have chosen the way of truth, thy judgments have I laid before me. Ver. 59. I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet unto by Testimonies.

Thirdly, To enable them (as for the whole course of their life) to hold on walking in his ways or Statutes. Isa. 26:7. The way of the just is uprightness. Psal. 119:102. I have not departed from thy judgments, for thou hast taught me. Ver. 112. I have inclined my heart to perform thy Statutes always unto the end. Jer. 32:40. I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall not depart from me.

Fourthly, He thus far also engageth himself that if at any time they fall, he will raise them up, and if they wander into by-paths, he will bring them back into the right way. (Psal. 119:176. I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant.) Jer. 3:22. Return ye backsliding

children and I will heal your backslidings; Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Ezek. 34:16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.

Fifthly, He will establish them unto the end, in their walking in his Statutes. 2 Thes. 2:16. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, &c. Ver. 17, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work, 3:3. The Lord is faithful who shall establish you, and keep you from evil. 2 Tit. 4:18. The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. Prov. 2:8. The Lord preserveth the way of his saints.

5ly. Why God makes his promise to cause his people to walk in his Statutes, &c.

First, Because they are (of themselves) insufficient and unable to do anything that is good. 2 Cor. 3:5. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. John 15:5. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. Jer. 10:23. O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Secondly, Because if God leaves them unto themselves, they are not only unable to walk in his Statutes, but will certainly wander from the way of his Statutes. When God left David to himself, how woefully did he trespass against God? When God left Hezekiah to himself, presently his heart was lifted up with pride: When Peter was left unto himself, how fearfully did he deny his Master?



Thirdly, To show the difference twixt the Covenant of works and the Covenant of Grace; that is the ministry of the Letter, and this is the ministry of the Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:6.

That Covenant of works is a Commanding Covenant, but it is not a Helping Covenant; the Covenant of Grace is a helping Covenant, as well as a commanding Covenant: God herein doth show us what we are to do, and likewise enables us to do.

Fourthly, Because God will have all the glory of all good to be ascribed unto himself; therefore will he be the cause of all good. Rom. 11:36. Of him, and through him, are all things; to him be glory forever. If we could walk or work by our own strength without God, then we might boast in ourselves, but God will have no flesh to boast and glory in itself. 1 Cor. 4:7. Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou haste not received it?

Fifthly, To comfort and encourage his poor and weak servants, under the breadth, and depth, and length of their obedience: When they consider how much God requires at their hands, and for how long a time, even all the days of their life; and then consider their own weakness, alas say they, who is sufficient for these things? How shall we be able to perform all those services which God requires?

But then when they find that God (the mighty God) is with them, and he engages himself to be their strength and help, and that his grace shall be sufficient, and he will put forth his own hand to their works, this raiseth and encourageth their hearts; why! I shall have God's help to do all God's work, &c.

Sixthly, To draw up their hearts unto himself, and to set their faith a work upon him when they are to do any duty: O sirs, we should end

all our services in a promise of acceptance, and begin all our work in a promise of assistance; we should end with glory to God, and begin with the grace of God. God hath promised to cause us to walk in his Statutes, and to do them. And why hath he made this promise? But because you should look up to your God by faith, and rely on him for sufficiency of grace and strength, to carry you out to his Name and power, &c.

### SECT. I.

1 Use. Doth God promise to cause his people to walk in his Statutes and to do them? Hence we may be informed of several things.

First, That then without all question, the natural and unregenerate man hath no sufficiency in himself to do any spiritual good: For if the people of God (who are called by grace, and are made alive by grace,) are not sufficient of themselves, but do stand in need of the grace of God to cause them to walk in God's Statutes; much more insufficient is every natural man to the doing of good, who is dead in trespasses and sins. Hear what the scriptures speak of the natural man, 1 Cor. 2:14. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Jer. 4:22. They are sottish children, and they have no understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. Hose. 8:12. I have written to him the great things of my Law, but they were counted a strange thing. Psal. 14:1. The fool hath said in his heart there is no God; they are corrupt, thy have done abominable works, there is none that doth good. Prov. 13:19. It is abomination to fools to depart from evil. Levite. 26:43. Because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my Statutes. Jer. 13:23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin,

or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Tit. 1:16. Being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

By all these places it doth appear, that there is no power and sufficiency in any natural man to any spiritual good, but a total want thereof, and a total opposition unto it.

Secondly, That then God is no hard, cruel, or rigorous master unto his servants, but very kind and gracious; we have no reason to complain at all, but rather to bless him, and cheerfully to serve him.

There are seven things which do respect the people of God, &c.

1. Entrance, which takes in, 1. Union: Of him are ye in Christ Jesus. 1. Cor. 1:3. 2. Regeneration. 3. Repentance: This God works in them of his own grace. Jam. 1:18. Of his own good will begat he us with the word of truth. Phil. 1:29. Unto you it is given to believe. Acts 11:18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

2. Performances; this likewise doth God work in his people. Phil. 2:13. It is God which worketh in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure.

3. Sufferance. Phil. 1:29. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

4. Resistance. 1. Of sinful works. 2 Tim. 4:18. The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work. 2. From sinful temptations. 1 Cor. 10:13. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able.

5. Perseverance. Phil. 1:6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Christ. 1 Pet. 1:5. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

6. Acceptance.

7. Recompence.

Thirdly, Then you see the same reason why, when the same truths of God are preached, and the same ways of life are revealed, some do receive those truths, but others do not; and some do walk in those ways, and some do not.

**Quest. Why do they not all do so? The Reason is,**

Sol. Because God leaves some unto themselves, and others he doth not leave unto themselves; they do both of them hear the way to heaven, but they have not both the same grace and strength given to walk in the way to heaven.

Fourthly, Then they are none of God's people, who never found any sufficiency, any ability, any actual strength to walk in the ways which God hath Comanded: why so? Because God promiseth to cause his people to walk in his Statutes, and to do them. I grant that all the people of God do not walk alike in his Statutes; some are more lively, some are more forward, some are more high, and full, and vigorous, and exact then others are; nevertheless every one of them hath obtained grace and strength in his proportion to walk in God's Statutes; every one of them doth pray, and every one of them doth repent, and every one of them doth believe, doth walk in newness of obedience, and every one of them doth fear the Lord, and makes conscience of his ways, and strives after perfection.

You see that the least finger in the body receives an influence from the head by which it moves, and stirs, and performs the office of its place: And so doth the meanest and weakest servant of Christ, receive a virtue and power from Christ to act, and walk in his proportion: Therefore those men who still continue in their ways, and have no power to leave them, and who are still charged to walk in God's ways, and have no heart nor power to obey him, (no power or ability at all to bewail their sins, to forsake their sins, to pour out their hearts in prayer, to long after Christ, to love the Lord Jesus Christ, to prize and hold communion with God;) these persons are not as yet the people of God's Covenant. There is nothing in the world to evidence it to their souls that they are so; nothing in practice; for they neglect all holy walking with God; and nothing in their natures and hearts, for if they were renewed and changed by grace, presently there would be an ability, an inclination, a desire, an endeavor to walk with God according to his word.

Take it for a certain truth, that all persons actually in Covenant with God, have a power given them (more or less) to walk as God would have them walk, and to do what God would have them to do; therefore consider yourselves and your conditions, all of you who are still without strength to walk; assuredly you are without life to quicken: all the children of God are alive, and are thus far enabled by his grace to choose his way, and to walk in his way with upright hearts.

Fifthly, Then the ways of God are possible and passable ways; why so? Because the promise of God is annexed unto them.

There are two errors opposite unto this truth.

1. One is of the Papists, who make the ways of God concerning us so passable, that a man may perfectly fulfil the Law of God;

may as if this were a poor business, they teach that a man may do yet more than God requires, he may do works of supererogation, by which he may merit for himself and for his friends; this is a proud and false doctrine; for no man (except Christ) ever did or could with a legal exactness fulfil the will of God: In many things we offend all, saith the Apostle, Jam. 3:2. And what man is he that liveth and sinneth not? There is no man that sinneth not. 1 Kin. 8:46. And who can say My heart is clean, or I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? Prov. 20:9.

2. The other is of carnal and lazy Protestants, who when they are pressed to leave their sinful ways, and to walk in the ways of God's Commandments, and to hold on in their walking all their days: O say they, this is impossible, and who can walk thus? But what Christ spake to another purpose, may be safely applied here, That which is impossible with men, is possible with God; or what Chrysostom replied about the work of turning the heart from sin, that it was impossible, Tu non potes, sed Dominus tuus potest, thou canst not turn thy heart, but yet the Lord can turn thy heart: that I say in this case, It is impossible for any man by his own strength to walk in all God's Statutes, nevertheless it is possible so to do with God's strength: I can do all through Christ that strengthens me, saith Paul. Phil. 4:13. And Take my yoke upon you, (saith Christ,) Math. 11:29, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light, ver. 30. How comes it to be easy and light? Surely because you have Christ help, as well as Christ's Command: And thus it is with all the ways of God; they are possible, and passable; why so? Because you have God's Promise, as well as God's Command. Indeed if they were ways under a command, then there were no possible walking in them, because then the acting of obedience unto them, would rest upon our own strength, which is none at all; but being ways also

under a promise of God. Who saith that he will cause us to walk in them, now they are possible: For beloved, what God promiseth to do for us, that rests not upon our strength, but his strength to make us to do, and he is able to make all strength to abound and increase within us.

Sixthly, Then it is nothing else but a foolish and proud conceit in men, to delay and defer works of obedience until they 1. Have compassed so much of the world. 2. Come to be old. 3. Come to be sick; then they will consider their ways, and then they will humble their hearts, and then they will repent, and then they will lay hold on Christ, and then they will lead new lives, and then they will make their peace with God, &c. Not knowing that it is God only who causeth us to walk in his Statutes, and to do them; and not knowing that we are not of ourselves sufficient to think anything; and not knowing that supernatural power must be the foundation and cause of all supernatural works; and not knowing that God justly may, and often times doth deny his grace and help to them who have refused it, and doth leave the refusing sinner (forever) to his own lusts and ways.

