

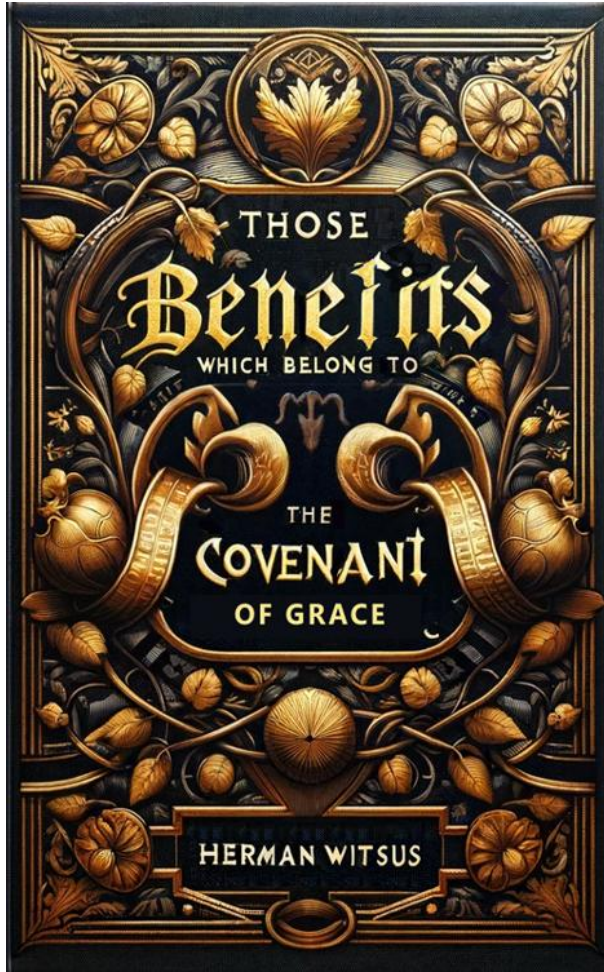


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# **Those Benefits Which Belong to the Covenant of Grace**

**by Herman Witsius, D. D.**

## **Chapter I: Of Election**

I. WE are now first of all to consider those benefits which belong to the covenant of grace, taken absolutely and in itself, and therefore common to all those in covenant, under what economy soever; which we enumerate in the following order: 1. Election. 2. Effectual calling to the communion of Christ. 3. Regeneration. 4. Faith. 5. Justification. 6. Spiritual Peace. 7. Adoption. 8. The Spirit of Adoption. 9. Sanctification. 10. Conservation, or preservation. 11. Glorification. The devout meditation of all these things cannot fail to be glorious to God; agreeable, delightful, and salutary to ourselves.

II. The beginning and first source of all grace is Election, both of Christ the Saviour and of those to be saved by him. For even Christ was chosen of God, and by an eternal and immutable decree given to be our Saviour, and therefore is said to be "foreordained before the foundation of the world," 1 Pet. 1:20. And they whom Christ was to save were given to him by the same decree, John 17:6. They are therefore said to be "chosen in Christ," Eph. 1:4; that is, not only by

Christ, as God, and consequently the elector of them, but also in Christ, as Mediator, and on that account the elected, who, by one and the same act, was given to them to be their head and lord, and at the same time they were given to him to be his members and property, to be saved by his merit and power, and to enjoy communion with him. And therefore the book of election is called, "the book of life of the Lamb," Rev. 13:8; not only because life is to be obtained in virtue of the Lamb slain, but also because the Lamb takes up the first page of that book, is the head of the rest of the elect, "the first-born among many brethren, and joint-heirs with him." Rom. 8:17, 29. But we before treated of this election of Christ the Mediator, book II. chap. iii. §. viii. and now we are to speak of the election of those to be saved.

III. We thus describe it: Election is the eternal, free, and immutable counsel of God, about revealing the glory of his grace, in the eternal salvation of some certain persons. Most of the parts of this description are in these words of the apostle, Eph. 1:4, 5, 6: "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

IV. We call election, "the counsel of God," by which term we mean that which is commonly called decree. Paul, on this subject, calls it the *προθεσις*, the purpose, of God. This term appears selected by the apostle, and frequently made use of by him to denote a sure, firm, and fixed decree of God, which he can never repent of, and which depends on nothing out of himself, but is founded only in his good pleasure. All this is intimated, 2 Tim. 1:9: "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but

according to his own purpose and grace." To this purpose also, Eph. 1:11, "we are predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And elsewhere the same apostle also speaks of προθεσις "the purpose of election," Rom. 8:28, "who are called according to his purpose," and Rom. 9:11. "the purpose of God according to election." And thus we distinguish this internal election and of counsel, from the external and of fact, which signifies the actual separation of believers from unbelievers, by effectual calling. In this sense the Lord Jesus said to his apostles, John 15:19, "but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." But the eternal and internal decree of God could not be the cause of this hatred, but only as it discovered itself by the event, and by the actual separation of the apostles from the world. To this we may also, it seems, apply what the apostle writes, 1 Cor. 1:26, 27, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, &c. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," &c. Where he seems to take calling and election for the same thing. Nor does this internal election and of counsel, differ from the external and of fact but only in this, that the last is the demonstration and execution of the first.

V. It is likewise clear, that we are not here speaking of an election to any political or ecclesiastical dignity, 1 Sam. 10:24, and John 9:70, nor even to the privilege of an external covenant with God; in the manner that God chose all the people of Israel, Deut. 4:37, "he loved thy fathers, and chose their seed," compared with Deut. 7:6, 7; but of that election, which is the designation and enrolment of the heirs of eternal salvation: or as Paul speaks, 2 Thes. 2:13, by which "God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth."

VI. For this purpose the BOOK OF LIFE is so frequently mentioned in Scripture: it will not then be improper, here, to inquire, what is intended by that appellation. That God has no book, properly so called, is self evident: but as men write down those things in books which they want to know and keep in memory; so the book of God denotes the series of persons and things, which are most perfectly known to God. Moreover, the Scripture speaks of several books of God. 1st, God has a book of common providence, in which the birth, life, and death of men, and every thing concerning the same, are inserted; Ps. 139:16, "in thy book all my members were written." 2ndly, There are also books of judgment, in which the actions, good or bad, of every man in particular are written, Rev. 20:12, "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." These books are mentioned in the plural number, as if each particular person had his own peculiar book assigned him, lest the good or bad behaviour of one should be put to the score of another, and thence any confusion should arise. By which is signified the most exact and distinct knowledge of God. And because, in other respects, God knows all things at one intuitive view of his understanding, this very book is mentioned in the singular number, Mal. 3:16, "A book of remembrance was written before him." 3dly, There is also the book of life; which is three-fold. 1, Of this natural life, of which Moses speaks Exod. 32:32. Where, entreating the face of the Lord, who had said he would consume Israel in the wilderness, and make Moses a great nation, Moses prays, that God would preserve his people, and bring them into the inheritance of the land of Canaan, offering himself, at the same time, instead of the people: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written." As if he had said, "I accept not the condition offered of preserving me alive, and increasing me greatly after the destruction of Israel: I choose rather to die an untimely death, than that Israel should be

destroyed in the wilderness." 2, Of a foederal and ecclesiastical life, consisting in communion with the people of God. Which is the register, not only of those internally, but of those externally in covenant, mentioned Ezek. 13:9, "They shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel;" and Ps. 87:6. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." 3, Of life eternal, mentioned, Is. 4:3. Dan 12:1. Phil. 4:3. Luke 10:20. Rev. 3:5: 13:8: 20:12: and 21:27; which book signifies the register of those predestinated to life eternal.

VII. Further, as the book of God denotes not one and the same thing; so the writing of persons in any of these is not always the same. The writing of some is only imaginary, consisting in a fallacious judgment concerning ourselves or others, too easily presuming either our own, or the election of others, such as was that of those who cried out, Jer. 7:4, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these;" and of the people of Sardis, who were said to live, though they were really dead, Rev. 3:1. There is another inscription which is indeed true, but it is only human, in the book of the foederal life, done either by the man himself, by a profession of the faith, subscribing as with his own hand, "I am the Lord's," Is. 45:5; or by the guides of the church, inserting such a person in the list of professors, and acknowledging him for a member of the church, of the visible at least. There is, in fine, a writing of God himself, made by his eternal and immutable decree; of which the apostle says, 2 Tim. 2:19, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The observation of these things throws much light on many places of Scripture, and will immediately prove also of use to us.

VIII. This election to glory is not some general decree of God about saving the faithful and the godly, who shall persevere in their faith



and piety to the end of their life; but a particular designation of certain individual persons, whom God has enrolled as heirs of salvation. It is not consistent with the perfection of God, to ascribe to him general and indeterminate decrees, which were to receive any determination or certainty from men. We read, Acts 2:23, of the determinate counsel of God, but never of a general and indeterminate decree. Neither does the Scripture ever describe election, as the determination of any certain condition, by and without which salvation is or is not obtained. It is nowhere said, that faith is chosen by God, or written down in the book of life, or any thing like that; but that men, indeed, are chosen by God. Let us refer to Rom. 8:29, 30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called," &c. It is not said in the text, persons so qualified, that it might be applied to the designation of any condition, but certain persons are appointed as the objects of the acts there mentioned.

IX. The very term, προορίειν, to predestinate, which the apostle more frequently uses on this subject, does not obscurely discover this truth. For, as ὀρίζειν signifies to point out, or ordain a certain person (Acts 17:31. "By that man whom ὠρίσε, he hath ordained," and pointed out by name; and Acts 10:42. "ὁ ὠρισμένος, which was ordained of God to be the judge;" and Rom. 1:4, "ὀρισθέντος υἱου Θεου declared to be [determinately marked out as] the Son of God," who was, by name, and particularly declared to be so by God, by a public nomination); so προορίζειν, as applied to the heirs of eternal life, must signify, to enrol, or write down some certain persons as heirs, in the eternal testament.

X. This is what Christ said to his disciples, Luke 10:20, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Where he speaks to them by name, and assures them of their election, and bids them rejoice on

that account. Which is certainly of much greater import, than if he had said in general, "Rejoice because God has established, by an eternal decree, that he would make all believers happy in heaven, though he has thought nothing of you by name:" for in this manner, according to the opinion of our adversaries, these words were to be explained.

XI. What the apostle, Phil. 4:3, expressly asserts concerning Clement and his other fellow-labourers, that their names were in the book of life, ought to be sufficient for determining this inquiry: since impudence itself dares not wrest that to a general decree of some condition. For, 1st, The name of a person is one thing, the condition of a thing another. He who determines to enlist none but valiant men for soldiers, does not write down the names of some soldiers in the roll. 2dly, The condition of salvation is but one, but the Scripture always speaks in the plural number of the names written in the book of life. Therefore the writing down of the names is one thing, the determination of some condition another. 3dly, It is certain, that the apostle, and other sacred writers, when they say that some men, or the names of some, are written in the book of life, do always, by that very thing, distinguish them from others, who are not inserted. But, according to the opinion of our adversaries, the appointment of this condition imports no actual distinction between men. Because notwithstanding that decree, about saving believers and those who obey it, it may be possible, according to their principles, that none should believe, obey, or be saved. 4thly, All these things will be more cogent, if we attend to the original of this metaphorical expression. The similitude is taken from a genealogical catalogue or register, especially among the people of God; in which the names of every particular person, belonging to any family, was written; and, according to this catalogue, at the time of the jubilee or other solemnity when the paternal inheritance was restored to any family,

every one was either admitted or rejected, according as his name was or was not found there. We have an example of this, Ezra 2:61, 62, when after the Babylonish captivity the posterity of Habaiiah, Koz, and Barzillai, not being able to prove their descent by the genealogical registers, were put from the priesthood. In the same manner, the book of life contains the names of those who belong to the family of God; in which he who is not written, whatever he may presume or pretend, will be deprived of the inheritance.

XII. To conclude, I would ask our adversaries, when the apostle says, 2 Tim. 2:19, "the Lord knoweth them that are his;" and the Lord Jesus, John 13:18, "I know whom I have chosen," whether there is nothing ascribed to God or to Christ in these words, but what the least in the school of Christ knows, that they who believe in and obey Christ are the peculiar property of God and of Christ? Has not that language a grander sound? and does it not intimate, that God has the exactest account of all in whom he will be glorified as his peculiar people? We yield to what our adversaries declare in Compend. Socin. c. 4. §. 1. "Admitting the infallible prescience of all future contingents, Calvin's doctrine of the predestination of some by name to life, of others to death, cannot be refuted." But that prescience of God has as many witnesses, as he has constituted prophets. It follows, therefore, that election is a designation or appointment of some certain persons.

XIII. This designation was made from eternity; as were all the counsels or decree of God in general; for, "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts 15:18; "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. 1:11. And all the foreknowledge of future contingencies is founded in the decree of God: consequently he determined with himself, from eternity, every thing he executes in time. If we are to believe this with respect to all

the decrees of God, much more with regard to that distinguishing decree, whereby he purposed to display his glory, in the eternal state of men. And I shall add, what ought, in the fullest manner, to establish this truth, that "we are chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world," Eph. 1:4.

XIV. And hence appears the gangrene of the Socinian heretics, who, distinguishing between predestination, which they define the general decrees of God, concerning the salvation of all those who constantly obey Christ, and between Election, which is of particular persons; they say, indeed, that the former is from eternity, but the latter made in time, when a person performs the condition contained in the general decree of predestination. And they make the excellence of the Lord Jesus and a part of his divinity to consist in this, that he was foreknown by name from eternity. But as Peter writes, 1 Epist. 1:20, that Christ "was foreordained before the foundation of the world;" so we have just heard Paul, testifying by the same expression, that "we were chosen before the foundation of the world." But neither the subject, as we have just shown, nor the apostle's words, which describe not an election of holiness as the condition of life, but an election of some certain persons to holiness, which, in virtue of that election, they had already in part obtained, and were afterwards in the fullest manner to obtain, will not suffer us to pervert this to some general decree of saving saints.