## SECT. II.

2 Use. Doth the Lord God himself undertake to cause his people to walk in his Statutes, and to do them? This may serve for caution unto all the people of God, (especially unto strong Christians) that they take heed of all self-confidence. Beware of all self-confidence, when you are to do any duty, or any work which the Lord requires from you; see that you do not attempt it, or set upon it in the power of self.

There are many sorts of a man's self; there is

1. His Natural self, the strength of natural knowledge, and judgment, and will, and resolution.
2. His Learned self, the strength of acquired parts and abilities, of understanding, of wisdom, of tongues, of utterance and of other gifts.
3. His Gracious self, the strength of a renewed mind, and of a renewed will, and of renewed affections.

Now hear my advice; When you are to do any work for God, beware that you rest not on any of these self-strengths. Jer. 9:23. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, neither let the rich man glory in his riches. So say I, let not the prudent Christian rest on his wisdom, and let not the knowing Christian rest upon his parts, and let not the renewed Christian rest upon his graces, and let not the forward Christian rest on his resolutions, and let not the experienced Christian rest on his comforts, as if those were able and enough to furnish and enable him to do the work or works which God requires of him.

There are three Reasons why I would seriously press this caution upon you that fear God.

First, The exceeding aptness and propension in the best, to be and to do something of themselves; there is scarce anything concerns us, but self is intermixed with it, and justles in itself; and we are hardly taken off from it, until by woeful experience we find much mischief and misery in it. Take us in any spiritual work, why something of self is appearing; in repentance, men will not forsake their own strength; in the work of faith, men will undertake to believe by their own strength; in the work of justification, men are apt to look upon their own righteousness; in active duties, men are many times of their mind in Jeremiah, The Lord be a faithful witness between us, if we



do not according to all things which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us. Jer. 42:5. And in passive duties, there also we presume many times too much upon our own self strength; Lord (said Peter,) I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. Luk. 22:33. And although all shall be offended, yet will not I, Mar. 14:29.

Secondly, The exceeding greatness of this sin: self-confidence, or a trusting and relying upon our own strength and sufficiency, it is a very great sin; which thus appears.

1. It is the pride and unbelief in departing from God: that man who makes not God his whole confidence, departs from him. Pride of heart, and (which is worse) the spiritual pride of heart, which God abhors, and is utterly contrary unto; but humility of heart is that which God doth much value and regard.
2. It is a kind of Atheism: the creature which would be a self-sufficiency unto itself, denies God in his All-sufficiency; it is proper to God as God to be a being of himself, and to give being unto all besides himself; to be independent on any for being and working.
3. At least you take the work of God out of the hand of God; his work it is to make us good, by his preventing grace; and his work it is to enable us to good, by his subsequent grace; and yet you will undertake by your own strength and by your own arm to conquer sins, to resist temptations, to perform acts of obedience.
4. You take the course to set up yourselves, and to lay aside your God; to magnify yourselves, and to nullify him; to glory in yourselves, and to take glory from God; if you will be the efficient causes of doing good without God, you will make yourselves the final cause of good.

Thirdly, The exceeding great danger of self-confidence to do any good: and there are three dangers which will befall you.

1. You will be but poor and barren, and insufficient, so as to do nothing at all: as the ship lies still if the wind stirs not; (without me you can do nothing) you will be weaker than the weakest Christian; the weakest Christian trusting on Christ, and the promise, will be able to do much, when you relying on yourself-ability, will be able to do nothing.

There are two sorts of being.

One is absolute and of itself, as God is who is of himself, and can work alone by and from himself.

Another is depending; such a being is every creature, yea and every created grace, which as it is by virtue of God's grace, so it acts in virtue of his assistance: As a beam of the sun is made alive by the sun, and it gives light by the continued influence of the sun: part it and the sun; it is nothing so, &c.

2 God will leave you (at least a while) unto yourselves, that you may be ashamed of your confidence, and see yourselves to be but vanity, that you are indeed without strength, and utterly insufficient of yourselves; and that you stand only, and work only in the presence of his might.

You read that God hath left his servants in four cases.

One when they have been idle and careless, and venturing upon the occasions of sin; this was David's case:

A second, when they have not steadfastly believed his word, but have given credit to Satan; upon this he left Adam and Eve unto

themselves.

A third, when they have ventured upon evil company; in this case he left Samson.

A fourth when they have presumed upon their own strength and sufficiency; and in this he left Peter.

3. And now you will not be able to do any good, nay not able to withstand the greatest sins; Satan will be too hard for you, and so will sin; we shall quickly hear you complaining of hardness of heart, and of deadness of heart, and of unbelief of heart; and I wish these were the worst. God doth sometimes cure the proud self-confidence, and the proud self-sufficiencies of his people, by leaving them to some gross and vile falls, as David, and Peter, &c.

Fourthly, There is indeed no self-sufficiency in you, although sometimes you verily imagine and fancy it; and I would convince you of this by your own experience.

1. You cannot pull down any one sin that troubles you by your own strength, it will move, and strive, and tempt, and follow you; and do what you can, (by all your own strength) it doth many times captivate you.

2. You cannot rise out of any sinful fall, unless the Lord gives you his hand to lift you up; there your feet stick in the mire, and every grace that you have is nonplussed; repentance will not stir, and sorrow will not melt, and faith will not take hold, unless the Lord himself comes in with new strength and assistance, you cannot deliver yourselves.

3. You cannot (many times) act any one grace when your desires are so to do; you find your hearts many times hard, but you cannot

soften them; dull, and you cannot quicken them; straitened, and you cannot enlarge them; you would mourn, but cannot fetch up your tears? You would believe, but you cannot stretch forth one act of faith; all that comes from you, is, Lord help my unbelief; you would pray, but are not able, &c.

4. If it were in your power and self-strength to act, and to do any good works, and to walk in God's Statutes, then

1. Why do you make your prayers to God for his help?

2. Why have the people of God acknowledged their own inability? It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

3. Why do the works of obedience stick and go on so heavily, when they rest on our hands?

4. Why is it that they go on so freely and easily, when God is pleased to put out his assistance? I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, saith David. Psal. 119:32.

### SECT. III.

3. Use. Doth the Lord promise to cause his people to walk in his Statutes, and to do them? This may instruct or teach us (especially the people of God,) four necessary duties.

1. To be always sensible of their own weakness and inefficiency.

2. Not to despond or cast down their hearts, because of the greatness of any work or duty which God requires of them.

3. To depend on God, and to make him their strength and help for all the works which they are to perform.
4. To give the praise of all to God.

First, To be always sensible of their own weakness and insufficiency. Two things are of great use unto every Christian; one is still to believe God's all-sufficiency, the other is still to acknowledge his own insufficiency. When you are to do any work or duty, (suppose it be to repent, to believe, to pray, to preach, to withstand a temptation, to cast out a sinful corruption) preserve in your hearts a sense of your own weakness and insufficiency; as Paul spake, so do you, Lord, who is sufficient for these things? 2 Cor. 2:16. I can do nothing by my own strength; here is much work, but of myself I can do nothing, I am not able to carry it on.

There are three Reasons why I offer this advice unto you, because many persons are not sensible of their own weakness and insufficiency to spiritual acts of obedience. e.g.

1. Such as make nothing of the most solemn duties of communion with God; they feel not the weight of those services: It is all one with them to go to the Lord's, as to go to their own table; it is all one with them to repent of sin as to commit sin; it is all one with them to believe on Christ, as to say that they believe on Christ; it is all one with them to pray as to speak; are these men sensible of their weakness and insufficiency unto any duty, unto whom the performance of every duty is so easy?

2. Such as are seldom in prayer, when they are to do any work commanded them of God; these men do not see their own weakness and insufficiency; they do imagine that they are able to carry on their work in their own strength, without the

strength of God; else they would be much in prayer to God for his help, and for his assistance.

3. Such as mind not the promises of God to enable them, and never make use of them: Surely the child thinks himself able to go alone, who refuseth the hand, and help of the Nurse, &c.

Secondly, Because a right sensibleness of your own weakness is a special means to make you strong for any work of God: That passage of Paul is observable, 2 Cor. 12:10. When I am weak, then am I strong; this seems to be a contradiction, but it is not so: It is as if he had said, When I find that I am weak in myself, then am I made strong by the strength of Christ: How so, will you say! How comes a man to be made strong by Christ, who finds himself to be but weak? I will show you how this comes to pass;

1. The sense of his own weakness is a means to put him upon much prayer to Christ for strength.

2. The sense of his own weakness is an occasion to put him upon faith in Christ, to rely on him, to make Christ his strength, and to draw more grace and strength from him, in whose strength he shall be able to do all things.

Thirdly, Because the Lord hath a special compassion, and a very tender regard to persons truly sensible of their own weakness. The Lord hath a tender regard unto three sorts of men.

1. Unto those that are sensible of their sins; He binds up the broken in heart.

2. Unto those that are sensible of their own unworthiness; The poor Publican went home justified.

3. And unto those that are sensible of their own weakness and insufficiency to do any good: Concerning these God gives command, Isa. 35:3. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. And Zech. 12:8. He that is feeble among them shall be as David: And to these especially hath the promise in the Text a respect; I will cause, &c.

Secondly, Not to despond or cast down their hearts by reason of the greatness, or by reason of the multiplicity, and by reason of the difficulty of the works and duties which God requires from them; depth, and breadth, and length of men's obedience are nothing, as long as there is depth, and breadth, and length of God's assistance. I confess that these would be strong discouragements, were we to traverse the ways and works of God by our strength; but they should not make any discouraging impression, seeing our hands shall be made strong by the Almighty arm of God.

Is anything too hard for the Lord! (He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, Ephes. 3:20, according to the power that worketh in us) God is pleased to charge all the essential duties of obedience upon the weakest of his people, and there is no severity or injustice in this, because as the strongest cannot do the least duty by his own strength, so the weakest Christian shall be made able also to do the greatest duty in the strength of God.