XV. We are here to explain what our Saviour declares he will pronounce on the last day of judgment, Matt. 25:34, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κοσμου, from the foundation of the world:" he does not say, "before the foundation of the world," as is said, Eph. 1:4. If by this preparing we understand God's decree, we must say with many expositors, that this phrase, "from the foundation of the world," is equivalent to that other,

"before the foundation of the world:" just as, "from the beginning of the world," Acts 15:18, and "before the world," 1 Cor. 2:7, denote the very same thing. Similar expressions of eternity may be compared, Prov. 8:23, "מעולם, from everlasting; מראש, from the beginning; מקדמי ארצ, or ever the earth was. Or if we would rather distinguish these, and explain that expression, "from the foundation of the world," to signify, not eternity, but the remotest period of time (as it is taken, Luke 11:50: "The blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world;" that is, from the remotest antiquity, beginning with the blood of Abel, ver. 51. and Heb. 4:3), we shall say, that by preparing the kingdom is meant the formation of heaven, which is the throne of glory; and that the elect are invited to enter in to the inheritance of that habitation which was created at the very beginning of the world, in order to be their eternal residence. And who can doubt but what God created in the beginning, in order to be the blessed abode of the elect, was appointed by him from eternity for that purpose?

XVI. And we must not omit that illustrious passage, Rev. 13:8: "Whose names are not written in the book of life of the lamb, slain from the foundation of the world." The last of these words are so placed, that they may stand in a threefold connexion with the preceding, as to mean, that Christ was "the lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" that is, either from all eternity in the decree of God, which, importing a certain futuration of events, to use a scholastic term, is the reason that things future may be considered as already existing; or from the remotest antiquity of the world, not only in the members of his mystical body, but also in the promise of God in the type of sacrifices, and of Abel, slain by his envious brother; and, in fine, in the efficacy of his death, which extended itself to the first of the human race. For unless the death of Christ, which he was once to undergo in the fulness of time, could have

extended its virtue to the first men in the world, "Christ must often have suffered since the foundation of the world," Heb. 9:26. God did many things before Christ could die, which could not consistently have been done, unless with a view to Christ's death, which was to ensue in its appointed time; and with respect to these, he is said to be slain before the foundation of the world. Nay, the foundation of the earth itself was not laid without a view to the death of Christ. For since the manifestation of his glorious grace in man, through Christ, was the chief end of God in creating man, we must look upon the foundation of the earth for a habitation of the good as a means to that end. Nor would it have been consistent with God to form the earth for a habitation of sinful man, unless that same earth was at one time or other to be purged by the blood of Christ, as the sanctifier and glorifier of his elect. For all these reasons, the slaying of Christ and the foundation of the world are not improperly connected. Secondly, those words, "from the foundation of the world," may be referred to what goes before, are written; to signify, whose names are not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of that lamb slain. Which sense was preferred by Junius, Piscator, Gomarus, and other great divines. And indeed, we observe, Luke 4:5, an instance of a transposition not unlike this. And John himself is found to have so ranged these very words, as to omit entirely what is here inserted about the lamb slain, Rev. 17:8, "Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." And then this phrase would denote the eternity of the divine decree, as we showed in the foregoing paragraph, that it might be explained. Thirdly and lastly, The words may be so construed as to point to men who have lived since the foundation of the world, and whose names are not written in the book of life. And then the usual and most common sense of that phraseology will be retained, so as to denote the first times of the world.

XVII. We are also to inquire into the genuine sense of that saying in 2 Tim. 1:9, and which is commonly brought as a proof of the eternity of election: "Saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Two things are here especially to be inquired into. 1st, What is to be understood by the giving of grace. 2dly, What by, "before the world began." The saving grace of the New Covenant is given to those who are to be saved. 1. In the decree of God. 2. In the promise. 3. In the actual gift of it. The decree of God is the original source of grace: the promise is the manifestation of the decree: the actual gift is the execution of both. But because it is impossible for the decree of God to fail, or the promise of God to deceive, the person to whom God decrees and promises to give any thing may be as certain that it shall be given as if he was already in the actual possession of it. And on account of that certainty of the promise of God, the benefit decreed or promised may be considered as already given. But it is plain that the apostle speaks not here of actual bestowing, therefore it ought to be understood of giving, either in the decree or in the promise. But which of these explications is to be preferred, depends on the meaning of the following phrase:  $\pi\rho\delta\ \chi\rho\nu\omega\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ , "before the world began."

XVIII. If there be any, who by  $\chi\rho\nu\omicron\nu\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\iota\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu\varsigma$ , "before the world began," understand absolute eternity, they refute themselves. For seeing Paul here relates something done before the world began, something must be imagined more eternal than eternity itself, than which nothing can be more absurd. It is better that we thereby understand all that time which commenced with the creation of the world (when  $\acute{\alpha}\iota\omega\nu\epsilon\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$ , "the worlds were framed," Heb. 11:3) which then run on, and will run through all ages without end and limit. But what is it, "before the world began?" Is it what precedes all time, and so is eternal, as most divines think, who from

hence directly conclude the eternity of our election, and interpret this giving of the giving contained in the decree? But we are to consider whether we can firmly maintain that exposition against the exceptions of those of the opposite opinion. Indeed, the very subtle Twiss himself, *Vindiciæ Gratiaë*, lib. i. p. I. Digress. ii. sect. 4, p. 64, cavils: "That it is not necessary directly to believe, that what is said to be before the foundation of the world, signifies to be before all time, but only before many ages." But that very learned person, as frequently on other occasions, so also on this, appears to have given too much scope to his wit and fancy. If this exposition of his be retained, there is nothing of which it may not, one time or other, be said that it was done "before the foundation of the world," a regard being had to following ages. Which is, in a remarkable manner, to weaken the force and majesty of the apostle's expression. And I would not willingly make such concessions to our adversaries. Since χρόνοι αἰώνιοι, "the beginning of the world," commenced at that beginning, in which αἰῶνες ἐκτίσθησαν, "the worlds were framed;" what was done, πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων, "before the foundation of the world," seems altogether to have been done before the creation of the world, and consequently from eternity: unless we should be under a necessity to limit that phrase. And none can doubt but in its full import it may signify this. Why then may it not be explained in its full emphasis if there be nothing to hinder it? But what is here said of giving grace is no such hinderance: "For because all things are present to God, and that what God has decreed to be future, shall certainly come to pass; therefore God is said to have done from eternity what is revealed to us in its appointed time;" as the venerable Beza has well observed on Tit. 1:2. And let this be said for those who understand this giving of the giving in the decree, and explain that expression, "before the foundation of the world," so as to mean the same thing as "from eternity."



XIX. Yet other divines explain it of the giving in the promise; on comparing Tit. 1:2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised, πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων, before the world began." "Hence we see," says a celebrated expositor of our day, "that the promise, which was made בראש דורות, in the beginning of ages," Is. 41:4, "before any age had passed away; and so when there was no secular time, or time of this world, when the second age was not yet called forth. We see, I say, that the promise was said to be given forth before the world began. Here, therefore, we do not only understand a giving by decree or purpose, but also by promise, that is, by assignation." Which is given unto us, that is, "the effect of which grace is assigned to us by promise, which is almost coeval with this world." These things are much more plausible than what we just heard from Twiss. Indeed, from that passage in Titus, it seems that we might conclude, that πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων, "before the world began, neither always, nor necessarily, denotes absolute eternity. For because the apostle there treats of the promise, he does not so comprehend all ages, as to lead us beyond the creation of the world, as Calvin himself has observed: but he points out the beginning of the first age, in which the promise of salvation was made to our first parents immediately upon the fall, which our Dutch commentators have also adopted. Whence it appears, that they are guilty of no absurdity, who so explain this giving as to include the promise of grace made before the flux of any age. And then, in the apostle's discourse there are these three things proposed in order: first, the purpose of God, which is the source of all grace; then the promise made from the remotest antiquity, which he expresses by the term, giving; and lastly, the actual bestowing and manifestation by the glorious coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Nor would I make much opposition, if any should explain the apostle's expression in this manner.

XX. But whatever way you interpret, there is a strong argument in the said passage of Paul for the eternity of election. For, if you explain the giving of the decree, and say, that before the world began is equivalent to eternity, you will conclude directly; and I think both may be defended. For indeed, the phrase, "before the world began," in its full emphasis, signifies so much: nor can it be much weakened by Titus. 1:2. For the subject is different: in the one place, the apostle speaks of the purpose of God, and of giving from his purpose; in the other, of the promise. But the same predicate is often to be differently explained, according to the diversity to the subjects. For instance, when Peter says, Acts 15:18, "known unto God are all his works," ἀπ' αἰῶνος, from the beginning of the world;" ἀπ' αἰῶνος doubtless signifies, from eternity. For, if all his works, certainly also, that of the first creation, prior to which was nothing but eternity; but when the same apostle, Acts 3:21, says, "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, ἀπ' αἰῶνος since the world began;" he means nothing by these words, but the most ancient times, in which the prophets existed. Why therefore may not πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνιων be explained one way in 2 Tim. 1:9. and another Tit 1:2. But let us grant, that the apostle, by the giving of grace before the world began, understands the promise made in the beginning of the first age; seeing he says, that "the purpose of God was the source of it," certainly that purpose was prior to the promise. But none, I imagine, will say, that it was made, when God created man; it must therefore have been from eternity. "According to the eternity purpose, which he proposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Eph. 3:11. That must certainly be an eternal purpose, since the effect of it is grace given before the foundation of the world.

XXI. Let us add another passage of Paul, which, we think, is a testimony to the eternity of election; namely, 2 Thess. 2:13, "but we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of

the Lord, because God hath ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation." The apostle distinguishes that election of which he speaks, from the call by the Gospel, ver. 14. And, therefore, with great propriety, we understand it of the election of counsel and purpose. This, he says, was "ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, from the beginning," that is, from eternity. For that phrase is often taken in that sense: thus what John 1:1, says in his Gospel, "ἔν ἀρχῇ ἦν, in the beginning was," in 1 John 1:1, he says "ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, was from the beginning. But to have been already in the beginning, signifies to be from eternity. For, what was already בראשית ἐν' ἀρχῇ, in the beginning, when all things were made, must have been self-existent, and from eternity. But, lest any should cavil, that the new world of grace was here intended, John speaks of "the beginning of things made," because he speaks of the existence of him by whom the world was made, and that very world which knew him not, ver. 10. By comparing the alleged passages, it appears, that in the beginning and from the beginning, are equivalent terms. We have this sense more clearly, Mic. 5:2. Where the prophet describes at least a twofold going forth of the Messiah; the one from Bethlehem, which is after the flesh, and relates to his being born of the virgin Mary; the other, which is after the Spirit, and is expressive of his eternal generation; of which last he says, "ומוצאוהי מן זמן קדמון" whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Which the Septuagint translate, "καὶ ἐξοδοὶ αὐτοῦ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἐξ ἡερῶν αἰῶνος· and his goings forth from the beginning, from everlasting." What can be more evident, than that ἀπ' ἀρχῆς there denotes eternity? The son of Sirach also, Ecclesiasticus 24:9, may show us in what sense the Hellenists were wont to use this expression, when he joins, as synonymous, πρὸ ποῦ αἰῶνος and ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. As, then, the apostle speaks of the election of purpose, as distinct from that of execution, which is made by effectual calling, and since ἀπ' ἀρχῆς signifies eternity, we very properly infer the eternity of election.

XXII. Here again Twiss comes in our way, who confidently affirms, that there is no place in all the Scripture, where this word signifies eternity: nay, he thinks it may be put out of all controversy, that it never is, or can be, so used in the sacred writings, according to right reason, l. c. p. 60. And he applies the election mentioned here, to some external declaration of internal election, and thinks the apostle alludes to that remarkable promise made to Adam after the fall, of the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head. For, says he, God himself has pointed out, in that place, a remarkable difference between the elect and the reprobate: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed," &c. p. 63. I cannot but wonder at the confidence of this very learned person. It is, indeed, true, that "from the beginning," does not always in Scripture denote eternity; as John 8:44, and 1 John 3:8, where the signification is to be determined by the subject treated of. But from the places above quoted it is plain, that sometimes it can admit of no other sense. And I hope, the learned person did not desire to wrest out of our hands those passages, by which our divines have, so happily, defended the eternity of the Logos, or Word, against the Socinians. I would rather believe, that he did not attend to the places we have mentioned. Besides, I could wish he could show where, in the sacred writings, the first promise of grace is called election; which I imagine, he will never be able to do: we are not to forge significations. Moreover, though in that promise there is some general indication of a difference made between the elect and reprobate; yet it is not credible, the apostle here had any eye to that; who gives thanks to God, not because he chose some men, but most especially because he chose the Thessalonians. But the election of the Thessalonians cannot be inferred from that general declaration of God, the truth of which might have remained, though none of those, who then dwelt at Thessalonica, had been chosen. We therefore

conclude, that the received explication of divines is perfectly well-grounded.

XXIII. There is another learned person, who asserts, that this place of Paul is to be understood "of that beginning in which God began to make the Gentiles heirs of salvation; seeing the Thessalonians were almost among the first of these, they are said to be chosen, separated from the beginning. Or also the beginning of the Gospel may be understood, of which Mark 1:1, Phil. 4:15; or of the salvation which was preached by Jesus, Heb. 3. He hath chosen you from the beginning. That is, from the beginning of preaching the Gospel, and of salvation manifested and proclaimed." But even these things are not satisfactory: for, 1st, We have shown, that Paul treats here of election in purpose, or intention, and not in execution. 2dly, It is, indeed true, that the term beginning ought to be explained in a way suitable to the subject it treats of; but I do not think, that "from the beginning," absolutely taken, does any where signify the beginning of the Gospel preached, much less the beginning of the inheritance of the Gentiles; nor do the places alleged prove it. 3dly, Nor does it agree with history, that the Thessalonians were the first-fruits of the Gentiles brought to the inheritance of salvation; for the people of Antioch, both in Syria and Pisidia, and the people of Lystra and Derbe, and the Philippians, had already received the Gospel, and the apostles had acquainted the brethren at Jerusalem with the conversion of the Gentiles, Acts 15:3, before ever Paul preached the Gospel at Thessalonica, as appears from the Acts of the Apostles. Nor do I think the learned person was unacquainted with this; and therefore he said, the Thessalonians were almost among the first; which diminutive particle does not a little weaken the force of the expression "from the beginning." 4thly. Much less can it be said, that the Thessalonians were separated from the beginning of that salvation which Jesus published; which beginning Paul makes prior

to the confirmation of the Gospel, made by those who heard it from the mouth of Jesus himself, that is, to the preaching of the apostles, Heb. 2:3. For it is plain, Christ was the minister of circumcision, and did not preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Nothing, therefore, appears more easy and solid, than that explication we have already given.

XXIV. Having said enough concerning the eternity of election, let us now consider its FREENESS; which consists in this, that God, as the absolute Lord of all his creatures, has chosen out of mankind whom, and as many as, he pleased; and indeed, in such a manner, as that no good which he foresaw in any man was the foundation of that choice, or the reason why he chose one rather than another. This appears, 1st, Because the Scripture asserts, that the most free will of God was the supreme reason or cause of election, Matt. 11:26, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke 12:32, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Above all, the apostle is full in vindicating this absolute power of God, Rom. 9; where among other things he says, ver. 21: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" 2dly, At the same time, also, that the Scripture refuses the consideration of any good foreseen in man, it maintains this most free and gracious good pleasure of God, Rom. 9:11; "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," &c. 2. Tim: 1:9, Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose."

3dly. Neither faith, nor holiness, nor any thing truly good can be considered in man, unless bestowed out of divine grace. Phil. 1:29, "Unto you is given to believe on Christ." Eph. 2:8. Faith, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." But the bestowing of this favour can

proceed from no other cause than the election of grace, and the benevolent good pleasure of his will. And consequently these benefits cannot be presupposed as preparatory to divine election.

4thly. The Scriptures expressly declare, that we are chosen to faith, holiness, and to perseverance in both, which, being the consequents and fruits of election, cannot be the antecedent conditions of it, Eph. 1:4, "He hath chosen us that we should be holy and without blame," or have it begun on earth, and consummated in heaven, John 15:16, "I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should bring forth fruit." I have chosen you from eternity, called and ordained you in the appointed time. 2 Thess. 2:13, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Election is as well to the means, as to the end. All these passages, and many others of a like nature, have been so fully and solidly defended by our divines, against the objections of the Remonstrants, that I have scarce any thing to add.

XXV. This counsel of God, as it is free, so it is also immutable from eternity, 1st. Immutability belongs to all the decrees of God, in general, Is. 14:27, "the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?" Is. 46:10, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Rom. 9:19, "Who hath resisted his will?" To affirm with Crellius, that these things are to be understood of the absolute decrees of God, not of his conditional, is begging the question. For we deny that any decree of God depends on a condition: if the thing decreed be suspended on a condition, the condition itself is at the same time decreed. These texts speak nothing of Crellius's distinction, nor lay any foundation for it: and even reason is against it. For if any decree of God could be changed, it would be, because God either would not or could not effect the thing decreed, or because his latter thoughts were wiser and better than his first: all

which are injurious to God. You will answer; God, indeed, wills what he has decreed to be done, but on condition the creature also wills it, whose liberty he would nowise infringe. I answer, is God so destitute either of power or of wisdom, that he cannot so concur with the liberty of second causes, which he himself gave and formed, as to do what he wills, without prejudice to and consistently with their liberty? God is far more glorious, in our opinion, and more to be had in reverence, than for us to believe any such thing of his power and wisdom. And here the very heathen poets and philosophers themselves, who at times have spoken more devoutly of their gods, may put the heretics to the blush: for thus Homer introduces Jupiter, saying,

—Οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον οὐδ' ἀπατηλὸν,

Οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητον ὅτι κ' ἐν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσω.

—Nec enim mutabitur unquam

Quod capite annuero, nec falsum fine carebit.

"Nor is it mine to recall, nor to be false in, nor leave unfinished, whatever I shall have signified by my awful nod." And Maximus Tyrius, who quotes these words of Homer, Dissert. 29, adds of his own in the following dissertation: "To be changeable and to repent is unworthy, not to say, of God, but even of an honest man." And he argues much in the same manner as we. 2dly, More especially the Scriptures ascribe immutability to the divine election: Rom 9:11, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." 2 Tim. 2:19, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them who are his." Is. 49:15, 16, "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 on the palms of my hands." Rev. 3:5, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Isa. 4:3, "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." Our adversaries have scarce any thing to oppose to such express passages, but their stale musty distinctions of election peremptory and not peremptory, and the like, which are contrary both to the glory of God, and to the simplicity of the Scriptures.

XXVI. But we must say something on Ps. 69:28; where the Lord Jesus denounceth a curse against the Jews, the obstinate despisers of his grace, and his sworn enemies: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." And it cannot be doubted, but this imprecation of our Lord had its full effect: and hence it is concluded, that some are blotted out of the book of the living. But we have already, §. 6 and 7, spoke somewhat largely on this head, which may throw no small light on this passage. For, 1st, By the "book of life", here, we may very well understand the list of those who live on earth, with respect to this animal life. For the wicked Jews were blotted out of that book, by the tremendous judgment of God, when, in their last wars with the Romans, many myriads of them were slain in a shocking manner, whose number Lipsius, de Constant. lib. ii. c. 21, has collected to amount to twelve hundred and thirty thousand, who were cut off in less than full seven years. 2dly, By the book of the living may be understood, the book of God's covenant-people, out of which the Jews were erased, when God publicly disowned and rejected them; and it was said to them "lo-Ruhama" and "lo-Ammi," according to the prophecy of Hosea, 1:6, 9. This was done when the Gospel, which the Jews rejected, was preached to the Gentiles, and eagerly received by them; and the wretched remains of the Jews were dispersed among the nations. 3dly, If we should understand it of the book of election, it may be

said, they were blotted out of that book, as to that writing by which they presumptuously wrote themselves down therein, falsely boasting that they were the dearly beloved children of God and of Abraham: our Lord Jesus justly imprecates against them, that this their boasting may be found actually vain. 4thly, But if this blotting out is to be absolutely understood of the writing of God himself in the book of election, we shall say, that the blotting out was not private but negative, and that the latter part of the verse is an explication of the former; so that the blotting out is a declaration of their not being written down. Kimchi, among the Jewish doctors, also observed this, who writes, "the verse is double, the same sense being proposed in different words." And he adds, "let them be blotted out, signifies, let them not be written in the book of life." From which it appears, that our adversaries argue falsely from this passage, against the immutability of God's election.

XXVII. As this is fixed and settled with respect to God, so the believer may also attain to a certain assurance thereof, and, from infallible marks, know that he is one of the chosen. If it was not so, Peter had to no purpose admonished believers "to make their calling and election sure," 2 Pet. 1:9, 10. That is, to endeavour, by evident signs, to be fully persuaded in their own mind. Vain also would have been Paul's glorying, 1 Thess. 1:4, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." For by the same evidences that Paul could have known this of the Thessalonians, the Thessalonians could have known it with respect to themselves. In fine, believers could not possibly, in faith, give thanks to God for their election, unless they could be assured of it in their own mind; and yet they do give thanks to God for it, Eph. 1:3, 4.

XXVIII. But in what manner do believers attain the assurance of their election? Who hath ascended into heaven? Or who, with a

prying eye, hath perused the volumes of God's decrees and secrets? Who hath looked into the heart of God? We are here, indeed, to guard against rash presumption. But what God has, from eternity, determined about the salvation of his people, he declares to them in time by signs that cannot deceive them. He has given them two books, from which they may gather what is sufficient to know, that they are written in the book of life: namely, the book of Scripture and the book of Conscience. In the book of Scripture, the distinguishing marks of election are drawn out with great exactness. In the book of Conscience, every one may read, if he gives that proper diligence which a matter of such importance requires, whether these marks are with him. The Scripture shows that the marks of Election are, 1st, Effectual calling by the word and Spirit of God, Rom. 8:30. 2dly, Faith in God and Christ, 2 Thess. 2:13. 3dly, Hatred and eschewing of evil, 2 Tim. 2:19. 4thly, The sincere and constant study of holiness, Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13. And when it is well understood and known what effectual calling is, what faith in God and Christ, what eschewing of evil, and what the study of genuine godliness are; the conscience is then to be examined, whether these can be found in itself; and, upon discovering that they are, the believing soul may, from these undoubted fruits, be assured of his election. And it frequently happens, that God favours his chosen people with the ravishments of his most beneficent love, that while they are inebriated with those spiritual and unspeakable delights, which earthly souls can neither conceive nor relish, they are no less persuaded of their election, than if they had seen their names written by the very hand of God himself. These things make them, with exultation, cry out to their infernal enemies, who in vain resist their faith, "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." Ps. 4:3. Especially if (which then is not usually wanting) the internal witness of the Spirit to their adoption is superadded, of

which in Rom. 8:16, and which is by way of seal, Eph. 1:13. But there will be occasion to speak of this hereafter.

XXIX. And it is the interest of believers to endeavour earnestly after this assurance of their election. For, 1st, It is not possible, they should have a life of joy and exultation in the Lord, while they are ignorant of this. They may, no doubt, happily fall asleep in the Lord, and, through death, reach to eternal life, though they are not assured of their election. For our salvation depends not on this full assurance of faith; but on our union and communion with Christ, which may remain safe and secure without that. But a man who has his salvation at heart, as he ought, cannot live in secure joy, so long as he doubts of his election. 2dly, Nor does this assurance greatly contribute to our joy only, but also very much to the glory of God. For then it is that we properly value the riches of divine love, and are sweetly swallowed up in the immense ocean of his goodness, when we ascend, in our minds and in our praises, to the original fountain of all grace; and, in imitation of Paul, celebrate his free love, by which "He hath chosen us in Christ Jesus, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. 1:6. 3dly, Nay, this certainty of the election which we preach likewise promotes the careful study of piety, and kindles a fervent zeal therein; so far is it from opening a wide door to ungodliness and carnal security: which none dare assert, but they who are ignorant of the good ways of God, or malignant perverters of them.

XXX. Here, then, is the meditation of one who is thus fully persuaded, and this is his language to his God: "Didst thou, O Lord, from eternity, entertain thoughts of glorifying me, a miserable wretch, who am less than nothing; and shall I not again carry thee for ever in my eyes, and always in my bosom? Shall I not delight in meditating on thee? Shall I not cry out, 'How precious also are thy

thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!' Ps. 139:17. Shall I not, with the most sincere repentance, bewail that time, in which so many hours, days, weeks, months, and years have passed over my head, without one single holy and pleasing thought of thee? Didst thou, out of mere love, choose me to salvation? And shall not I again choose thee for my Lord, my king, my husband; for the portion of my soul; for my chief, or rather my only, delight? Didst thou choose me from among so many others, who, being left to themselves, have eternal destruction abiding them; and shall not I exert myself to the utmost, to excel others in love, in thy worship, and in all the duties of holiness? Didst thou predestinate me to holiness, which is so amiable in itself and so necessary for me, that without it, there can be no salvation; and shall not I walk therein? Shall I presume to cavil with thee, thou brightest Teacher of truth; that, separating the end from the means, I should securely promise myself the end, as being predestinated thereto, in a neglect of the means to which I was no less predestinated? Is thy purpose concerning my salvation fixed and unchangeable; and shall I change every hour—at one time giving my service to thee, and at another time to the devil? Shall I not rather cleave to thee with such a firm purpose, as sooner to choose a thousand deaths rather than perfidiously forsake thee? Shall I not be 'steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as I know my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord?' 1 Cor. 15:58. Wilt thou by thy Spirit assure me of thy love, which passeth all understanding; and I not love thee again with all my heart, all my mind, and all my strength? Wilt thou give me the assurance of my salvation; and shall not I, 'having this hope, purify myself, as thou art pure?' 1 John 3:3." Who that understands these things, can deny that the doctrine of Election, as we have explained it, affords ample matter to a pious soul for these and such like meditations? And who also can deny,

that in the practice of these meditations consists the very kernel of piety and holiness?

## **Chapter II: Of Effectual Calling**

I. THE first immediate fruit of eternal election, and the principal act of God by which appointed salvation applied, is EFFECTUAL CALLING; of which the apostle saith, Rom. 8:30, "whom he did predestinate, them he also called." And this CALLING is that act by which those who are chosen by God, and redeemed by Christ, are sweetly invited, and effectually brought from a state of sin, to a state of communion with God in Christ, both externally and internally.

II. The term from which they are called, is a state of sin and misery in which all men are involved, ever since the sin of our first parents. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart," Eph. 4:18. For we are brought to such a pass, that we are wholly excluded from the saving communion of God and Christ. Being sunk in the deep gulf of misery, and having lost all notion of true happiness, we wallow in the mire of the wickedness and vanities of this world without end and without measure, and are enslaved to the devil, to whom we have submitted as conquered captives; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. 3:23. But out of this darkness of ignorance, sin, and misery, "God calleth us unto his marvellous light," 1 Pet. 2:9; "and delivers us from this present evil world," Gal. 1:4. And we are never to forget our former state. "Remember that, at that time, ye were without Christ, being aliens

from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world," Eph. 2:12. The meditation of this tends to humble us the more deeply before God, who calleth us, the more to prize the riches of his glorious grace, and the more to quicken us to walk worthy of our calling, and of God, by whom we are called.

III. The term to which we are called, is Christ, and communion with him. For this he calls out, Is. 45:22, 'פנו אלי, "look to me (or incline yourselves to me) and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." In this communion with Christ consists that mystical and most delightful marriage of the elect soul with Christ, to which he invites him with all the allurements of his gospel, and whose exalted nuptial song Solomon sung: "Wisdom hath builded her house.—She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city,—turn in hither,—come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled," Prov. 9:1–5.