Never say, If I were so strong as such or such a one, then I could do much, but I am weak. I tell you that the strong Christian without the help of God, is but weak; and the weak Christian with the help of his God is strong.

But to remove all despondency of heart from weak Christians about their many, and great, and continual works of obedience, I would

desire them carefully to remember and lay up four singular Adjuncts or ingredients in that helping and assisting grace which God doth promise unto them.

1. Coextension as to all the parts and times of duty.
2. Sufficiency as to enabling for these duties.
3. Redundancy or exuberancy; there is help enough and to spare.
4. Infallibility or certainty of enjoying that assisting grace, if they look up to God for it.

First, Coextension: The helping or assisting grace of God promised unto his people, is not limited or restrained to this or that particular duty, not to this or that particular time of life; but it extends to all our work, and for all the days of our life.

First, It extends to all the duties which God requires of us; what the Apostle spake in another case: 2 Cor. 1:5. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ; That may be said in this case, As our duties and services abound, so the help and strength of God's assisting grace abounds towards us.

Our duties are sometimes summed up. 1. Into the love of God. And 2ly, Into the love of our neighbor; and the promise of assisting grace extends to both these: For the one, see Deut. 30:6. I will circumcise, &c. For the other, see Isa. 11:6. The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, &c. Ver. 9. They shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy Mountain.

Our duties are sometimes summed up into 1. Affirmative. 2ly. Negative; the one is of the good which we are to do; the other is of



the evil which we are to forsake; and you have the promise of assisting grace as to both of them. For these, see Rom. 6:14. And Ezek. 18. They shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abominations thereof.

Our duties are sometimes summed up, 1. Into active. And 2ly, into passive; both these have assisting grace promised; for the first, Ye shall keep my judgments and do them: For the second, it is given unto you on the behalf of Christ to suffer for his Name, Phil. 1:39.

Secondly, It extends unto our duties for all the days of our life; assisting grace is promised to come in as duties are to go on: Isa. 40:31. They shall renew their strength. Chap. 41:1. Let the people renew their strength. Chap. 46:3. Hearken unto me O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. Ver. 4. And even to the old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.

Secondly, Sufficiency: There is a sufficiency in that assisting grace promised to enable the people of God effectually for the greatest and hardest duties; which I shall clear by a few instances.

Said God to Abraham (Gen. 22:2) Take thy son, thine only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt burnt-offering, &c. Was not this a very hard and difficult work to perform? Against which all the strength of nature might rise, yea and grace itself might have disputed the lawfulness of it; nevertheless Abraham was enabled to obey this command, Heb. 11:17.

Again, is it not a great work for a person to leave all that he hath, and then to submit himself unto a suffering condition? Yet the people of

God have been enabled unto this: Moses left all his honor, and riches, and pleasure, and enjoyments in Egypt, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. Heb. 11:24,25,26. And so did the Disciples; they forsook all and took up the cross, and followed Christ.

Again, is it not a great and difficult work, for any man to pass through all changes (incident to our conditions) with a composed, quiet and well-pleased spirit? Yet Paul was enabled to do this; to come up unto it. Phil. 4:11. I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. Ver. 12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound and to suffer need.

Once more, when we are reduced to the extremist of outward straits, that no visible mercy on earth appears for us, is it not then a very hard work to look up to God, and to place our confidence upon him? Yet Jehoshaphat was enabled in this case so to do. 2 Chron. 20:12. We have no might, &c. neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee: Nay when the Lord himself withdraws and hides his face, and writes and speaks bitter things, it is now a most difficult work to look up unto him, and to trust upon him: certainly it is one of the hardest works in the world for any Christian to do it: Nevertheless the people of God have found such a sufficiency of God's assisting grace, that (in such a case) they have been enabled to look up unto him, and to trust upon him. Isa. 8:17. I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Job 13:15. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

Thirdly, Redundancy: There is not only a sufficiency in God's grace effectually to enable his servants, but there is also a redundancy. What's that? That is, the Lord hath strength more than enough for

the works which his people are to perform. When you cast up all the duties which do concern you, and then think of the greatness of that assistance necessary for the performing of them; and do many times pray for, and find an assistance proportionable to your services: why, God is able to communicate much more assistance and strength, then ever you found or imagined. Ephes. 3:20. He is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us.

When you need power to trust on him, he doth give that power, and he can enable you more then only to trust in him; he can enable you to wait and to rejoice in him.

When you need assistance to resist a sin or a temptation, God gives you strength so to do, and yet he can give you much more power than that; he can enable you also to conquer them, yea and to be more then conquerors through him that loved you.

When you need a heart to pray unto him, he can give you that heart to pray; he can help your infirmities; and more can God do than this; he can also strengthen you to pray with confidence, and to strive and wrestle in prayer, and to make your hearts joyful in his house of prayer.

When you need a heart to suffer, he cannot only give you strength to suffer, but enable you to suffer more than your adversaries can inflict.

Fourthly, Certainty of enjoying that assisting grace, if they do look up to God for it: Here briefly observe two things.

1. That God's promise of assisting Grace, doth not exclude our calling upon God for the same; for even for this, as well as for the rest of the

good things promised by God, it holds, Ezek. 36:37. Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.

2. That when we do rightly call upon God for his assistance, for his grace to cause us to walk in his Statutes, the Lord will not deny it unto us, but will assuredly give it unto us. 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 unto him: ver. 6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, &c. Psal. 57:2. I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me.

**Object. But clear this by instances.**

Sol. Psal. 138:3. In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. 2 Cor. 12:8. For this I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me: ver. 9. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

**Object. O but for all this, I find many times no help or strength from God, although he saith that he will cause us to walk in his Statutes, and to do them; and this discourages me.**

Sol. To this I would give these answers.

First, The imparting of promised help, is not by way of necessary or natural dimanation, as the sun imparts light unto the earth, but by way of voluntary and prudent dispensation, as a father imparts supplies unto his children; who comes in with his helps in a time of need, and upon the humble addresses and entreaties of his children.

**Object. You want more help, but do you call upon the Lord for more help?**

Sol. God expects to hear from you, as you desire to hear from him. Jer. 29:12. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you: ver. 13. And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your art.

Secondly, Though you have prayed, yet did you pray in faith? He that comes to God, must believe that God is; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. 11:6. I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Mar. 11:24.

Thirdly, But do you with patience wait upon the Lord? The Prophet saith, that the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him. Isa. 30:18. And the Church saith, I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me. Micah 7:7. And David declares it upon experience. I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry. Psal. 40:1.

Now I say unto you, put these three things together in practice, and then you shall assuredly find that assisting grace which you need; whether it be for resistance of temptations, or for victory over corruptions, or for ability for performance of duties.

**Object. But I would enjoy such a full power of assisting and helping grace at once, that I might make a perfect riddance of all sin, and be always completely and presently furnished for any acts of obedience.**

Sol. Belike you would needs be in the Prodigals condition, to have all your portion of goods in your own hands, thinking that you are more

wise and more able than your God, to manage the stock of grace! But,

First, It is not only fitter, but better that you should trust God, then that God should trust you; your grace and strength are safer in his hands, than in yours.

Secondly, God will not thus impart his strength unto you; as you imagine or wish; but he will impart it successively and gradually, according to your continual necessities of it.

1. He would still keep you humble. 2. He would still keep you in dependence upon himself. 3. He would give unto you manifold experiences of his faithfulness in performing his promise unto you.

Thirdly, To depend on God, and to make him their strength for all the works which they are to perform.

Now because this is the principal Use which can be made from the choice and precious promise here in the Text, I shall therefore insist the more upon it and show unto you,

1. Why you that are the people of God, should depend on God for his strength to enable you for all your works and services?

2. When especially you should do so?

3. Whether indeed you do so?

4. How you may be enabled so to do?

5. How one may know that it is the very strength of God which is with us?

**1. Quest. Why the people of God should depend on God, (yea only depend on God) for his strength to enable them for all their duties, for all their works and services?**

Sol. There are three reasons for it.

1. In respect of God.

2. In respect of ourselves.

1. In respect of God.

First, It is his command and will concerning you, still to depend on him, and on him alone. Psal. 62:5. My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him: ver. 6. He is my Rock, and my Salvation: ver. 7. In God is my Salvation and my Glory, the Rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God: ver. 8. Trust in him at all times, pour out your heart before him, &c. Prov. 3:5. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. Ver. 6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Isa. 26:4. Trust you in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. God (you see) calls on us for our dependence on him, and only upon him, and at all times, in all our occasions.

Secondly, It is his honor that you do depend on him, to help and strengthen your souls: you do now declare, and publish, and put unto your seal, that power belongs to God; that he is the all-sufficient and efficient God; and that he is the faithful God, who will perform whatsoever promise he hath made unto you. Unquestionably God would have his people to honor him, (he forms them for his praise,) and all the honor which God hath by us, consists in this, that he is

acknowledged to be the only efficient, and the only end of all that we have or do.

Thirdly, It is the end why he makes this promise of causing you to walk in his Statutes: As the end of his threatening's is our repentance, and as the end of his precepts is our obedience; so the end of this promise is our dependence. Prov. 22:19. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known unto thee this day. Ver. 29. Excellent things in counsels and knowledge.

Fourthly, It is his way of conveying or communicating his strength and help: all your sights of his mercy, all your taste of his love, all your experiences of his goodness, and all the imparting's of his help and strength are unto faith; you must believe, if you will be established and strengthened: God will give strength to his promise, but then his people must come and depend upon him for it. Psal. 27:14. Wait on the Lord, and he shall strengthen thine heart.

**Object. Indeed if you speak of the absolute power of God, he can let out and convey sufficient help for our work without any praying of ours, and without any believing of ours.**

Sol. But God is pleased to set out this way of depending and believing to let forth his help unto us as the best way to his own wisdom, both for the conviction of our own weaknesses, and for the demonstration of his own graces and fullness.

2. In respect of ourselves.

First, Necessity: There is not bread enough at home, nor strength enough in ourselves for any good; therefore go abroad, and look for it in God.



Quid es in te, & quid es de te! Spake Austin very well on Psal. 42, Psal. 119:35. Make me to go in the path of thy Commandments: ver. 36. Incline my heart unto thy Testimonies: 1 Kings 8:37. The Lord our God be with us; Let him not leave us, nor forsake us; ver. 58. That he may incline our heart unto him, to walk in his ways and to keep his Judgments! I confess, that there were no necessity of our dependence of God for strength to cause, &c. if one of these two things were true.

1. That we had power and sufficiency of our own.

2. Or, That any other besides God could be a sufficiency unto us.

But neither of these are so: 1. No man, not the best, is or can be a sufficiency unto himself, as I have formerly proved.

2. None besides God, can be a sufficiency unto us, or help unto us.

**Object. We do find much help and strength many times by public Ordinances and private Conferences.**

Sol. The Reason is, because God makes them to be of help and strength unto you: The conduit conveys water into your houses, but water comes not from the Conduit, but from the Spring: Therefore you find sometimes Ordinances and Conferences can do nothing at all in any way of help, that you may know, that not they, but God in and by them, was the help.

Secondly, Prevalency: Dependance on God for strength, will get you his strength; Psal. 84:5. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee: ver. 7. They go from strength to strength, Psal. 28:7. The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him and I am helped.

Thirdly, Experience: They that know thy Name; will put their trust in thee; Psal. 9:10. For thou Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee; Isa. 11:2. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation: Isa. 25:4. Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength unto the needy in his distress! God is your God, and he is your strength, and you have found him to be so; when being sensible of your own weakness, you have cast yourselves upon him: How did his strength beat down strength before you! And how did his power make itself manifest in your weakness! O Christians, you have experience on all sides.

1. When you have trusted upon yourselves, how barren and dead have your hearts been! Like Samson, &c.
2. When you have trusted on your God, how able, how full, quick, and enlarged hath your heart been, and with what life and alacrity hath the work of God prospered in your hands!

Fourthly, Privilege: It is not only your duty to go to God, and to trust on him to help and enable you to walk in his Statutes, and to do them, but it is also your privilege which you enjoy by virtue of the Covenant: Is it not a privilege which a Son enjoys, and which a Wife enjoys, that the one may confidently go to his Father, and the other may confidently go to her Husband, to help them in their necessities!

Why! You who are in Covenant with God, you are the Sons of God, 2 Cor. 6. He is your Father, you are married unto him; Thy Maker is thy Husband, Isa. 54:5, you may therefore go unto him, and rely on him.

1. Your God knew long ago all your necessities, and self-weaknesses, or insufficiencies, and therefore at the very first, he engaged himself

to be yours in love and mercy, and help, and strength.

2. It is no more than he is resolved for; he is resolved, and willing, and ready to help you, and do you good with all his heart and with all his soul.

3. And it concerns his glory to cause you to walk in his Statutes and to do them.

**Quest. 2. When especially the People of God should by faith depend upon God for his gracious help and strength to cause them, &c.**

Sol. There is no duty or work which we are to do upon God's Command at any time, but we should by faith depend upon God for his strength to enable and cause us to do it: Nevertheless we should in eight Cases, express a more special care to depend upon him for his assisting and supplying strength. e.g.

1. When we are most apt to think that we stand in least need of his strength and presence.

2. When we find the greatest strength of opposition to the performing of any work.

3. When we are most sensible of our own indisposition and inability to the doing of such good works.

4. When any work we are called to perform, hath a greater Concernment and Respect to God's Glory, his Churches good, and our own salvation.

5. When the Work is extraordinary and universal.

6. When near, great, and sudden Changes do befall us.

7. When we have made solemn vows to God in the days of our distress, for Reformation or better walking.

8. When it is such a work, wherein we have miscarried, and have longer stuck at it, and cannot get it forward.

1. When we are most apt to think, that we stand in least need of his strength and presence: That our mountain is strong, that we are increased, that we can go alone, and are now sufficient.

**Object. But will some of you say, When are we thus apt to think, &c?**

Sol. In three Cases.

1. When the works or duties seem unto us little, and common, and easy, not needing any singular presence of God's Grace: As the Israelites thought about the taking of Ai, it was but a small City, and a few men would serve the turn, and there was no need to trouble all the host: But they found it otherwise, &c. so when any duty seems but ordinary, a small work; and we need not call in for the help of God, it is but to meditate, it is but to pray, it is but to read the Word, but to hear a Sermon, but to resist a temptation, but to deny a very light occasion of sinning, but to bear an ordinary Cross or affliction.

Now we are apt to think we can do these ordinary works, and we can pass these ordinary crosses; and are not very importunate with God to assist and enable us. But what comes of this? Why! Either we can do nothing at all! Or else what we do is but superficial and cold; or that little temptation or occasion of sin is too hard for us, and that little Cross fills us with impatience, and vexation, and discontent, &c.

Therefore I beseech you who are the people of God, Learn to go out of yourselves. Learn to depend on God's strength, even for the least Duty that you are to perform: there is in the least duty (whether Active or Passive) enough to exercise your Faith; Though the greatest work be not above God's strength, yet the least is above your strength. If you can do nothing without Christ, then you cannot do the least good work without him. If the Apostles were not sufficient of themselves to think anything, much less are we able of ourselves do anything! Nay, and you may observe it, That the failings of the people of God are usually about ordinary duties: They do carry on their difficult works, better than they do their ordinary works; what is the Reason of this? Because in them they look up more to God: but in these, they look more at themselves.

Secondly, When we have found more than ordinary enlargements in Communion with God, that our hearts have melted in the confession of our sins, and that our hearts have wrestled with God in Prayer, and our resolutions have been exceedingly strengthened and sharpened: O now beware of thyself; and now have a special care to make God alone thy strength: why? Because now thou shalt (through subtlety of temptation,) be inclined to think too highly of thyself, and of thine own strength; and that this may last long; and thereupon there wilt slack that earnestness of Communion; and thou wilt be venturing and hazarding upon the account of thy own strength, and God will leave thee, and humble thee.

Thirdly, When we have tasted of the wonderful goodness of God in high and rich experiences, nay in the very healings and assurances of his own spirit, that we have heard the voice of joy, all is pardoned, God is reconciled: Hereupon our hearts are exceedingly raised to God, in blessing and praising, and saying, What shall I do for this good God? O but remember to raise your hearts in a careful and

watchful, depending on God's strength and sufficiency, still to enable you to walk with him, and to do for him: You think you can do much more, and I do verily believe you would do much more; but all those gracious experiences without any assistance and influence from God, will not be sufficient unto you

Secondly, We should especially depend upon God for his strength and sufficiency then when we do meet with the greatest strength of opposition to the performing of any good work or works: as David in another case, when the people spake of stoning him, he did then encourage himself in the Lord his God. 1 Sam. 30:6. Or as Jehoshaphat when that great multitude came against him, and God promised him deliverance, said he, Believe in the Lord your God, and ye shall be established. 2 Chron. 20:20.

So should we do when we meet with strong oppositions and hindrances; when we are to work, or when we are working the work or works commanded us of God, we should now by faith look up to God, and rest on his arm of gracious power to uphold our hearts, and to carry us out unto our dutiful performances. How many temptations do we many times meet with from Satan? And how many threatening's, and scoffs, and reproaches, and encounters do we meet many times with from ungodly men, and from carnal parents and friends, and from secret enemies of God and his ways? All which do tend to discourage our hearts, and to weaken our hands, and to interrupt or divert our feet from walking in God's ways, and from doing of the works which God requires of us in our places: Now this is the time to look up to God and to trust on him, to encourage and enable the heart to serve him, to hold on in walking before him with all faithfulness, wisdom, zeal and patience: now make use of that promise in Isa. 41:10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea I will help

thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Zech. 4:6. This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Ver. 7. Who art thou O great mountain! Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting's, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

Thirdly We should especially depend on God for his strength, when we are most sensible of our own indispositions, weaknesses, streitghtened and insufficient hearts: How often do we find these things upon us? How apt are we under them to shrink, to complain, to give over? O but our work (when we are not able to do our work,) is by faith to look up to God, to quicken and enable us to do his work. Psal. 119:159. Consider how I love thy precepts! Quicken me (O Lord,) according to thy loving kindness. Isa. 45:24. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come.

**Object. But I have no might or power at all to do anything.**

Sol. Consider now that precious promise in Isa. 40:29. He giveth power to the faint, and unto them that have no might he increaseth strength. Phil. 2:13. He worketh in us, &c.

**Object. But I have looked up with such weak desires, and with such a weak faith as I have, and yet find no more strength.**

Sol. Read on ver. 31. They that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength, &c. So Psal. 31:24. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord.

**Object. But did any servant of God ever find him coming in with strength, when sensible of his own weakness, and calling upon him for help and strength?**

Sol. See two places of Scripture instances for this:

Psal. 73:26. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion fore ver. Psal. 138:3. In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

Fourthly, We should especially depend on God for strength, when we are called to do any work wherein the glory of God, and the good of his Church, and our own salvation, are more singularly concerned.

First, These are services and works of the highest, and of the greatest consequence: there is no work whatsoever (wherein we can deal) which is or can be of a higher nature, for excellency necessity, felicity.

Secondly, Miscarriages under these, would prove very woeful and ruinous: that God's glory should fail in my hand, or the good and safety of the Church in my hand, and my own soul should perish by my own neglect.

Thirdly, And of all works these do meet with the greatest opposition, from without ourselves, and from within ourselves: the gates of hell are opened, &c.

Yet for these hath God most of all engaged his power, and presence, and strength, as you may see in the variety of his promises, and in the glory of his providences; therefore when you are called to do any work, which hath a near and special respect to these things, fall down



and pray; look up and depend: as he said, *de deo nil sine deo*; we can know nothing of God without God: so say I, *pro deo nil sine deo*; we can do nothing for God without God; nothing for his glory, without his assistance.