IV. From this communion results the communication of all the benefits of Christ, both in grace and in glory, to which we are likewise called. "Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in farness. 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." Isa 55:2, 3. Thus he calleth us to his kingdom and glory, 1 Thess. 2:12.

V. And since Christ cannot be separated from his Father and his Spirit, we are, at the same time, called to the communion of the undivided Trinity. "That our fellowship may be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John 1:3; to which Paul joins "the communion of the Holy Ghost," 2 Cor. 13:14. And it is the very summit of our of our happiness, to exult in God as ours, and sing

aloud to him, my God, while he himself calls to us, my people, Hos. 2:23.

VI. Moreover, as all the elect are partakers of one and the same grace, they are all likewise called to mutual communion with one another, "that ye also may have fellowship with us," 1 John 1:3. Believers of the New Testament with those of the Old, the Gentiles with the Jews, "being all of the same body," Eph. 3:6, "in Christ, who hath made both one," Eph. 2:14. Nay, those on earth with those in heaven: "for all things are gathered together in one in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance," Eph. 1:10, 11. And this is that blessed state to which, by the holy and heavenly calling, we are invited; namely, communion with Christ, and, by him, with the undivided Trinity, and consequently with all the saints, both militant and triumphant, not even excepting the praising assembly of angels; in order with them to exult in the most delightful fruition of all the blessings of God. For all who obey this call "are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," Heb. 12:23, 24. What grander things can be spoken, what more noble and divine can be conceived, than these?

VII. But this calling is given, partly externally, by a persuasive power, called moral suasion; partly internally, by a real supernatural efficacy, which changes the heart. The external call is, in some measure, published by the word of nature, but more fully by that of supernatural revelation, without which every word of nature would be insufficient and ineffectual. The internal comes from the power of



the Holy Spirit working inwardly on the heart; and without this every external revealed word, though objectively very sufficient, as it clearly discovers every thing to be known, believed, and done, yet is subjectively ineffectual, nor will ever bring any person to the communion of Christ.

VIII. Nature itself is not silent, but many ways calls on man to lay aside his too eager care and pursuit of earthly things, and of this animal life, and to endeavour after the far better things of heaven and eternity. For when, with attentive eyes, he surveys that glittering canopy on high, bespangled with so many constellations, and sparkling with so many stars, above which, according to the general belief of mankind, the throne of the Supreme Being is placed, he feels a certain strong desire excited in his breast, that, when he leaves this earthly dross, he may, hereafter, ascend on high, be admitted into the inmost recesses of nature, and received into fellowship with God. And when his thoughts pursue the several beauties of the starry heavens, he then takes a secret pleasure to look down with contempt on the pavements of the rich, nay, on this whole earth, with all its gold, not only that which it has already produced, but that which still lies concealed for the avarice of posterity. And when he further traverses the whole universe, he learns to despise the most stately porticoes, ceilings inlaid with ivory, woods formed by art, and rivers conveyed home, and looking down from on high on this small terrestrial globe, a great part of which is covered with the sea, and much of what remains greatly uncultivated, many places being either scorched with heat, or frozen with cold, he thus says to himself, "Is this that insignificant spot, which so many nations divide among themselves by fire and sword? When thou hast been engaged in the contemplation of these things truly great, then, as oft as thou shalt espy armies with banners displayed, and, as if some great event was in agitation, the horse now advancing to gain intelligence, again

pouring forth from the flanks, it may remind thee of the excursion of ants, toiling within a scanty compass. Whereas there are vastly extensive regions above, into the possession of which the soul is admitted; and thus, although it has suffered some inconvenience from the body, yet if, by being content with little, it has dropped all its dross, it is now light and ready to depart: unless, then, I be admitted into these regions, my birth has been in vain. For why should I rejoice for being numbered among the living? Without this inestimable good, life is not of such value, that I should sweat and fatigue myself therein. O! how contemptible is man, unless he is advanced above what is human!" Thus the book of nature, thus the contemplation of the heavens, taught Seneca both to think and speak. In Præfat. Quest. Natur.

IX. But seeing the same nature teacheth us, that God is far more excellent than those very heavens, which are his throne and the work of his hands, that he is both the creator and ruler of the heavens; the same works invite man to seek after the communion of God himself above all things. For happiness cannot consist in barely dwelling in heaven, unless one enjoys the fellowship and communion of God there. Thus by the voice of nature men are invited "to seek God, if haply they might feel after him," Acts 17:27. "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good;" Acts 14:17; and that by discovering himself to be the fountain of all good, both the greatest and the best of Beings, whose communion alone can render any perfectly blessed. It is therefore an old saying, and handed down from our ancestors to mankind, "that all things were both framed by God and in him consist; and that no nature can be sufficient for its own safety, which is only entrusted with its own preservation, without God." Thus the author of the book "de mundo," extant among Aristotle's works, c. 11, and who concludes with these

excellent words: "Whoever would attain to a blessed and happy life, must partake of the Deity from the very beginning."

X. But God not only invites men by the light of nature to seek him, but also gives some hope of enjoying him. For why else should he forbear sinners, with so much long-suffering, unless he had decreed to take pity on some of them? Would it be worthy of the most pure Deity to have preserved now for so many ages, the world subjected to vanity by the sins of men, unless there were some of mankind to whom he was willing to show himself glorious in their happiness? "The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. 3:9. And as this consideration of the Divine patience and forbearance, shining forth in the whole government of the world, yields some hope of salvation, "and the long-suffering of our Lord ought to be accounted salvation," *ib.* ver. 15. "so this goodness of God should lead every one to repentance," Rom. 2:4.

XI. For nature also teaches, that it is not possible any one can enjoy converse and familiarity with God, who does not sincerely endeavour after purity and holiness, and, as the emperor Marcus Antoninus speaks, lib. ii. §. 5, labours not "to live a life resembling God." For like delights in like, and rejoices to communicate itself thereto. Plato, *de Legibus*, lib. iv, says well, "What practice is it that is agreeable to, and in imitation of God? This, and that ancient one, that like delights in like." Thus man is invited to the practice of the strictest purity, by the voice of nature herself, in order to the enjoyment of God. I cannot forbear adding the gradation of Agapetus, which is really fine, and strictly true. Thus he says to the emperor Justinian: "For he who knows himself shall know God. But he who knows God, shall be made like to God. He shall be like God, who is worthy of God. He shall be worthy of God, who does nothing unworthy of God, but

meditates on the things of God, and what he thinks he speaks, and what he speaks he acts."

XII. All these things the royal Seer, Ps. 19:1–4, has exhibited in a concise but very strong manner. "The heavens declare the glory of God;" for as they are his throne, curiously framed, so they display his power, majesty, greatness and holiness, before which the heavens themselves confess they are not clean: however their very excellence invites men to endeavour, within their circuit, to the utmost, after the enjoyment of communion with the great and good God. "And the firmament showeth his handy-work," proclaiming, that by his word only, it was framed together. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." These vicissitudes of light and darkness mutually corresponding in so exact and constant an order, prove a most wise Director. And there is no day nor night but speaks something of God, and declares it to the next, as the scholar of the preceding and the master of the following. "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." If they were words, the instruction would cease with their sound; but now what the heavens declare, they do it always, and in the same manner. If speeches, and sentences deduced with much subtlety from their reasons and causes, they would labour under obscurity; if their voice was heard, it would stun us with its noise. But now the heavens instruct both constantly, clearly, and sweetly. For though their voice is not heard, yet they have a voice, no less strongly adapted to strike the mind, than the sound of a trumpet, or of thunder; seeing they exhibit to the eyes of all the magnificence of their Creator so clearly, as to escape the observation of none but the wilfully blind. Or possibly this may be the meaning: "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Though people differ in languages, and the Greek understands not the barbarian; yet the heavens have a common language adapted to the instruction of all alike and nothing but a

culpable carelessness can hinder the most distant people from improving by the instruction, as it were, of one teacher. "Their line is gone out through all the earth." The instruction of the heavens resembles that of school-masters, who teach children their letters by drawing their strokes before them. Thus the heavens draw lines or strokes with their rays, and as it were letters of the alphabet, from which, combined and variously joined together, an entire volume of wisdom is formed. This is the signification of  $\iota\lambda$ , as Isa. 28:10, "line upon line:" from which the Greek  $\phi\thetaογγος$ , which the apostle uses, Rom. 10:18, does not differ much, denoting not only a sound, but also a letter of the alphabet, as Plutarch, in fabio, notes, as Scapula has observed in his lexicon. Nor is it necessary to say, that the text is here corrupted, or that the Septuagint read  $\delta\lambda\iota\lambda$  their voice. And this line "is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." All mankind, whether in a habitable or desert country, are taught by this master. There is no corner of the world, where the figures of the heavens, as so many arguments of the divine perfections, are not to be seen. And this is the reason why I have just now proposed the reasonings of those (if you except the quotation from Agapetus, a deacon of the church of Constantinople) who had no other master but nature.

XIII. But though the invitation, which nature gives to seek God, be sufficient to render them without excuse who do not comply with it, Rom. 1:20; yet it is not sufficient, even objectively, for salvation. For it does not afford that lively hope, which maketh not ashamed;" for this is only revealed by the gospel; whence the Gentiles are said to have been "without hope in the world," Eph. 2:12. It does not show the true way to the enjoyment of God, which is no other than faith in Christ. It does not sufficiently instruct us about the manner in which we ought to worship and please God, and do what is acceptable to him. In short, this call by nature never did, nor is it even possible

that it ever can, bring any to the saving knowledge of God; the gospel alone "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16.

XIV. We cannot agree with those, whether they be ancients, a list of whom Casaubon, Exercit. I. ad Apparat. Annal. Baronii, and after him Vossius, Histor. Pelag. lib. iii. p. 3. Thes. 11, have drawn up; or whether they be moderns, who maintain, that good men, among the Gentiles, were brought to salvation by this call of nature, without the knowledge of Christ. And we think some of our brethren ascribe too much to nature, who tell us "that men, if not wilfully blind, could, by what is known of God, have attained to some knowledge of the divine mercy, by which they might obtain salvation, in a manner perhaps unknown to us; though destitute of the distinct knowledge of some mysteries, which they could no way discover of themselves," Amyraldus, Specim. Animad. in Exerc. de Gratia. Univ. P. 2. p. 133. For we are persuaded, there is no salvation without Christ, Acts 4:12: no communion of adult persons with Christ, but by faith in him, Eph. 3:17: no faith in Christ, without the knowledge of him, John 17:3; no knowledge, but by the preaching of the Gospel, Rom. 10:14: no preaching of the Gospel in the works of nature. For it is that "mystery, which was kept secret since the world began." Rom. 16:25.

XV. To what purpose then, you will say, is this call by the light of nature? Not to speak of the being without excuse, just now mentioned, which, indeed, may be the end of him who calls, though not of the call itself: that calling serves to prepare the way for a further, a more perfect, and a more explicit call by the Gospel, and as a prelude of a fuller instruction. For as grace supposes nature, and makes it perfect, so the truths revealed in the Gospel are built on those made known by the light of nature. When a person, under that glimmering light, has discovered that there is a God; that happiness

consists in communion with him, and that in comparison of him all things are nothing; and that he is the rewarder of those who seek him; and that, if he is sought in a proper way and manner, he is not sought in vain; he has now a foundation laid, on which to build the gospel, which declares what that God is, in what manner he becomes propitious to men in Christ, how he is to be sought, and in what method he will certainly be found. And thus the knowledge he learns from nature being sanctified by the Spirit, better prepares the mind for embracing those truths which, though they surpass, are yet so far from destroying, that they perfect nature. And it is very expedient for believers, who live under the Gospel, to have always the book of nature before their eyes: which furnishes them with useful instructions, and lashes the conscience with continual reproaches, unless they love, worship, and celebrate the Deity, who is every where present. Which the heathens themselves, as Epictetus and others, have represented in their own way.

XVI. We must therefore add the other call by the word of God, supernaturally revealed, either immediately from God's own mouth, as was formerly done to the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and others; or mediately by the ministers of God, whether they preached it by word of mouth, or consigned it to writing. Thus Paul says, Rom. 10:14, "How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" And here indeed both parts of the word are to be made use of; thus the law convincing man of sin, Rom. 3:20, awakens him to a sense of his misery, drives the sinner out of himself, stirs him up to desire deliverance, and makes him sigh in this manner, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of death!" Rom. 7:24. Therefore the law ought certainly to be preached, in its full vigour and force, that "knowing the terror of the Lord, we may persuade men." 2 Cor. 5:11. But yet the principal part is performed by the Gospel, which

revealing Christ, and the fulness of all grace and salvation in him, allures, by its endearing sweetness, awakened and concerned sinners to communion with God. Nothing more powerfully sinks into the inmost soul, than that most alluring invitation of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. 11:28. "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. This word is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth," Rom. 1:16. If the law only was preached, it would, by its horrors, harden souls, driven to despair, into a hatred of God, as a severe avenger of sin. But by adding the Gospel, which makes a bright hope of grace to shine, even on the most abandoned and wretched sinner, if, displeased with himself, he heartily desires it: obstinate hearts come to relent, and to be melted down into a love of God, and of his Christ. And therefore, nothing ought to be more sweet and dear to us than the most delightful word of the Gospel, in which are rivers of honey and butter. Job 20:17.

XVII. This word of grace, though variously dispensed, was published in the world from the very first sin of man. Heb. 1:1. But in such a manner, as to be sufficient for the instruction of the elect to salvation, in all ages, according to that measure of grace and knowledge, which the providence of God distributed in each period of time. When the revelation was more sparing and obscure, God being satisfied with a less measure of knowledge, did, by the secret power of his Spirit, unite the elect to Christ, and keep them united by an almost invisible band, which yet no force could break asunder. But when he had more brightly discovered himself, he called for a more exact knowledge and faith. And as he clearly teaches his people, how they ought to walk and to please God, so he also requires them to "abound more and more." 1Thess. 4:1.



XVIII. We do not agree with those who think, that by the unwritten word of God, those only were called to salvation through faith in Christ, who were eminent for the spirit of prophesy, but the rest of the church was so rude and ignorant, that they were brought to an unknown Christ, by the help of the law of nature alone, without the spirit of faith. For, down from Adam, the true church had one and the same precious faith, and the same common salvation with the prophets. God did not only speak to the prophets, for their private use, but by the Prophets to the fathers, Heb. 1:1. The prophets would have acted perfidiously, had they put the candle that was lighted for them under a bushel, and indolently wrapt in a napkin the talent intrusted with them. Nor is it consistent with the piety of the ancient fathers, not to have inculcated, with care and diligence, upon their children, what they themselves had learned about the promised seed of the woman. So that though we are not to determine any thing rashly, as to the manner and measure of knowledge, yet we are not to doubt, but that the revelation of a Saviour was made to the elect from the beginning.

XIX. This Gospel-call was never given universally to all men, unless in the beginning of the world, just springing from Adam, or rising again from Noah. Though, even then, God gave warning of the seclusion of some from his grace, by the distinction he made between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; and by separating Ham from his brethren by a dreadful curse, and the ancient prophecy of alluring, in after times, the posterity of Japhet into the tents of Shem, which insinuated that the posterity of Japhet should, for some time, be aliens from the communion of the people of God. Afterwards, the greatest part of mankind were left to themselves; and though God vouchsafed the word of his grace to the posterity of Abraham, yet not to them all In fine, when he claimed Israel to himself for a people, he rejected the other nations, and suffered them

all to go on in their own ways, Acts 14:16. And though, upon breaking down the wall of partition, the apostles were enjoined to preach the Gospel to every creature, without distinction, yet it was never so universally preached, but that there were always very many nations, and still are at this day, whom the report of the Gospel never reached. They are therefore mistaken who, having feigned an universal redemption by Christ, and an universal objective grace, as it is called, have at the same time devised, for supporting it, an universal call to Christ.

XX. This call contains the command of faith, by which all men without exception, to whom God vouchsafes the same, are enjoined to believe in Christ, in that way and manner which is revealed in the Gospel, Isa. 45:22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." But the method of believing is this: first, that a person do heartily acknowledge all men, without exception, and himself among the rest, to be liable to condemnation because of sin: and then, that he embrace the principal truths of the Gospel; namely, that there is no salvation but in Christ, nor any communion with Christ, but by a true and lively faith: moreover, that he do not neglect so great salvation, but renouncing all earthly enjoyments, and every false remedy for his sins that, he only desire the righteousness of Christ, receive him as his Saviour, give himself up wholly to him, not doubting but, in so doing, he shall find rest to his soul. All, and every one in particular, therefore, to whom the Gospel is preached, are not commanded directly to believe, that Christ died for them. For that is a falsehood: but are commanded to proceed in that method, I have now described; and not to take comfort to themselves from the death of Christ, before, having acknowledged their own misery, and renounced every thing but Christ, they have given themselves up sincerely to him. We cannot therefore conclude from this general call, who they are for whom Christ died; but only this, that there is no

other name given under heaven, in which we can be saved; and that in him, as an all-sufficient Saviour, every believer shall have life.

XXI. But that external call will bring none to communion with Christ, unless it be accompanied with the internal, which is accomplished not only by persuasion and command, but by the powerful operation of the Spirit. There is a certain call of God, whereby he makes the things he calls, to exist by that very call. By such a call "he calleth those things which be not, as though they were," Rom. 4:17. For when he said, "Let there be light," immediately "there was light," Gen. 1:3. Not unlike this is that internal call of the Spirit, of which the apostle writes, 2 Cor. 4:6, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts." But when he says to the elect, in the hour of their happy visitation, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. 5:14, it is no more possible for them to remain any longer in the sleep of death, than it was possible for Lazarus to continue in the grave, after Christ had said to him, "Lazarus, come forth," John 11:43.

XXII. Here God exerts his infinite power, by which he converts the soul no less powerfully than sweetly. While the Gospel is externally proposed to his chosen people, "He gives them the eyes of their understanding to be enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of their calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Eph. 1:18; "he openeth their heart, that they may attend unto the things which are spoken," Acts 16:14; and causes them "to receive the word with all readiness of mind," Acts 17:11. He writes his laws on their heart, Jer. 31:33: puts the reverence of himself there, Ezek. 11:20: and not only calls them from darkness to his marvellous light, but also, by the call, draws them, not to stand still in the path of doubtful deliberation, but to run after him, Cant.

1:4; not only puts them in an equal poise, but turns them, Jer. 31:18; not only advises, but persuades, and "he is stronger and prevails," Jer. 20:7. Nor does he solicit, but translate, Col. 1:13; not by an ordinary, but by that mighty power, by which he raised Christ from the dead, Eph. 1:20. Let changeable human nature put on what form it will, it must be obliged to confess, that in this matter, these are so many displays of divine omnipotence, like so many thunderbolts thrown out to bring down its pride.

XXIII. Nevertheless, God deals here with the rational creature in such a manner, that the liberty of the human will is not, in the least, affected: which he is so far from destroying, by the energy of his power, that, on the contrary, he rescues and maintains it. He put, indeed, into the heart of Titus the earnest care of going, yet so as to undertake the journey of his own accord, 2 Cor. 8:16, 17. It is a violence, indeed, but that of heavenly love, the greater the sweeter. A certain kind of compulsion, but that of the most charming friendship, to the end that the soul being loosed from the chains of sin and Satan, may rejoice in the most delightful liberty. God does not drag along the unwilling by head and shoulders, but makes them willing, Phil. 2:13. bringing his truths so clearly to their understanding, that they cannot but assent, so effectually gaining upon their will by the charms of his goodness, that they are not able to reject them; but yield themselves conquered, and that with the highest complacency; exulting with joy, "O Lord, thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed," Jer. 20:7. "I may well exult in this victory and triumph over the devil, for that I myself am conquered by thee." And who can be so rude as to complain of any violence done to human liberty, by this winning power (so to speak) of the Deity?

XXIV. It was certainly inconsistent with the power and majesty of God, to attempt any thing and leave it in suspense, and not bring it to a final issue; it was likewise unworthy both of his goodness and wisdom, so to vex and distress a man endowed with reason and will, as, in a matter of the far greatest moment act, to without knowledge or against his will, by a certain fatal and blind instinct of his own. He therefore employs the highest degree of force, thereby to conquer the highest degree of the corruption of nature; but a pleasant force, a force under the direction of wisdom, as became an intelligent and rational nature; which is so willingly overcome, as not only not to resist, because nothing can resist God, when he comes to convert the soul; but also because, should it resist, it would think itself most unhappy. But yet we are here to distinguish between the beginning and accomplishment of the call; as also between the object and the end, or that in which it terminates. For at the beginning of the call, man necessarily resists, and cannot but resist, because the object is an unbelieving and rebellious sinner, and a child of disobedience: but in the consummation, he necessarily makes no resistance, and cannot now resist, because the end of this call, or that in which it terminates, is a Believer, who owns himself conquered, and glories in the obedience of faith. This is what the Greek authors emphatically call *πειθανάγκη*, the contracting persuasion, of God who calls.

XXV. The many admonitions, promises, and threatenings by which we are invited, make nothing against this truth; for, as they inform us of our duty, so they are made effectual to conversion by the internal operation of the Spirit. Nor ought the complaints of God and of Christ, of the unwillingness of people to be converted, be objected to it; because these do not speak of any inward power that would bring about their conversion, as if they were able to weaken that, but of the external ministry of the word, against which the wicked harden their heart. Neither are we to urge what we elsewhere find

about grieving the Spirit of God: because we are to distinguish between the common operations of the Spirit of God, and the special operations of the Spirit of grace: between the moral and the supernatural actions of the Spirit of grace. Between some more feeble impulses to certain exercises of virtue and piety, and that grand attempt of the Spirit when he goes to convert an elect person. They grieve the Spirit of God, because they rather choose to obey the impulses of the flesh and of the devil, than his holy admonitions, which are partly proposed externally by the word, partly insinuated into their mind by conscience. Believers themselves also grieve the Spirit of grace whereby they are sealed, as often as they refuse to comply with his holy admonitions; and though conscience, in which the Spirit has set up his throne, in vain struggles with them, yet they suffer themselves to be carried away by the flesh and the world: and likewise every time that, with a becoming reverence of soul, they refuse to receive, cherish, and follow his holy impulses, when he quickens them to duty. Whence nothing can be concluded against the invincible efficacy of God, when he calls internally, and effectually undertakes the conversion of his people.

XXVI. We ought then attentively to consider, carefully hearken to, and willingly comply with the call of God, both the external by the light of nature and revelation, and the internal by the Spirit; so that, upon being brought to communion with God and Christ, "we may show forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light," 1 Pet. 2:9.

## Chapter III: Of Regeneration

I. BY that same word, whereby the elect are called to communion with God and his Christ, they are also regenerated to a far more excellent life. For thus James saith, 1:18, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." It is therefore proper we proceed from the subject of effectual calling to that of Regeneration.

II. But here all things are deep, and wrapt up in mystery. Who can unfold to us the secrets of his own corporal birth? Who can distinctly declare in what manner he was poured out like milk, and curdled like cheese within the bowels of his mother. The prophet himself, as if he was seized with a holy amazement, cried out, "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect," Ps. 139:14–16. But if these things, which regard the origin of our body, and the beginnings of this animal life, are involved in such darkness as to frustrate the inquiries of the most sagacious; how much more involved are the things that constitute our spiritual regeneration, which none can doubt to be altogether mysterious.

III. But yet this is so necessary, that our Saviour declares, that without it there is no entering into the kingdom of heaven, John 3:3, 5. It therefore deserves to be inquired into; that, if we have perhaps attained to it, we may celebrate with becoming praises the glorious perfections of God our Father, which shine so conspicuously in this illustrious work, and properly valuing our happiness, we may frame the whole tenour of our lives in a manner suitable to it.

IV. We give this definition of it: Regeneration is that supernatural act of God, whereby a new and divine life is infused into the elect person, spiritually dead, and that from the incorruptible seed of the word of God, made fruitful by the infinite power of the Spirit.

V. We are "all dead in Adam," 1 Cor. 15:22, through the poison of the tempting serpent. This "murderer from the beginning", John 8:44, had such success attending his endeavours, that all men who now exist are by nature "dead in trespasses and sins", Eph. 2:1. That is, 1st, They are separated at the greatest distance from God and his Spirit, who is the soul of their soul, and life of their life; or in the language of Paul, "alienated from the life of God", Eph. 4:18. 2dly, They are spiritually insensible of all spiritual things, destitute of all true feeling: they do not rightly consider the load of their sins, because they are in them as in their element: nor have a right knowledge of their misery, "being past feeling," Eph. 4:19, nor any relish for divine grace, because it has not yet been conferred upon them; nor any longing after heavenly things, being ignorant of their worth. 3dly, They are wholly incapable of every act of true life: "Not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves," 2 Cor. 3:5. The understanding is overspread with dismal darkness, Eph. 4:18; "hath not set God before it," Ps. 86:14; "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can it know them," 1 Cor. 2:14; the will has no tendency to things unknown: and thus all the things of God are despised by it as mean. And if at times it seem to perform any things that have some appearance of vital actions, this proceeds not from a principle of life, but resembles those automatical or artificial motions, by which statues, ingeniously framed, counterfeit living animals.

VI. But as a dead carcass swarms with vermin, arising from putrefaction, in which the briskest life is observed, though of another



order and kind from that life which was formerly in that body; so, in like manner, there is a kind of life in a man spiritually dead, but it is carnal, hellish, and diabolical, at the greatest distance from true life, and the more vigorous it is, it gives the more evident signs of the most deplorable death. The apostle has elegantly joined this death and life; Eph. 2:1, 2, "When ye were dead in trespasses and sins ye walked in them, as is the life of this world:" so Beza translates. In the Greek it runs, κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα του κοσμου τουτου. Philo., in Alleg., lib. i., defines this death well: "When the soul is dead as to virtue, it lives the life of vice." Not unlike to what Macarius says, Homil. 12, "When Adam began to entertain evil thoughts and devices, he perished as to God: we say not he perished altogether, was destroyed and quite dead; but that, though as to God he was dead, yet he was alive as to his own nature." What Macarius affirms of Adam is universally true of all; for in a man spiritually dead, there is really a natural or animal life, which, though not active in that which is good, is doubly active in that which is evil. The understanding, not apprehending the wisdom of God, looks upon it as foolishness, 1 Cor. 2:14; and yet, when it would find wisdom in the things of God, it so transforms them by its mad presumption, and compels them, even against their nature, to a conformity to the notions of its trifling presumptuous self-wisdom, that while it impiously presumes to correct the wisdom of God, it transforms it in a dreadful manner into downright folly. The will, not finding any thing in God wherewith it can take delight, seeks it either in the creatures without God, or, which is more abominable, in the very perpetration of wickedness. The affections, shaking off the reins of reason, rush on in full career. The body, with all its members, is the throne of mad and furious lusts. And the whole man, being so averse from God, and infatuated with the fond love of himself, sets himself up for an idol, makes his own advantage his supreme end; his own pleasure, his most infallible

law. This is the life of the soul, which "is dead while living", 1 Tim. 5:6.

VII. And thus it is with the elect before regeneration: but by regeneration a new life is put into them, resulting from a gracious union with God and his Spirit. For what the soul is to the body, that God is to the soul. Moreover, this spiritual life may be considered, either by way of faculty, and in the first act, in the usual language of the schools; or by way of operation, and in the second act. In the former respect, it is that inward constitution of the soul whereby it is fitted to exert those actions which are acceptable to God in Christ, by the power of the Spirit uniting it to God: whether such actions immediately flow from that principle, or whether they lie concealed for some time as fruits in their seed. In the latter respect, it is that activity of the living soul by which it acts agreeably to the command of God, and the example of Christ.