O Lord, the work which I am now endeavoring, thou knowest, that it concerns thy name and glory; the good and welfare of thy Church, which is the apple of thine eye, and the dearly beloved of thy soul; and it respects mine own eternal salvation, which thou wouldst have me work out with fear and trembling: good Lord leave me not; hide not thyself, but appear in thy strength for the carrying on of these works; come in with thy wisdom to direct me, and with thy grace to quicken me, and with thy spirit to lead, and uphold, and prosper me.

Fifthly, When the work is extraordinary and universal, of much difficulty and danger, and requires more than ordinary height of spirit, and courage, and resolution, now is your time not to consult with flesh and blood; not to consider your own proportion of gifts and abilities; but by faith to look up to him who commands the work, and promiseth his assistance and presence for the work. *Exod. 3:10*. I will send thee unto Pharaoh (saith God to Moses,) that thou mayst bring forth my people, the children of Israel out of Egypt: *ver. 11*. And Moses said to God, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh? And that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? *Ver. 12*. And he said, Certainly I will be with thee. *Josh. 1:5*. As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.

Beloved, as the weakest duties are above our strength; so the greatest and hardest are below God's strength: it is not what you are, but what your God is who commands you, and what he will be unto you, who hath promised his own power and strength.

Sixthly, When near, great, and sudden changes do befall us; as the loss of a husband, wife, child, parent, friend, estate, &c. this is a time wherein ordinarily we are weak, and do stand in need of more strength than our own, to bear the hand of God with patient submission, and to make a sanctified use of the same. And this is a time when we should in a special manner look up to God, and trust on him for his help and assistance, who hath promised to be with his people in the fire, and in the water. Isa. 43:2. And to wipe off their tears; and to turn again in mercy; and that all things shall work together for their good.

Seventhly, When we have made solemn vows in our distresses of particular reformation, or of better walking with God: O if God will spare me, if God will hear me, then this I will be, and thus I will walk, &c. Indeed the sin is great to answer for such works, and God will certainly require them at your hands: therefore when God hath answered you, O beg for his grace, for his strength to enable you. Isa. 10:21. They shall make a vow unto the Lord and perform it.

Eighthly, We should in a special manner depend upon God for his own strength to be revealed unto us, when we have experimentally found any work or duty sticking long upon our hands, and we cannot get it forward, and accomplish it with our strength: as many times a man resolves to leave such and such a sin, and is very serious in his resolution, and yet he finds himself hampered, and captivated by it.

And many times a man resolves upon such or such a heavenly duty, which is of an excellent nature; and yet he cannot get up his heart unto it, but he still omits and neglects it, or is by carnal counsel and pleasures taken off from it.

In these and the like cases, we should go and weep before the Lord, and confess, both the deceitfulness and insufficiency of our own

hearts; and earnestly beseech the Lord to take 1. our hearts, and 2. our works into his own hands; that he would change our hearts, and that he would direct our steps; and that he would mortify our sinful lusts, and by his strength tread down strength, that he would lead captivity captive, that he would break our bonds for us, and set us at liberty by the power of his own Spirit.

**3. Quest. Now follows the third Question, How may one know, that he doth indeed make God his strength; and doth depend or rely only upon him for all the works which he is to do; to cause him to walk in his statutes, and to do them?**

Sol. If one doth indeed set up God for his strength, and doth depend and rely upon him, &c.

First, He will be much in prayer unto God; he will not take up, or set upon any work without prayer: when any duty is to be performed by him, his first work is with God; Lord, give thy strength unto thy servant: he will not first venture upon the work, and then look up to God, but will first call in the help of God, and then attempt the work. Beloved, remember this, that the more that any man depends upon himself, the less he is in prayer to God: (for saith he,) I have wisdom enough; and I have strength enough to do this work; and the more that any man depends upon God, the more will he pray unto God: he that believes most, will pray most. Psal. 62:8. Trust in him at all times ye people, pour out your hearts before him; God is a refuge for us. Because if you do indeed trust on God; if you do indeed believe that God is your strength and refuge, you will then pour out your heart in prayer before him. Psal. 116:10. I believe, therefore have I spoken.

Secondly, He will be much in fear: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that Works in you to will and to do,

of his own good pleasure. Phil. 2:12,13.

**Quest. Of what is the man afraid, who acknowledgeth and relieth on God as his strength for every good work?**

Sol. He is afraid

1. Of himself, even in his best sufficiencies; for not by might and by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. Zech. 4:6 As Jehoshaphat, who had an army of above eleven hundred thousand men; (2 Chron. 17. from ver. 14 to 19.) yet when the Moabites and the Ammonites came against him, he goes unto the Lord, and saith; 2 Chron. 20:12. O our God, wilt not thou judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee. Why said he we have no might? Had he not above eleven hundred thousand fighting men? Were these no might? No, they were not; self-sufficiency is no sufficiency, and self-might is no might, and therefore he feared himself in the highest of his own sufficiency's; and his eyes are upon God; in and from him was might and sufficiency indeed. The like you read in a spiritual case of Paul; as able an Apostle, and as laborious, and as powerful as any of them all, and one that relied as much upon the grace of God in Christ, and one that had as choice and eminent abilities of knowledge and grace; yet saith he, 2 Cor. 3:5. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God: Ver. 6, who hath made us able ministers of the new testament.

2. Of doing anything which may offend his God, and provoke him to withdraw himself from him. How jealous was Moses, when the two Tribes and a half petitioned to have their portion on this side Jordan, lest they had been upon a sinful design

which might move the Lord to leave them! Numb. 32:14. Behold you are risen up in your fathers stead; an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord towards Israel. Ver. 15. For if ye turn away from him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness, and ye shall destroy all this people: See how afraid Moses was, lest anything should be done which might move the Lord to leave them. And so indeed it is with everyone who knows that God is his strength and sufficiency; he is afraid of everything which may move the Lord to depart from him, and to leave him unto himself; he is afraid of every gross sin, and of going against the light of the word, and against the working of the spirit, and against the checks and warnings of his own conscience, as knowing that for these things God hath left his people, and hath withdrawn his actual assistance from them, as you may read in Samson, and David, and Hezekiah, and Peter.

3. Of giving way to unbelief, and of siding with it, and nourishing of it, which makes us so ready to deny the power of God's all sufficiency, and to question the intention and purpose of it unto ourselves, &c. against this he wrestles much, and doth pray much, lest having a promise of God's helping grace, he should fall short of it through unbelief.

Thirdly, If you do indeed look on God as your strength, that can and will enable you to walk, &c. then his promise in relation unto your services of obedience, will put life and courage into you, even under the greatest and hardest of trials and duties; so that the greatest and hardest services will be all one unto you with the weakest and smallest; for saith the Church, The Lord God will help me. Isa. 50:7,9. And as Asa said when he was going out against a boast of a thousand thousand Ethiopians: Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power, 2 Chron. 14:11.

So it will be with us, when high and difficult works are to be done by us our hearts faint not, but we set upon them cheerfully; for God's strength is sufficient for the greatest and for the smallest services. Zach. 4:7. Who art thou O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. Sometimes you meet with dreadful temptations; and if you do believe and rely on God's strength, you will resist them, and fight against them, and expect victory over them; for God is on your side, and his strength will bear down all the strength of Satan. Sometimes you meet with strong corruptions; why, the power of God will subdue them, and sin shall not have, &c. Sometimes you meet with strong afflictions, and you will bear them patiently; for the hand of God will sustain you. Sometimes you meet with wonderful oppositions from the world; why, your God is with you, and for you, and he will uphold and strengthen you; and fill you with love and zeal for his name. O when a man believes indeed on God, he doth then 1. Oppose strength to strength. 2. See all to be weakness which opposeth God. 3. That God's strength will carry all before it. 4. That works which heretofore seemed impossible and unfeasible, and we did despair ever to compass them: now we look upon them as possible to be done, and dare to set upon them, and are confident to be successful in them: strong temptations and corruptions will now appear to be vincible; and the greatest and hardest of holy duties will now appear to be practicable, &c. Before we do by faith apprehend and rely on God's promised strength and assistance, we do measure all our works, and duties, and trials by our own strength; but when we do indeed rely on God, then we do measure them by God's strength which is all-sufficient. When a poor soul lights upon a spiritual promise, respectively answerable unto his particular work and occasion; and can indeed by faith rely upon God making that promise: Come saith he, the work will be done which I have often thought would never be done: this sin will be mastered;

and that temptation will be conquered, for God, hath promised his own strength, &c.

Fourthly, If you do indeed look on God as your strength, who can and will enable you to walk in his statutes, &c. then your hearts will be perfect with God, and sound and impartial in respect unto all his ways: you will not pick and choose; you will not take up one duty which concerns, you and leave or omit a weightier duty which concerns you: you will not comply only with duties of easiness, and neglect the duties of difficulty; you will not satisfy yourselves with the external parts of duty, and lay aside the internal ingredients of duty; but your hearts will comply with all the will of God; and you will sincerely attempt the performance of all.

Why so? Because: 1. The command of God takes on your souls for all; and 2. God assures you by his promise, that he will enable you for all the works he requires of you. Beloved, this is an undeniable truth, that so far as men are believably persuaded of God's sufficiency and faithfulness in promise, so far their hearts are carried out in evenness and uprightness of walking with God: if a man believes that God will be present with him, and help and strengthen him for all the duties and works commanded of God, this man shall find his heart closing with God, enlarged unto all those works: And on the contrary, if any man remains unpersuaded of God's ability and faithfulness, (either in whole or in part) his heart will remain unsound, and his walking will forever be uneven with God: If he thinks that God's help is sufficient against one sin, but not against another sin, (unto which he hath been accustomed,) why he will now remain under the dominion of that sin: If he thinks that God's help is sufficient for one good work, but not for the performance of another good work, (not to self-denial, not to contentedness, not to heavenly-mindedness, not to perseverance;) O how uneven will this man be? How full of carnal

reasonings? O this cannot be done, and this can never be attained. And why is not that work done by you, as well as by another? And attained by you, as well as another? Why can you not mourn for every sin, as well as another doth? And why cannot you repent and forsake every sin, as well as another? And why are not you so even and upright in your ways, as well as another? I tell you the reason of it; because you do not believe the promise of God's sufficient grace; and you do not rely upon it as another doth: think you that he mortifies his sins, and acts all those duties by his own strength, or by the strength of God? And how comes he by that strength but by believing? And verily thus far might you have attained as well as he, if your heart were sincere, and did your hearts desire and trust on God in Christ for his all-sufficient help.