VIII. If we consider this first principle of life, there is not the least doubt but regeneration is accomplished in a moment. For there is no delay in the transition from death to life. No person can be regenerated so long as he is in the state of spiritual death: but in the instant he begins to live, he is born again. Wherefore no intermediate state between the regenerate and unregenerate can be imagined so much as in thought, if we mean regeneration in the first act; for one is either dead or alive; has either the Spirit of the flesh and the world, or the Spirit of God actuating him; is either in the state of grace or in the state of malediction; either the child of God or of the devil; either in the way to salvation or damnation. There neither is nor can be any medium here. The Holy Scripture divides all mankind into two classes—"sheep and goats," Matt. 25:2, 3; and compares their goings to two ways; whereof the one, which is broad, leads to destruction; the other, which is narrow, to life, Matt. 7:13, 14; and there is no one

who does not tread in one or other of these ways. And what if he, whom some imagine to be in an intermediate state, should depart this animal life before he be fully brought to the spiritual life, would such a one be received into heaven? But heaven is open only to the actually regenerate, John 3:3. Or would he be thrust into hell? But hell is allotted only for the goats, and for those who, all their life long, have walked in the broad way. Or perhaps such will be received into some intermediate place, where, being free from the pains of hell and deprived of the joys of heaven, they will delight themselves in I know not what degree of natural happiness? As some popish doctors, discoursing in the council of Trent, of infants dying without baptism, pleased themselves with these fond sportings of their imagination, which the author of the history of that council, lib. ii. p. 157, has not dismissed without a good deal of acrimony and sharpness. Or you will say, perhaps, it is a case which never happens that any one should die in that intermediate state. But produce me the vouchers of such an assertion, whereby security is given to those in this intermediate class, of retaining their lives till they shall have declared of what class they choose to be. I do not remember to have read any thing on that head in Scripture. And if that intermediate state has such an indissolvable connexion with salvation, it will be no longer intermediate, but a state of grace. For it is grace alone to which the attainment of glory is infallibly assigned. I own there are various degrees of regeneration in the second act; and that the seed of it sometimes lies hid under the earth, or at most, exerts some slender and initial, and, as it were, infantile operations, differing very much with respect to perfection from those which a more advanced spirit of sanctification produces; yet seeing the former also have their rise from the fountain of the new life, it is plain that they who exert them are to be ranked among the regenerate. For we must say one of these two things; either that these operations ascribed to the intermediate state proceed from the powers of nature and common grace; and

thus there is nothing in them which may not be found in the reprobate, and those entirely unregenerate; or that they proceed from the indwelling Spirit of grace, and so are effects of regeneration, to which the beginnings of the new life are owing.

IX. Hence it appears, there are no preparations antecedent to the first beginning of regeneration; because, previous to that, nothing but mere death in the highest degree is to be found in the person to be regenerated. "When we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ," Eph. 2:5. And indeed the Scripture represents man's conversion by such similitudes, as show that all preparations are entirely excluded; sometimes calling it a new generation, to which, certainly, none can contribute any thing of himself; but yet, as natural generation presupposes some dispositions in the matter, so that we may not imagine any such thing to be in ourselves but from God, we have this held forth by the similitude of a resurrection; in which a body is restored from matter, prepared by no qualifications: yet because here certainly is matter, but in the resurrection of the soul there is nothing at all, therefore we have added the figure of a creation, Ps. 51:10, Eph. 2:10; by which we are taught that a new creature exists from a spiritual nothing, which is sin: but as there was not something in nothing to assist and sustain creation, so there was nothing to oppose and resist; but sin is so far from submitting to what God does, that it is reluctant thereto, and in a hostile manner at enmity with him; accordingly, the other images did not fully complete the idea of this admirable action, till at length it is called the victory of God—victory, I say, over the devil, who maintains his palace, Luke 11:21, and effectually worketh "in the children of disobedience," Eph. 2:2. All these operations of God, which Alexander Moore has, in an elegant order, ranged one after another, *de Victoria Gratia*, Diss. 1, Thess. 10, tend to exclude, as far as possible, all preparations from the beginning of our regeneration.

X. The semi-pelagians, therefore, of Marseilles were mistaken, who insisted, that a man comes to the grace, whereby we are regenerated in Christ, by a natural faculty, as by asking, seeking, knocking; and that, in some at least, before they are born again, there is a kind of repentance going before, together with a sorrow for sin, and a change of the life for the better, and a beginning of faith, and an initial love of God, and a desire of grace; it is true, they did not look on these endeavours to be of such importance as that it would be said, we were thereby rendered worthy of the grace of the Holy Spirit, as Pelagius and Julian professed; but yet they imagined, they were an occasion by which God was moved to bestow his grace; for they said, that the mercy of God is such, that he recompenses this very small beginning of good with this illustrious reward; as Vossius, *Hist. Pelag. lib. iv. p. 1*, *Thess. 1*, has refined this their opinion. The Remonstrants are likewise mistaken, in *Collatione Hagiensi, editionis Brandianæ, p. 302*, when they write, "Some work of man, therefore, goes before his vivification; namely, to acknowledge and bewail his death, to will and desire deliverance from it; to hunger, thirst, and seek after life; all which, and a great deal besides, is required by Christ in those whom he will make alive." But there is little accuracy in the reasonings of these men. For, 1st, Since our nature is become, after having eaten of the forbidden fruit, like an evil tree, it can produce no fruit truly good and acceptable to God, and do nothing by which it can prepare itself for the grace of regeneration, unless a person can be thought to prepare himself for grace by sin. 2dly, It has been found, that they who in appearance were in the best manner disposed for regeneration, were yet at the greatest distance from it, as the instance of that young man, *Matt. 19:21, 22*, very plainly shows. He appeared to be full of good intentions, and inflamed with a desire after heaven, and a blameless life before men, to a degree, that Jesus himself, beholding him, loved him; but notwithstanding all these dispositions, he parted with our

Lord sorrowful. 3dly, And on the other hand, they who had not even the least appearance of any preparation, as the publicans and harlots, went into the kingdom of God before those who were civilly righteous and externally religious; "for these last believed not John, declaring the way of righteousness; but the publicans and the harlots truly believed," Matt. 21:31, 32. 4thly and lastly, God testifies, that in the first approach of his grace, "he is found of them, that sought him not, and asked not for him," Isa. 65:1, Fulgentius, lib. i., de veritat. prædest. p. 62, says extremely well: "We have not certainly received grace, because we are willing; but grace is given us, while we are still unwilling."

XI. There have been likewise some among ourselves, who have spoken of preparations to regeneration or conversion, but in a quite different sense from the favourers of Pelagianism. In persons to be regenerated they have assigned, 1st, A breaking of the natural obstinacy and a flexibility of the will. 2dly, A serious consideration of the law. 3dly, A consideration of their own sins and offences against God. 4thly, A legal fear of punishment and a dread of hell, and consequently a despairing of their salvation, with respect to any thing in themselves. For in this order, Perkins, Cas. Conscient. c. v. quæst. 1, sect. 1, reckons up these preparations; and Ames, in the same manner, Cas. Conscient. lib. ii. c. iv. And the British divines explained themselves almost to the same purpose in the synod of Dort, p. 139, of the Utrecht edition, 1620, folio, "1st, There are some external works ordinarily required of men before they are brought to a state of regeneration or conversion, which are wont sometimes to be freely done, sometimes freely omitted by them, as going to church, hearing the word preached, and the like. 2dly, There are some internal effects, previous to conversion or regeneration, excited by the power of the word and Spirit in the hearts of those who are not yet justified; as the knowledge of the will of God, sense of sin, dread

of punishment, anxiety about deliverance, some hope of pardon." But they differ from the favourers of Pelagianism in this manner: 1st, That they are not for having these things to proceed from nature, but profess them to be the effects of the spirit of bondage, preparing a way to himself for their actual regeneration. 2dly, That they are not for God's bestowing the grace of regeneration from a regard to, and moved by occasion of, these preparations, much less by any merit in them; but they imagine, that God in this manner levels a way for himself, fills up vallies, depresses mountains and hills, in order the better to smooth the way for his entrance into that soul. Nay, the British divines add, Thess. vi.: "That even the elect themselves never behave in these acts preceding regeneration, in such a manner, as that, on account of their negligence and resistance, they may not justly be abandoned and forsaken of God." Yet they call them rather preparations for grace, than the fruits and effects of grace; because they think, that even the reprobate may go as far as this; and they affirm, "that these antecedent effects, produced by the power of the word and Spirit in the minds of men, may be, and in many usually are, stifled and entirely extinguished through the fault of the rebellious will," Ibid. Thess. v. But we really think they argue more accurately, who make these and the like things in the elect, to be preparations to the further and more perfect operations of a more noble and plentiful spirit, and so not preparations for regeneration, but the fruits and effects of the first regeneration: for as these things suppose some life of the soul, which spiritually attends to spiritual things, and are operations of the Spirit of God when going about to sanctify the elect, we cannot but refer them to the Spirit of grace and regeneration. Nor is it any objection, that the like, or the same may be also said to be in reprobates, for they are only the same materially, but not formally. Reprobates also have some knowledge of Christ, some taste of the grace of God, and of the powers of the world to come. Yet it does not follow, that the knowledge of Christ as it is in

believers, and that relish of grace and glory they have, is not the gift of the Spirit of grace and of glory. And, indeed, the things mentioned by Perkins, and the other British divines, are no preparations for regeneration in the reprobate, either from the nature of the thing, or the intention of God. Not the former, for however great these things may appear to be, yet they are consistent with spiritual death; and the reprobate are so far from being disposed thereby to a spiritual life, that, on the contrary, deceived by those actings which counterfeit spiritual life, they are the more hardened in a real death, and fondly pleasing themselves, are at a greater distance from inquiring after true life, which they falsely imagine they have obtained. Not the latter, for no intention of God can be rendered void. It is therefore necessary, that all these things be in another manner in the elect, than in the reprobate.

XII. If this matter be more closely considered, we shall find that the orthodox differ more in words, and in the manner of explaining, than in sense and reality. For the term regeneration is of ambiguous signification; sometimes it is blended with sanctification, and by regeneration is understood that action of God, whereby man, who is now become the friend of God, and endowed with spiritual life, acts in a righteous and holy manner from infused habits. And then it is certain, there are some effects of the Spirit, by which he usually prepares them for the actings of complete faith and holiness; for a knowledge of divine truths, a sense of misery, sorrow for sin, hope of pardon, &c. go before any one can fiducially lay hold on Christ, and apply himself to the practice of true godliness. God does not usually sanctify a man all at once, before ever he has had any thought about himself and God, and any concern about his salvation. And this is what the British divines seem to have intended, when, in *Confirmatione Secundæ Theseos*, they thus speak: "Divine grace does not usually bring men to a state of justification, in which we



have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by a sudden enthusiasm, but first subdues and prepares them by many previous acts by the ministry of the word." By which words they sufficiently show, that, by regeneration, they mean the state of passive justification. But sometimes regeneration denotes the first translation of a man from a state of death to a state of spiritual life; in which sense we take it. And in that respect none of the orthodox, if he will speak consistently with his own principles, can suppose preparatory works to the grace of regeneration. For, either he would maintain, that these works proceeded from nature; and so, by the confession of all the orthodox, are but dead works and splendid sins. But none in his right mind will affirm, that any can be disposed for the grace of regeneration, by those things which are sinful. Or he would maintain, that these works proceeded from the Spirit of God. But if thus far he does not operate in another manner in the elect, than in the reprobate; these works, notwithstanding this his operation, may be reckoned among dead works, for the orthodox look upon all the actions of the reprobate to be sinful, let them be ever so much elevated by divine assistance. Thus the British divines, l. c. p. 143: "An evil tree, which naturally brings forth evil fruit, must itself be first changed to a good tree before ever it can yield any good fruit. But the will of an unregenerate person is not only an evil, but also a dead tree." I now infer, the reprobate are never regenerated, and therefore continue evil trees, without ever producing any other than bad fruit. And so there can be no preparation in such works for regeneration, for the reason above explained. If you say, that these works which you call preparatory, are different in the elect, I ask, in what respect? No other answer can be given but this, that they proceed from the spirit of grace and life; right: but then they are not preparations for the first regeneration, but effects of it; for regeneration is the first approach of the spirit of grace and life, effectually working in the elect.

XIII. You will say then, are there no preparatory dispositions to the first regeneration? I confidently answer, there are none; and agree with Fulgentius, de Incarnat. et Gratia Christi, c. xix.: "With respect to the birth of a child, the work of God is previous to any will of the person that comes into the world; so also in the spiritual birth, whereby we begin to put off the old man." I own, indeed, spiritual death has its degrees, but with a distinction; what is privative therein, or what it is destitute of, namely, the want of the life of God, is equal or alike in all, and in this respect there are no degrees less or more. But what is possible, or as it were positive therein, namely, those evil habits, these indeed are very unequal. In infants there are only those evil habits which come into the world with them: in the adult there are others, contracted and deeply rooted by many vicious acts and a course of wickedness. These again greatly differ, according as by the secret dispensation of God's providence, the affections of men are more or less restrained; for, though every kind of wickedness, like a certain hydra, lurks in the heart of all, yet God suffers some to give loose reins to their vices, and to be hurried on, as by so many furies; while he moves others with a sense of shame, and a reverence for the laws, and some kind of love to honour and honesty; who, in that respect, may be said not to be at such a distance from sanctifying grace as they who are guilty of horrid crimes, which are more opposite thereto than a civil and external honesty of life. But yet, whatever length any before regeneration has advanced in that honesty, he nevertheless remains in the confines of death in which there is no preparation for life.

XIV. Nor do we agree with those, who so inconsiderately assert, that man is no more disposed for regeneration than a stone, or an irrational animal. For there are naturally such faculties in the soul of man, as render him a fit subject of regeneration, which are not to be found in stones or brutes. Thus a man can be regenerated, but a

brute or a stone cannot. In that sense Augustine, de Predest. sanct. c. 5, said, "the capacity of having faith and love is of the nature of man; but to have them, of the grace of believers." Vossius has proved by proper arguments, that this is to be understood, not of the proximate, but remote capacity, in so far as man has naturally those faculties, in which faith and love may be wrought; Histor. Pelag. lib. 4. P. I. p. 418.