Fifthly, if you do indeed trust upon God to be your strength, who can and will enable you to walk in his statutes and to do them; then you are and may be found in the ways of his strength, in the ways wherein he reveals his arm and power unto his servants. Beloved, there is a marvelous difference between presumption and faith: presumption is a very bold, and boisterous, and irregular confidence on God, both for pardoning mercy, and for assisting grace: the man loves his sins and lives in them, and yet doubts not of God's mercy to pardon his sins; and the man exposeth himself to the temptations of sins, and presumes on God's help to keep him from sin: and the man lives in the contempt or in the neglect of God's ordinances, and presumes of God's help and strength for all his works: Just as if a man should voluntarily leap into the sea, and think that God must keep him from drowning; or as if a man should desire to be strong, and yet refuse daily food which is a means of strength. Thus it is when persons are foolish and proudly presumptuous. When we do indeed rely on God by faith for his gracious assistance, to enable us either against the doing of evil or for the doing of good, we do then



decline all sinful occasions which draw us on to sin; and we do then apply ourselves to all those means which God hath set apart, and doth bless to convey his strength unto us.

There are three ways wherein God reveals, or gives out strength unto us.

1. His word which begets and nourishes us; which conveys life unto us, and strength; which brings us in, and builds us up: O how diligent and conscientious doth faith make us to attend it!
2. Prayer, when our requests are put up to God, and his answers come down to help and strengthen us: O how doth faith enable us to wrestle with God, to be strengthened with all might by his spirit in the inner man I as the Apostle speaks in Ephes. 3:16.
3. Heavenly conference, where we help to edify, and establish, and build up one another in our holy profession. O how doth faith make us to prize and improve such opportunities?

Now consider yourselves you who think you look up to God, and do acknowledge him, and rely on him for strength to cause you, &c. where may a man find you complaining of weakness, and in word extolling and desiring strength from God? Are you in the ways of strength? And are you seriously and conscientiously in them? I doubt that some of you are in the ways of weakness, and not of strength; not in God's ways, but in Satan's ways; not attending the doctrines of truths, but the doctrines of lies and errors; not keeping close to God's ordinances, but roving out after such teachers as distil into you scorns and contempt's of God's Ordinances: Is this to rely on God for strength, when for lying vanities you forsake the paths of God, and of his strength, and of your own true peace?

Sixthly, What shall I say more? If you do indeed depend on God as your strength to enable you to walk in his statutes, you shall then find a spiritual rest or quietation in your hearts, joined with a spiritual liberty or freedom. You cannot imagine how tumultuous and unsettled a man's heart is, and how straightened it is, and backward his heart is unto duties, whilst he still sees holy and heavenly work to be done, and no strength undertaking to enable him for that work; or at least if he cannot believe that God will be his strength: his thoughts are many times confounded and amazed, and his very heart sometimes quakes and trembles. But on the contrary, when he can by faith see the sufficiency of God's strength, and is able to fix and rely himself upon it, then these two things will presently follow and appear.

1. One is Quietation: his whole soul comes into a calm, and is cleared of all those boisterous storms of unbelieving fears: my God is my strength: the work is much, but he hath help enough and will not fail me.

2. The other is a Liberty and enlargedness; he hath now a heart ready and free to set upon the work.

#### **4. Quest. What one must be, and do, that so he may find God to be his strength enabling him, &c.**

Sol. There are four things which I would answer to this.

First, If you would find God to be your enabling strength, then there must be a relation twixt God and you; he must be your God, if you would find him to be your strength. Psal. 91:2. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust. Micah 7:7. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Psal. 68:28. Thy God hath commanded thy

strength; strengthen O God that which thou hast wrought in us. Beloved, the Lord calls upon us to be his people; to take off our hearts from all other objects, and to give them in unto himself, and to exalt him in his sovereignty and authority; which if we do, he will be our God, and will perform all the good of his Covenant unto us. Now if any man saith, I do not like to serve this God; I would rather serve my sins and the world; let not that man think to find any good from God: neither love, nor mercy, nor grace, nor strength: But if a man's heart doth like and consent, choose the Lord to be his God, and him he loves, and him he will serve; he is now come into the bond of the Covenant, and God is bound to find him mercy to pardon him, and grace to change him, and strength to enable him for all the duties or works which he requires from him: and he may in the sense of his sufficiency go to God, and trust on him, and wait on him; and shall assuredly receive strength and power from his God, to walk in his Statutes and to do them.

Secondly, If you would find the Lord's strength to cause you to walk, &c. then you must get to him in the name of Christ; not in your own name or worthiness or merit, or goodness for which the Lord should give out his help unto you, but only in the name of Christ; that the Lord for his sake would make his promise good unto you; for all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ, 2 Cor. 1:20. And Christ hath assured you, that whatsoever you shall ask the father in his name, he will give it you, Joh. 16:23. I am weak, Lord, strengthen me for Christ's sake: I am insufficient, without strength, able of myself to do nothing, O Lord help me, O Lord, work all thy works in me for Christ's sake; for Christ's sake pull down my sins, for Christ's sake enable me to walk in all well-pleasing before thee, &c.

Thirdly, If you would find the strength of God, &c. then you must be sure to keep your hearts upright with God, that it is indeed your

souls desire, and endeavor to walk in God's ways, and to do his work.

**Object. A man many times complains that he can get no power from God against his sins, and no power to do such and such duties.**

Sol. I will tell you the reason of it; because his heart secretly loves such a sin, and is not willing to be parted from it; and his heart secretly dislikes such a way of God, and therefore the Lord gives him no power or strength, and regards not his prayers, nor his complaints, Psal. 66:18.

But if your hearts were resolved indeed to forsake your sins; they would be your hatred, and burden, and grief, and you would set yourselves against them; but your strength is too weak and disproportionable; and hereupon you go and cry unto the Lord; O Lord, those sins are too strong for me, I am not able to subdue them; I beseech thee for Christ's sake, to send forth the word of thy power, and lead captivity captive, and suffer me not to dishonor thee anymore.

I say if your hearts were drawn into this frame; that the business did not lie upon the deceitfulness or falseness of your hearts, but only upon the weakness and impotency of your heart, (you would break down the power of sin, but cannot do it; you would walk better with God, but you cannot do so) you may now go confidently unto God for strength, and he will certainly hear you, and answer you with strength in your soul.

**Object. You will say, This doth stay and encourage us; but how may one know that it is only weakness, and not wickedness; only a want of power, and not a want of will, &c.**

Sol. Its only a weakness, and a want of more power against sin, if you find these six things.

1. A constant conflict with sin.
2. A resolved unsubjected unto sin: I will never serve sin, though I am often captivated by it.
3. Earnest desires to have it mortified; longings when.
4. Avoiding all occasions and ways that do give strength to sin.
5. Gladness of any preventing and assisting power against sin.
6. Extreme grief, when our weakness is borne down by the strength of sin.

If you find these things in you, assuredly your hearts are willing to forsake sin; and that you cannot get more riddance, doth arise only from weakness; and therefore in this case go to God for more of his strength, and he will not deny it unto you.

And so for any good work that you would perform, but you cannot dispatch it as you would, or as you should; you may know that this comes only from weakness and defect of more strength; and nor from a secret dislike of it, or averseness unto it, if you find these five qualities in you.

1. You dare not neglect or omit it, but you will be doing the will of God in this and that particular duty, with such a weak power as you have, though it be in sighs, and in tears, and in much weakness, and under many fears and temptations.

2. You will be in the ways of strength; you will be creeping to the pools of God's Ordinances, there to receive of his strength.

3. Though you cannot do much, yet you will find desires to do more; strong cries to help weakness.

4. You will take a delight after the inward man in the law of God, and consent unto it, that it is good and holy.

5. You will make much use of Christ, until God shows his power in your weakness, and gives in more strength to enable and perfect your works.

Fourthly, If you would find strength from God to enable you to walk in his Statutes and to do them, then you must be an humble people, and you must sue unto him in forma pauperis. Psal 40:17. I am poor and needy, the Lord thinketh upon me; thou art my help, &c. Psal. 10:17. Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart; thou wilt incline thine ear to hear. Jam. 4:6. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. By these places you see that we must not be proud, but humble; and if we be so, and if we do seek the Lord with a humble heart, he will hear our desire, and will give grace unto us.

**Object. But perhaps you may desire to know when a man's heart is humble, and when he seeks the Lord with a humble heart, to help and strengthen him?**

Sol. I will speak a little to this: a man's heart is humble, and humbly seeking, when;

First, He hath no self-bottom to trust unto, but looks on himself as one utterly destitute and insufficient; in me saith Paul, there dwells

no good; and we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything.

Secondly, He is well contented to go abroad, and to beg, and to be beholding unto another for all his supplies, and supports, and helps: The humble heart is well content to go and stand at heaven gates for mercy, for grace, for wisdom, for all spiritual power.

Thirdly, He judgeth himself unworthy of the least mercy and help from God; not only which he hath received, (as Jacob, Gen. 32:10. I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shown to thy servant) but also which he doth now request of God; there is no reason in me, nor cause in me, nothing in me for which, &c.

Fourthly, He impleads and useth the name of Christ. Dan. 9:18. We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies of another: God's own reason, for God's own grant; for his Name sake, for his own Promise sake, for his Christ sake. Remember thy word, and remember thy Covenant, and do it for the Lord's sake.

Fifthly, He will wait God's leisure, and God's pleasure: I will hearken what God the Lord will speak, Psal. 85:8. I will wait so the God of my salvation, my God will hear me, Micah 7:7.

**5. Quest. The fifth and last Question is, How one may know that God hath been his strength to cause him to do any good work, or that he hath done it in the strength of God, and not in the strength of his own parts and gifts?**

Sol. This is a choice and deep question, but I shall desire to speak a few things unto it: One may know that he doth act his duties or do

his works, not in the strength of his own parts, but in and by the strength of God;

First, By the Integrity or full frame of a holy working: when his work or duty hath still the requisites that do constitute or make a duty to be a right duty; or a work to be a right work in a spiritual sense.

To make a work, or to set forth a work in a right and spiritual way, there must be a concurrence or conjunction of five particulars.

1. There must be the rule of God's word to command and warrant it.
2. There must be a right end, even the glory of God alone intended and aimed at.
3. There must be a renewed and changed heart by the Spirit of Christ: the tree must be good, before the fruit be good.
4. There must be the breathing of those heavenly affections of love, and delight, and joy, and inward working as well as an outward work.
5. There must be faith to set it forth in the name of Christ.

Now to work it, I say,

1. No man on earth can (by the sole strength of his parts) set forth any one good work: indeed a man of much learning, and of great endowments, and of good utterance, may in the virtue of these say and do many good works, which we call good: he may make a Sermon, he may utter a Prayer, he may be much in the outward part of duty; nevertheless this strength that is in him is nothing as to the spiritual performing of any duty: he is not able



with all the parts which he hath, to look only at God's glory, nor to set out his duties with holy and heavenly affections, nor with faith in Christ.

2. Therefore if you find this concurring frame (which I have mentioned) in any of your works or duties, assuredly you have attained grace and strength from God to enable you: the Spirit of God hath been present with you to help you.

Secondly, By the Antecedents that go before any work or duty of yours, of which the performance of it is a consequent or fruit: e.g. if it be the fruit following

1. The sense and acknowledgment of your own insufficiency.
2. An earnest desire of God to engage his help and assistance.
3. The actual and particular application of the promise of God, resting on him, and expecting God's assistance: now the work that is done, is not done in any confidence of ourselves, but only upon the account of God's strength; but to this I have hinted already.

Thirdly, By the Consequents of your duties performed in the strength of God, which are quite different from those that are performed in our own strength, whether we look unto God, or unto ourselves.

First, Unto God, there is acceptance and answer of all the duties or works done by his strength and assistance; but not so of the works done in our strength.

Secondly, Unto ourselves, where we shall experimentally find four admirable effects.

1. After all the duties or works performed by us in the strength of God, we grow more humble, as David, in 1 Chron. 29:14. But who am I, and who is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee: But after works done in the strength of our own parts, we grow more proud, as the Pharisees, &c.

2. After the duties performed in the strength of God, we do more exalt and bless the grace of God, as Paul, 1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. And David, Psal. 115:1. Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy, and for thy truths sake: Whereas when we do act in the strength of our own parts, we will rob God of his glory, and give praise and blessing unto ourselves; unto our own wisdom, and unto our own zeal, and unto our own dexterity and learning.

3. When we have performed our work in the strength of God, and have indeed discerned his presence with us, this will draw out our hearts to depend more upon God for our future works and services: It will sweetly raise our hearts unto him; O I will trust on him another time, for I relied on his power and sufficiency, and he graciously helped and strengthened me. Psal. 63:7. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice: But it is not thus when we act in our own strength; for after such performances we are still more apt to rely upon ourselves.

4. When we have done our work by the strength of God, hereupon our hearts are more endeared to God, and so are our resolutions more and more to pray unto God. Psal. 116:1. I love

the Lord because he hath heard my voice, and my supplication.  
Ver. 2. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I  
call upon him as long as I live.

Thus have I finished the third duty, which was to depend upon God  
for his strength, seeing he doth promise to cause us to walk in his  
Statutes and to do them.

Fourthly, Now follows the fourth and last duty which concerns the  
people of God, which is to give the praise of all the good which they  
do, unto God alone: I may not slightly pass this; therefore I will  
inquire, first why, secondly whither.

**1. Quest. Why the people of God should be careful to give  
unto God alone, the praise and glory of all the good which  
they do?**

Sol. Reasons for it briefly are these.

First, His grace is the only cause of all the good which we do: it is  
true, that we are the subjects who do repent, and who do believe,  
who do love, and fear, and serve, and obey him, and walk in his  
Statutes: O but who is the cause that we do all this, or any of this?  
From whom is all our fruit found? Excellent is that passage of  
Augustine, *Certum est nos velle cum volumus, sed Deus facit ut  
vellemus, certum est nos facere cum faciamus, Deus facit ut  
faciamus*, we do will good, but it is God that makes us to will that  
good; and we do good, but it is God who makes us to do that good; it  
is God who works in us to will and to do: And hereupon in another  
place he ingenuously confesseth, that his good works were rather  
God's works then his own works; *Quaecunque sunt bona opera mea  
tua magis quam mea sunt*.

Now if God works all our works for us, is it not just that he should have all the glory from us?

Secondly, We should else be injurious unto God, who saith, Glory is mine. 1 Chron. 29:11. And my glory will I not give unto another. Isa. 42:8. Glory (if I may so speak,) is the Lord's portion and revenue out of all his works of power and grace; and he is very tender of it, and therefore we cheat him when we withhold any part of his glory from him; nay it is plain theft to take any part of glory from God, unto whom all the glory doth belong, Psal. 96:8, for you lay hands of that which is none of your own, and without the consent of another who is the true owner; and he professeth that he will not part with it; it being indeed so properly essential to the crown of his deity.

Thirdly, We do but proudly dishonor ourselves, in a vain-glorious boasting of that which is none of our own, for which God will certainly abase us. 1 Cor. 4:7. For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hast not received it? Isa. 2:17. The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low. Luk. 18:14. Everyone that exalteth himself, shall be abased. Nebuchadnezzar was cast out among the beasts, for arrogating to himself: Herod was smitten and eat up with worms, because he gave not the glory to God: the Pharisee rejected, because he gloried in himself.

Fourthly, Because it is an exceeding mercy, if God actually gives us his power to do any good, or to walk in his Statutes and to do them; which may appear thus.

First, It is a great mercy to enjoy the Spirit of God, and an unquestionable Comfort to know that we do enjoy him: this I think no Christian will deny. But when we find a power enabling

us to walk in God's Statutes, this power comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in us: No man can walk in God's Statutes without the presence and influence of the Spirit; and everyone who doth walk in them and do them, hath the Spirit of God: I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk, &c.

Secondly, It is a great mercy to be made a new creature, to be regenerated, to partake of the life of Christ; whosoever is enabled to walk in God's ways and to do them, he is unquestionably a new creature, he is born again, he partakes of Christ, of the life of Christ, and hath communion with Christ, he abides in him: For without me (saith Christ, John 15:5) ye can do nothing.

Thirdly, It is a great mercy to be kept from sin, and all sinful walking's by which God is dishonored; (therefore David abundantly blessed God, who kept him from sinning against him, when he rashly intended to destroy Nabal and all his household. 1 Sam. 25:32,33.) but thus are we kept and preserved, when God causeth us to walk in his Statutes.

Fourthly, It is a great mercy that we are able to honor God, and to honor our holy profession: it is one of the greatest favors which God shows to any man on earth, when he makes, and when he useth him as a vessel of his glory.

And this honor God puts upon you, by causing you to walk in his Statutes; now you are vessels fitted for his honor. In these ways you do live unto his honor, and to your own honor, and to the honor of your heavenly calling and profession.

Fifthly, It is a great mercy so to walk as to get peace in conscience, and assurance of happiness: But when the Lord puts

forth such a power upon you, as enables you to walk in his Statutes, and to keep his judgments and to do them; hereupon,

1. There comes peace of Conscience; great peace have they which keep thy law, Psal. 119:165. And this is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience that, &c. 2 Cor. 1:12.

2. And Assurance and confidence of happiness; they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God, Psal. 44:7.

Sixthly, It is a great judgment, (yea it is one of the greatest judgments) when the Lord leaveth any to themselves. Psal. 81:12. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels. If so, then by the rule of contraries, it is a very great mercy when the Lord gives unto any man the power of his grace, enabling him to walk in his ways and Statutes. Now if there be so many choice mercies bestowed and manifested in causing us to walk in God's Statutes, surely then there is great reason that we should give God all the glory, &c.

**2. Quest. Whether we do give God the glory of all the good which he causeth us to do, and do not assert nor ascribe it unto ourselves?**

Sol This may be known thus;

First, When we make a right division of the work done by us; and accordingly make our acknowledgment; in every good work done by us, there is aliquid Dei, and aliquid mei; something which is of God, and something which is of our own. The goodness or well-doing, that is of God; and there must come in an Agnosco; O Lord, this was thine, this was wrought by thee. The evil-doing, the mixtures, the

imperfections, the distractions, these are ours; and here must come in our Ignosce; O Lord own and accept what is thine, and O Lord mercifully pardon what is mine. If after any good done by us we take the humbling part unto ourselves, and give the exalting part unto God, now we ascribe shame unto ourselves, and all the glory unto God.

Secondly, When after the best performances we set an higher value upon the grace of God, and do not put a higher rate upon ourselves: as Paul, Gal. 2:20. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. 1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. When after our good-doings, we raise the grace God (in this work the good hand of God was with me, and his power was manifested,) but we raise not ourselves a jot; but we are nothing, and still are nothing, and can do nothing without his grace and presence: verily our posture is humble, and the glory of our well-doing is returned to God alone.