XV. But we must not here omit, that the elect, before their actual regeneration, are honoured by God with various, and those indeed very excellent privileges above the reprobate, which are intended, according to the purpose of God, to be subservient for promoting their regeneration, in his appointed time. For as God has a love of special benevolence for them, according to the degree of election; and they are redeemed by Christ, and in a state of reconciliation with God, and of justification, actively taken; it follows: 1st, That God often preserves them from those base and scandalous crimes, which are repugnant to common humanity, and that by some assistance of light, of divinity, of conscience, and civil honesty, with an accession of some grace operating internally, and laying a restraint on the wickedness of their nature. 2dly, That all and every one of them, who are brought to the acknowledgment and the common illumination of the truth of the Gospel, are kept from the sin against the Holy Ghost. 3dly, That, by the ministry of the word, and other operations of God's special providence towards them, many evident principles of divine truth are understood by the natural mind, and also imprinted on the natural memory, the meditation of which, immediately after they are regenerated, conduces very much to the confirmation of their faith. And thus, without knowing it, they have collected a very valuable treasure, the excellence and genuine use of which they come not to see, till they are born again. But as these things do not, of their own nature, dispose man for regeneration, though, by the appointment of

God, they are so disposed, as that regeneration is certainly to follow, they cannot but very remotely be called preparations, and they will be such more from the intention of God, than from the virtue of the thing.

XVI. Now after a principle of spiritual life is infused into the elect soul by regeneration, divine grace does not always proceed therein in the same method and order. It is possible, that for some time, the spirit of the life of Christ may lie, as it were, dormant in some (almost in the same manner as vegetative life in the seed of a plant, or sensitive life in the seed of an animal, or a poetical genius in one born a poet), so as that no vital operations can yet proceed therefrom, though savingly united to Christ, the fountain of true life, by the Spirit. This is the case with respect to elect and regenerate infants, whose is the kingdom of God, and who therefore are reckoned among believers and saints, though unqualified through age actually to believe and practise godliness.

XVII. Moreover, this spirit of a new life will even sometimes exert itself in vital actions, in those who have received it in their infancy, as they gradually advance in years, and are qualified to raise their thoughts above the objects of sense. Accordingly it has often been observed, that, in children of five or six years of age, some small sparks of piety and devotion have shone forth in holy longings, ardent little prayers, and in a certain extraordinary tenderness of conscience, not daring to do any thing with respect to God, themselves, or their neighbour, which they have been taught to be displeasing to God: as also it appears in their discourses concerning God and Christ, which have been full of a holy and unfeigned love and breathing, of a heavenly nature, which I have not words to express. Thus sometimes God is pleased, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings to ordain strength." Ps. 8:2. This has been especially

observed in some dying children, to the great astonishment of all present.

XVIII. But when the foundation is laid, divine grace does not always grow up in the same manner. It often happens, that this principle of spiritual life, which had discovered its activity in the most tender childhood, according to, and sometimes above, the age of the person, God, in his singular grace, preceding the full maturity of the natural faculties, grows up by degrees with the person, after the example of our Lord, who "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man," Luke 2:52; and of John the Baptist, who "grew and waxed strong in spirit." Luke 1:80. Such persons make continual progress in the way of sanctification, and grow insensibly "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:13. We have an illustrious example of this in Timothy, "who from a child had known the Holy Scriptures," 2 Tim. 3:15; and who, in his tender youth, to Paul's exceeding joy, had given evident signs of an unfeigned faith, with tears of the most tender piety bursting out at times, 2 Tim. 1:4, 5.

XIX. On the other hand, sometimes these sparks of piety, especially which more sparingly shone forth in childhood, when in a manner covered with the ashes of worldly vanities, and carnal pleasures of youth, will appear to be almost extinguished. The allurements of the deceitful flesh, and the sorceries of a tempting world, assaulting the unadvised unwary heart with its deceitful pleasures, almost stifle those small beginnings of piety; and for months, sometimes for years together, so violently overpower them, that all their attempts against them seem to be in vain. Yet there are still, in these persons, remorses of conscience, awakening them at times, languid resolutions, and vanishing purposes, of reforming their lives, till, by the infinite efficacy of divine grace, insinuating into the languid and

decaying breast, they awake as from a deep sleep, and, with the greatest sorrow for their past life, and utmost seriousness, apply to the careful practice of piety; the warmth of their zeal then breaks forth, being exceedingly desirous to show, by brighter flames, its having been unwillingly kept smothered under the ashes. Augustine has given us, in his own person, a representation of this state, in the excellent book of his confessions.

XX. But the elect are not all favoured with regenerating grace in their infancy. There are some adult persons whom God regenerates, and at once effectually calls, and converts, in the second act, from a worldly and hypocritical condition, or even from a state of profligate wickedness. Thus it is with those, who are born and brought up without God's covenant, or even of those, who, living where this covenant is dispensed, have sold themselves wholly to sin, Satan, and the world. The regeneration of these is usually followed with great consternation of soul, and sorrow for sin, with a dread of God's fiery indignation, and incredible desires after grace, together with an inexpressible joy, upon finding salvation in Jesus, and a wonderful alacrity in the service of the Lord, which they can scarcely contain. All this may be observed in the jailer, of whom we read, Acts 16.

XXI. On this depends the solution of that question, whether we are to look upon any as born again, but those who can specify the time, manner, and progress of their regeneration. None, indeed, are here to be flattered, or soothed, as to think it lawful for them securely to presume on their regeneration: but then the consciences of believers are not to be racked with too severe a scrupulosity. We cannot determine this point without a distinction: we have just shown, that the progress of regeneration is various. Adult persons, who are brought altogether from a carnal to a spiritual life, indeed may, and ought exactly to know the beginning and manner of so great a

change. They who, though regenerated in infancy, have yet been carried away by the entanglements of the world, and for some time have struggled, as it were, with destruction, but afterwards have been roused by the grace of God, made to renounce the world, and give themselves wholly to piety, such as we described, sect. 17, may, and it is their duty to recollect, not so much the beginning of their very first regeneration, as the process of that actual and thorough conversion. But it would be wrong to require those, who being regenerated in their infancy, have grown up all along with the quickening Spirit, to declare the time and manner of their passage from death to life. It is sufficient, if they can comfort themselves, and edify others, with the fruits of regeneration, and the constant tenour of a pious life. It is, however, the duty of all to recollect, not in a careless manner, the operations of the Spirit of grace on their hearts; which is highly useful, both for our glorifying God, and for our own comfort and excitement to every duty.

XXII. There cannot be the least doubt of God's being the author of our regeneration. For we become his sons by regeneration, being born of God, John 1:12. And even in this respect, the sons of God by grace, bear some resemblance to him, who is the Son of God by nature: observing only the difference between the infinite excellency of our Lord, and that dark resemblance of it in us. Why is the Lord Jesus called the Son of God? Because begotten of the Father. Ps. 2:7. Wherein consists that generation of the Father? In this, that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." John 5:26. And why are we, in communion with Christ, called the sons of God? Because his father is our father. John 20:17. How is he our father? "He hath begotten us." James 1:18. 1 John 5:4, 11. Wherein does that generation consist? "He hath made us partakers of a divine nature," 2 Peter 1:4. Thus we are even

transformed into his likeness, and have upon us no contemptible effulgence of his most glorious holiness.

XXIII. But there is here a special consideration of Christ: Who, as God, is, together with the Father and Spirit, the principal, but economically considered the meritorious and exemplary cause of our regeneration. For when he cast a veil over the majesty of the Son of God, took upon him human form, and came in the "likeness of sinful flesh," Rom. 8:3, he thereby merited for all his elect their advancement to the illustrious dignity of the sons of God; sons, I say, not only by adoption, but by a spiritual and heavenly generation. The holy and glorious life of Christ is also the most perfect pattern of our new life, all the excellence of which consists in a conformity with the life of Christ, who is the "first-born among many brethren," Rom. 8:29. And we may add, that Christ, as the second Adam, is become, not only by merit, but also by efficacy, "a quickening spirit," 1 Cor. 15:45. So that the regenerate do not so much live themselves, as feel, acknowledge, and proclaim Christ living in them, Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21.

XXIV. What Christ declares of the Spirit, the author of regeneration, deserves our consideration. John 3:5: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here interpreters inquire what we are to understand by water, and what by the Spirit? There is one who, by water understands the origin of our natural birth; comparing with this place what we have Isa. 48:1, where the Israelites are said to have come forth out of "the waters of Judah;" and Ps. 68:26, "from the fountain of Israel;" and then the meaning will be; besides that birth, whereby we are born men, there is still another requisite, whereby we are born the sons of God, which appears both simple and agreeable to Scripture language. There is another who understands by water, Christ's obedience; we



doubt not but that is the meritorious cause of our regeneration; but we question whether it is ever called water in Scripture; for no such thing appears from the Scriptures they bring to prove it, Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:6, 8; Ezek. 36:25. By water, in these places, we are more properly to understand the Holy Spirit with his operations. And it is evident our Lord himself explains the passage in Ezekiel in this manner. The common explication, therefore, is to be preferred, that one and the same thing is meant by water and the Spirit, as it is by the Spirit and fire, Matt. 3:11. For nothing is more common in the sacred writings than to represent the Holy Spirit under the emblem of water. See among other passages, Isa. 44:3, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods among the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed:" where the former figurative expression is explained by the subsequent one, which is plain.

XXV. The seed of regeneration is the word of God. For thus: 1 Pet, 1:23, "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible," διὰ λόγου ζῶντος Θεοῦ, καὶ μένοντος εἰς τον αἰῶνα which may be translated, "by the word of God, who liveth and abideth for ever;" or, "by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." But this seed does not operate always in the same manner: for adult persons are born again by the word of God laying before them the deformity, horror, and misery of their natural life, or rather of their living death; and at the same time, the excellence of that spiritual life, of which Christ is the author, fountain, and pattern; pressing them also, by the most powerful exhortations, that, denying all carnal lusts and appetites, they may give themselves up to be new moulded and formed by the Spirit of God. And in this manner the word is to them a moral instrument of regeneration, by teaching and persuasion. But the case is otherwise with elect infants, being incapable of teaching and persuasion. If they also be thought to be regenerated by the seed of the word, it is to be understood, not of the word externally

propounded, which they understand not, but of the truths contained in the word, the efficacy of which is imprinted by the Holy Spirit upon their minds, which they will come to the actual knowledge of when they grow up, but the word operates effectually in none, unless when impregnated by the efficacy of the Spirit. To the external world must be added the internal, which is no less effectual than that word of God whereby he commanded light to shine out of darkness.

XXVI. It is therefore incumbent on every person who would not profanely despise his salvation, diligently to read, hear, and meditate on the word of God, and constantly attend on the public worship and assemblies of his people. For though, before his regeneration, he cannot savingly hear, read, or meditate on the word of God; yet how can he know which may be the happy hour of his gracious visitation; what part of Holy Scripture, what sermon and what instrument the Lord is to render effectual for his regeneration by the supernatural efficacy of his Spirit? Experience teaches this, that men are born again there where the word of God is preached; a thing which is not the case in those parts of the world, which God favours not with the preaching of the gospel. And though we dare not assure any one that if he continues in hearing the word he shall certainly be born again; yet we justly insist upon this, that there is a brighter hope of the wished-for conversion for those who, in the best manner they can, use the means which God has prescribed, than for such as forwardly neglect them. While Ezekiel was prophesying to the dry bones, behold, a shaking was observed among them, and "the breath (spirit) came, and they lived," 37:7, 10.

XXVII. Let none think it absurd, that we now speak of means for regeneration, when, but a little before, we rejected all preparations for it. We have above sufficiently proved, that none can contribute any thing to his own regeneration; yet God commands every one to

"make himself a new heart and a new spirit," Ezek. 18:31: to "awake from sleep and arise from the dead," Eph. 5:14: and to "flee from the wrath to come," Matt. 3:7. And what then? Shall we, insignificant mortals, pretend to reply to God, as if by our sophistry we could catch and entangle the Almighty? Shall we say to what purpose we are enjoined to what none of us can comply with? Shall we exclaim against the counsel of God, and cry out: "Since we can contribute nothing to our regeneration, is it not the best course we can take to put our hands in our bosom, and securely wait till he himself regenerate us?" But would not this be with our vain and carnal reasonings to argue with God, whose foolishness will be ever found wiser than our most exalted wisdom? How much better is it when one hears these commands of God, and, at the same time, is sensible of his own incapacity, to learn a holy despair of self, and in sorrow, anxiety, and a longing desire of soul and in the use of the means, to wait patiently for the coming of the grace of God?

XXVIII. Moreover, when a person touched with an unfeigned sense of his misery, and a sincere desire after his salvation, cries out with the jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30; even then some pious emotions begin to arise, which proceed from an inward but a very tender principle of new life, and which are solicitously to be cherished. For which purpose it is expedient, 1st, That he frequently, and in as affecting a manner as possible, set before his eyes the most wretched condition of all unregenerate persons, and how himself also, while he continues in the state of nature, has nothing to expect but eternal destruction, a deprivation of the divine glory, and intolerable torments both of soul and of body; and all this unavoidable, unless he be born again in the image of God. 2dly, That affected by this consideration, he cry, pray to, be earnest with God, and not give over crying till he has obtained his grace. Let him often represent himself to himself, as now standing on the very brink of

the infernal lake, with the devil standing by him, who, should the Supreme Being permit, would instantly hurry him headlong into hell; and in this anguish of his distressed soul, importune God, and, as it were, extort pardon by the warmest prayers, sighs, and tears. 3dly, Let him, moreover, go on to hear, read, and meditate on the word of God, expecting the farther motions of the Spirit, as the diseased waited for the angel to move the waters of Bethesda. 4thly, Let him join himself in society with the godly, and, in the exercise of piety, endeavour to catch the flame of devotion from their instruction, example, and prayers.