Thirdly, When we are afraid of all self-glory, as Paul, Gal. 6:14. God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the secret temptations unto self-glory, our souls are distressed and exceedingly humbled within us, and we wrestle with God to beat down, and cast out all high self-challenging, and self-appropriating thoughts, and to set the crown of praise only on his own glorious name: this also demonstrates that we acknowledge God, and not ourselves.

Fourthly, when after our well-doing our hearts do look upon the good which we have done, as special mercy which we have received, and as a new obligation binding and engaging us unto God, as for a new mercy received from the hand of God: When *bona nostra* are *dona sua*; our good-doings are reckoned amongst God's favors and

mercies to us; and when we look on bona nostra as debita nostra; the good which we do as indebting us unto God for what he hath made us to do; and the more good we do, the more are we indebted for praises and thanksgivings, and say as David, What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? Psal. 116:12. So what shall I render unto the Lord for all the good which he hath done? And for all the good which I have done? (which I have done by his power.) This shows that you desire to give all the glory unto him.

Fifthly, When there is an after-work to be done, as well as a fore-work to be done, and we are as serious, and careful, and watchful about this, as about that, before we perform any duty, our fore-work is by faith to look up to God for his strength; and therein we show ourselves careful by the many prayers which we do put up unto him: And after we have done the duty, there is another work which doth concern us, and that is immediate and solemn returns of praise unto God, to give him praise who hath given us strength, and this work fills our hearts presently; we cannot come off from our work; we do not account all our work done, until this be done: As when Naaman was cleansed, he returned presently unto the Prophets house; or as when the Leper was healed, he presently went back to Christ and gave thanks: So as soon as the Lord hath enabled us to do any work which he hath commanded, we presently are filled with the sense of his goodness, and our lips do praise him, &c. I have one work yet more to do; one duty more, viz. to bless my God who hath been my strength.

#### SECT. IV.

3. Use. Doth God himself undertake to cause his people to walk in his Statutes and to do them? Then here is comfort, and seasonable



refreshing for all the people of God: Behold your work, and behold your God, and behold your strength. O what a God do you serve! Who commands your obedience, and commands also his own strength to enable you for that obedience. This I command you to do, and this I will cause you to do; here is my precept, and there is my promise; here is work, and there is strength. Beloved, stand still a little and consider of the promise of God here made unto you.

First, It is a promise of that whereof every one of you do stand in need; and you do stand in need of that promised strength every day, and every hour; our bodies do not stand more in need of daily food, than our souls do of daily strength from God, to do the works which he requires of us.

Secondly, It is a promise which extends unto every one of you who are the people of God; to the strong, and to the weak: some promises do only respect the strong Christians, and some of them do respect only the weak Christians; and some promises do respect us only for some particular times, and for some particular conditions; but this promise respects every Christian, and every Christian in every time, and in every condition, and for every work which he is to do. Our whole life is a time of obedience; and although our conditions do alter, yet still the works of obedience do continue and remain; and in all those conditions, and for all our services in those conditions, doth this promise of help and strength remain for every Christian.

Thirdly, Because it is God's promise, therefore God himself stands engaged unto you, and indebted unto you: you are indebted unto God for obedience, and God is indebted unto you for strength and help: *Promittendo se fecit debitorem.*

Now four things are observable in every promise of God.

1. The good of the promise is suitable, and answerable to our need.

2. The performance of that promised good belongeth to God. Mica. 7:20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, &c.

3. He is able to accomplish it, for he is a natural all sufficiency, an infinite goodness, a treasury full of grace and power; nothing is too hard for him.

4. He will perform it, for he is faithful who hath promised, and will not alter the word that is come out of his lips, neither will he suffer his faithfulness to fail: The heavens shall wax old as a garment, and the earth shall be changed, but his word remains forever: His counsel shall stand, and his truth for evermore: he cannot lie nor deny himself.

Fourthly, This promise is a bond of present payment: all the promises cannot be sued at one time, nor at all times; but this promise of causing us to walk in his Statutes may be sued every day, and is to some performed every day. The time or need is unquestionable the very fit time for payment, (for God to make good his promise;) but every day is our time of need, every time that we are to perform service unto God, is God bound to perform his promise of help and strength unto us, because then we do need his presence and assistance. Now this is a wonderful comfort unto all the people of God, whose hearts are made willing to serve him; you have a God to go unto, and you may freely and boldly go unto him, and he hath engaged himself by special promise unto you to be your help, and he is able and faithful, and will not miss his day nor fail to help you in your time of need.

Fifthly, Nay let me add one word more so your comfort; though the strength which God imparts unto you to do him service, be not so high and full as you do desire, nevertheless

1. It is enough to enable you to serve him with uprightness, although perhaps with much weakness.
2. It is enough to enable you to walk humbly with your God, though not so strongly.
3. Whatsoever service you do perform by the strength of God, (according to that proportion which you have received,) God will graciously accept of it in Christ: if it be the work of his hands, it shall receive acceptance at his Throne.

**Object. But here it is objected; If God will cause his people (by giving them his strength) to walk in his Statutes and to do them; whence is it that his people many times fail of this strength and power to enable them so to do?**

Sol. The reason is not that God is not ready to make good his promise unto them, but because they are not ready to make use of him to be their strength; it doth arise,

First, Sometimes from the carelessness of their spirits, as Isa. 64:7. There is no man that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: And Isa. 43:22. But thou hast not called upon me O Jacob! But thou hast been weary of me O Israel! And James 4:2. Ye have not, because ye ask not. Beloved, the Lord doth promise to give us his strength, yet he will be inquired of by us to do it for us. And how must he be inquired of by us? Even with our whole heart, not faintly, nor carelessly, but fervently, and seriously. Jer. 29:13. Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your

heart. Did any of you in the sense of your own weakness and insufficiency seek the Lord with your heart, and with all your soul, but you found him to look down upon you with health and strength?

Secondly, Sometimes from the unbelief of their hearts: He that comes to God, must believe that God is; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11:6. But here we have often failed. James 1:5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, &c. Ver. 6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. Ver. 7. Else let not this man think that he shall obtain anything of the Lord. Why this is our way; either we seek not to the Lord, or we do not seek to him in faith: we are usually so far from believing, that we are plainly unbelieving, God will not hear, God will not answer, God will not perform his promise unto us.

Thirdly, Sometimes from impatience of heart: they will not wait upon the Lord, but will limit him, and leave him, and fling away without their answer, and their help. Where now lies the fault? In God's promise? No, but in your own unbelief and impatience.

Fourthly, Sometimes from presumption of heart: they will be venturing upon the occasions and ways of sins, for which God justly leaves them, as he did Samson.

**Object. But why doth God give out so little a measure of strength at a time? Why not enough at once to serve them all their lives, for all their duties?**

Sol If you will have reasons and accounts given unto you for God's dealings in this kind; then thus;

1. He is no necessary agent which works ad extremum, to its utmost, but a voluntary agent, working after the counsel of his own will: as a

parent helps his child as he sees occasion.

2. He is a wise God, as well as a faithful God, and therefore he imparts help and strength unto his people in such a way, and by such proportion as doth most exalt his glory and respect their good.

Indeed God is able at once to fill us with strength, but he will not do so, but chooseth rather to give it out gradually, and successively, because

1. Thus we are kept in a continual dependence upon, and in a continual exercise of our faith.

2. Thus he makes way for continual prayer and supplications.

3 Thus he gives us fresh experiences, and daily proofs or testimonies of his fidelity in promising, which do endear our hearts the more unto him, and quicken our hearts to perpetual thanksgiving.

4. Thus he keeps us in a more humble frame, and sense of our own insufficiency and feat of our sins, &c.

**Object. Whence is it that the people of God do find such a various manifestation of the strength of God in them, as to their holy performances? Sometimes a marvelous enlargement, and at another time a meet presence of power, no more then will serve the work in hand: sometimes carried out with a full gale, and at other times almost becalmed; scarcely able to do anything?**

Sol. This is a real case, and a very profitable Question, unto which I return this answer.

First, It doth sometimes arise from the distempers of melancholy, which doth dead and oppress their spirits, and renders them (for the time) as useless vessels, binding up not only the power of reason, but also the power of grace: yet when this winter is off, the spring of grace appears in strength again.

Secondly, It doth sometimes arise from their own folly, in weakening their own help and strength; either

1. From spiritual pride, after spiritual enlargements, which God ever punisheth with some measure of declining.
2. From spiritual neglects of strengthening ordinances, or stirring up ourselves to take hold of the strength of God: if the child sucks not as it was wont, it will be weaker.
3. From worldly engagements in multitude of cares and businesses, which either wholly takes us off from communion with God, or makes us but formal in it.

Thirdly, It doth sometimes arise from the different actings of our faith: sometimes we do believe more strongly and perfectly; and sometimes we do believe more weakly and unsteadfastly, and therefore we are able to do much, and sometimes we are able to do little. Our proportion of obedience, is answerable to the proportion of our believing: much faith brings in much strength, and little faith brings in little strength:

As the larger vessels bring up the more water, and the narrower vessels but a little, &c.

If you believe, you shall see the glory and the power of God; and as you believe, so do you partake and receive of that power.

Fourthly, It doth sometimes arise from the presence of soul-conflicts: we are sometimes in statu libertatis, in an estate of liberty, exempted from the actual temptations of Satan, and from violent rebellions and hurrying's of our own corruptions; and now our ship goes on more swiftly, and we can serve the Lord with gladness: but sometimes we are in statu perturbationis; wind and tide are against us; enemies without, and enemies within; and now (at least to our own apprehensions,) our ship moves but heavily, and we serve the Lord in tears.

Fifthly, It doth sometimes arise from divine wisdom, that we do not always find the like measure of assistance: by this God doth learn his people

1. That their strength is not in themselves, but only in their God.
2. That what they are, they are by his grace, and act in a proportion to his grace given and received.
3. That they should not despair at the greatest services; for God can then enlarge them; nor yet presume and make nothing of the least duties; for God can withdraw himself, and then they can do nothing.

FINIS.

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## MONERGISM BOOKS

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