## Chapter IV: Of Faith

I. WE now proceed to explain the nature of true faith in God by Christ, which is the principal act of that spiritual life implanted in the elect by regeneration, and the source of all subsequent vital operations. But it is not any one particular act or habit, nor must it be restricted to any one particular faculty of the soul, for it is a certain complex thing, consisting of various acts, which, without confusion pervade, and by a sweet and happy conjunction, mutually promote and assist one another; it imports a change of the whole man, is the spring of the whole spiritual life, and in fine, the holy energy and activity of the whole soul towards God, in Christ. And therefore its full extent can scarcely be distinctly comprehended under any one single idea.

II. And we need not wonder, that under the name of one Christian virtue so many others are at once comprehended. For as, when any person speaks of life, he signifies by that term something that, diffusing itself through the whole soul and all its faculties, is also communicated to the body, and extends itself to all the actions of the living person: so when we speak of faith, which is the most fruitful spring of the whole spiritual life, we understand by it that which pervades all the faculties, and is well adapted to unite them with Christ; and so to enliven, sanctify, and render them blessed.

III. There are many things both in naturals and morals, which are almost by general consent allowed to extend to the whole soul, without being restricted to any one faculty. In naturals, free-will, which as will is referred to the understanding; as free, rather to the will: so that as Bernard somewhere speaks, "Let man be his own freeman on account of his will; his own judge on account of his

reason." In morals, the image of God and original righteousness; which are to be placed neither in the understanding alone nor in the will alone, but may justly belong to both these faculties.

IV. Should we not then at last see every difficulty removed, and the whole of that controversy among divines, about the subject of faith, settled, if, as we justly may, we should refuse that there is any real distinction of understanding and will, as well from the soul as from each other? For what is the understanding but the soul understanding and knowing? What else the will, but the soul willing and desiring? We must on no account conceive of the soul as of a thing in itself brutish and irrational, which at length becomes intelligent and rational, when something else is given to it. What some affirm, that the understanding comes from the soul by a certain kind of emanation, is what we can scarcely conceive. For if the soul, in its proper and formal conception, does not include the power of reasoning, it can never produce it; for we are in vain to expect from a cause what it contains neither formally nor eminently. If the soul is of itself endowed with the faculty of reasoning, no necessity requires that some other faculty be superadded to that wherewith the soul is of itself endowed. The like holds with respect to the will, which is not really distinct from the soul any more than the understanding, but is the very soul itself, as God has given it a natural aptitude to desire good. Since both these faculties are only modally (or in our manner of apprehension) distinct from the soul, so in the same sense they are also distinct from each other. For if the will be so distinct from the understanding as in itself to be blind, it is not possible to explain how it can perceive and so rationally desire the object discovered by the understanding, as good. And for what reason, pray, should we make a real difference between these two? Is it because the object is different? But the object of both is really the same; namely, a true good, though the manner of our consideration differs. For the

understanding considers the good as true; and the will desires this true thing as it is good. And do not the objects of the speculative and practical understanding differ far more among themselves? And yet philosophers generally agree that they are but one and the same power of the soul. Is it because their acts are different? But every difference of acts does not infer a difference of power. Indeed, simple apprehension differs from judgment and discourse or reasoning; which yet are all the acts of the same faculty.

V. This ought not to be looked upon as a new assertion. Scotus long ago maintained, that the understanding and will differed neither among themselves, nor from the soul, in 2 dist. xv. qu. 1. Scaliger, in like manner, whose words we shall not scruple to transcribe from his *Exercitat.* 307 §. 15: "Although the understanding and will," says he, "are one thing, yet they are distinguished by the manner in which we conceive them. For they are proper and not accidental affections of the soul, and one thing with it. As one, good, and true are the affections of entity or being; nay, one and the same thing with being itself. But they are distinguished from it, and among themselves by definition in this manner: because being itself is placed in the first nature or essence, which nature does in some measure display itself, and is the cause of that one, true, and good. Which is a formality different from the first formality, Because the notion of being is one thing, as it is being, and another, as it is one. For the latter follows and arises from the former; but not without it, for it is one thing. Thus soul, understanding, and will are one thing. Yet the soul denotes the essence; the understanding that very essence as it apprehends; the will, the same with that intelligent essence tending to enjoy the thing known or understood." Thus far Scaliger. Durandus was of opinion, that indeed, the faculties differ really from the soul, but not from each other. An opinion which Vossius is above all pleased with, *de Idolat.* lib. iii. e. 42. Which is sufficient for our

present purpose: as we are not then to separate those faculties, there is no wonder that we place faith in both.

VI. Meanwhile we observe, that among those acts which we are about to describe, there is one principal act, in which we apprehend the very essence and formal nature of faith consists, as it unites us with Christ and justifies us. This is to be carefully taken notice of in the matter of justification, lest any one should look upon some acts of love, which, in different ways, are implied in the exercise of faith, as the causes of justification.

VII. Moreover, we are likewise to maintain, that those things which we shall, for the greater accuracy, explain distinctly in particular, stand various ways mutually connected in the very exercise of faith. While the whole soul is engaged in this work of God, very many actions may all at once tend towards God and Christ, without observing any certain method; and which the believer engaged in this work itself, has neither leisure nor inclination to range in their proper order; nay, sometimes it is impossible to do it. Yet it is expedient that we attend to the natural process of faith, whereby its entire nature and manner may be the more thoroughly perceived.

VIII. The first thing which faith either comprehends or presupposes, is the knowledge of the thing to be believed. This appears in opposition to Popish triflers. I. From express passages of Scripture, which so speak concerning faith as manifestly to intimate, that knowledge is included in its very notion and exercise, Is. 53:11. John 17:3, compared with Heb. 2:4. John 6:69. 2 Tim. 1:3. II. From the nature of faith itself, which, as it doubtless means an assent given to a truth revealed by God, necessarily presupposes the knowledge of these two things. (1.) That God has revealed something. (2.) What that is to which assent is given, as a thing divinely revealed. For it is



absurd to say, that a person assents to any truth which he is entirely ignorant of, and concerning which he knows of no testimony extant worthy of credit. III. From the manner in which faith is produced in the elect, which is done externally by preaching and hearing of the Gospel, Rom. 10:17, revealing that which ought to be believed, with the demonstration of the truth to every man's conscience, 2 Cor. 4:2; and internally by the teaching of God the Father, John 6:45. If, therefore, faith be generated in the heart by a teaching both external and internal, it must of necessity consist in knowledge; for knowledge is the proper and immediate effect of such instruction. IV. From the consequence annexed, which is confession and ἀπολογία, or giving an answer, Rom. 10:9, 10, 1 Pet. 3:15. But it is impossible that this should be without knowledge. Hilary saith well, "for none can speak what he knows not, nor believe what he cannot speak."

IX. But, indeed, it must be confessed that, in the present dark state of our minds, even the most illuminated are ignorant of a great many things; and that many things are believed with an implicit faith, especially by young beginners and babes in Christ, so far as they admit in general, the whole Scriptures to be the infallible standard of what is to be believed, in which are contained many things which they do not understand; and in as far as they embrace the leading doctrines of Christianity, in which many other truths centre, which are thence deduced by evident consequence, and which they believe in their foundation or principle, as John writes concerning believers, "that they knew all things," 1 John 2:20; because they had learned by the teaching of the Spirit, that foundation of foundations to which all saving truths are reduced, and from which they are inferred. But I go a step farther: it is possible that one to whom God, who distributes his blessings as he pleases, has measured out a small degree of knowledge, may yet be most firmly rooted in the faith, even to martyrdom. But then it no ways follows, that faith is better

described by ignorance than by knowledge: or that they do well who cherish ignorance among the people as the mother of faith and devotion, contrary to Col. 3:16; for we can by no means believe what we are quite ignorant of, Rom. 10:14. And all should strive to have their faith as little implicit and as much distinct as possible; as becometh those who are "filled with all knowledge," Rom 15:14. For the more distinctly a person sees by the light of the Spirit a truth revealed by God, and the rays of divinity shining therein, the more firm will be his belief of that truth. Those very martyrs who in other respects were rude and ignorant, most clearly and distinctly saw those truths, for which they made no scruple to lay down their lives, to be most certain and divine: though perhaps they were not able to dispute much for them.

X. Moreover, those things which are necessary to be known by the person who would believe, are in general the divinity of the Scriptures, into which, faith must be ultimately resolved; more especially those things which regard the obtaining of salvation in Christ, which may summarily be reduced to these three heads. 1st, To know, that by sin thou art estranged from the life of God, and art "come short of the glory of God," Rom. 3:23. That it is not possible that either thou thyself, or an angel from heaven, or any creature in the world, nay, or all the creatures in the universe, can extricate thee from the abyss of misery, and restore thee to a state of happiness. 2dly, That thou shouldst know Christ, this Lord to be "full of grace and truth," John 1:14, "who is that only name given under heaven whereby we can be saved," Acts 4:12, "and in the knowledge of whom consists eternal life," John 17:3. 3dly, That thou shouldst know, that in order to thy obtaining salvation in Christ, it is necessary that thou beest united to Christ by the Spirit and by faith, and that thou givest up thyself to him, not only to be justified, but also sanctified and

governed by his will and pleasure, "proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," Rom. 12:2.

XI. To this knowledge must be joined assent, which is the second act of faith, whereby a person receives and acknowledges as truths, those things which he knows, "receiving the testimony of God, and thus setting to his seal that God is true," John 3:33. This assent is principally founded on the infallible veracity of God, who testifies of himself and of his Son, 1 John 5:9, 10. On which testimony revealed in Scripture, and shedding forth all around the rays of its divinity, the believer relies with no less than if he had been actually present at the revelation of these things. For when the soul, enlightened by the Spirit, discerns those divine truths, and in them a certain excellent theoprepy, or beauty worthy of God, and a most wise and inseparable connexion of the whole, it cannot but assent to a truth, that forces itself upon him with so many arguments, and as securely admit what it thus knows, for certain, as if it had seen it with its own eyes, or handled it with its own hands, or had been taken up into the third heavens, and heard it immediately from God's own mouth. Whatever the lust of the flesh may murmur, whatever vain sophists may quibble and object, though perhaps the soul may not be able to answer or solve all objections, yet it persists in the acknowledgement of this truth, which it saw too clearly, and heard too certainly, as it were from the mouth of God, ever to suffer itself to be drawn away from it by any sophistical reasonings whatever: "For I have not followed," says the believing soul, "cunningly devised fables, when I believed the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but in the Spirit was eye witness of his majesty, and heard his voice from heaven," 2 Pet. 1:16, 18. And this faith is accompanied with ὑποστασις, substance, and ἔλεγχος, evidence, Heb. 11:1, and πληροφορία, full persuasion or assurance, Rom. 4:21. It will not be unprofitable to consider a little the meaning of these words.

XII. The apostle speaks more than once of πληροφορία, plerophory or full assurance: as Col. 2:2, πληροφορία συνεσῆως, the full assurance of understanding, Heb. 6:11; πληροφορία της ελπίδος, the full assurance of hope, Heb. 10:22; πληροφορία πίστεως, full assurance of faith. According to its etymology the word plerophory, denotes a carrying with full sail, a metaphor, as it should seem, taken from ships, when all their sails are filled with a prosperous gale. So that here it signifies the vehement inclination of the soul, driven forward by the Holy Spirit towards an assent to the truth it is made sensible of. Hesychius, that most excellent master of the Greek language, explains it by Βεβαίωσις, firmness. And in that sense, πληροφορία πίστεως, plerophory of faith, is nothing but στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως, the steadfastness of faith in Christ, as the apostle varies those phrases, Col. 2:2, 5; and πεπληροφορημένα πράγματα, are things most surely or firmly believed, Luke 1:1. So firm, therefore, must the believer's assent be to divine truth.

XIII. The term ὑπόστασις hypostasis, substance, is also very emphatical, which the apostle makes use of when he speaks of faith, Heb. 11:1. Nor have the Latins any word that can fully express all its force and significancy. 1st, Ὑπόστασις, hypostasis, denotes the existence, or, as one of the ancients has said, the extantia, the standing up of a thing; in which sense philosophers say, that a thing that really is, has an ὑπόστασις, that is, a real existence, and is not the fiction of our own mind. And, indeed, faith makes the thing hoped for, though not actually existing, to have, notwithstanding, an existence in the believer's mind, who so firmly assents to the promises of God, as if the thing promised was already present with him. Chrysostom had this in his mind when he thus explained this passage: Ἡ ἀνάστασις οὐ παραγέγονεν, οὐδέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑποστάσει, ἀλλ' ἡ ἐλπίς ὑφίστησεν αὐτὴν ἐν ἡμετέρα ψυχῇ. "the resurrection does not yet exist in itself, but hope (let us say faith) presents it to,

and makes it extant in our soul." A Greek scholiast, cited by Beza, has most happily expressed the same thing: Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τὰ ἐν ἐλπίσιν ἀνυπόστατά ἐστιν, ὡς τέως μὴ παρόντα, ἢ πίστις, οὐσιά τις αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπόστασις γίνεται εἶναι αὐτὰ καὶ παρεῖναι τρόπον τινὰ παρασκευάζουσα, διὰ τοῦ πιστεῦειν εἶναι, "as things hoped for are not yet extant, as not being present, faith becomes a kind of substance and essence of them, making them, in some measure, extant and present with us, in that it believes them to be." 2dly, Ὑπόστασις also signifies a base or foundation, in which sense Diodorus Siculus, quoted by Gomarus, has said, ὑπόστασις τοῦ τάφοῦ, that is, the foundation of the sepulchre. And Calvin's interpretation looks this way, "Faith," says he, "is hypostasis, that is, a prop or possession, on which we fix our feet." 3dly, It also denotes subsistence or constancy, without yielding to any assault of the enemy. Thus Plutarch in Demetrius: Οὐδενὸς ὑφιστιμένου τῶν ἐναντίων, ἀλλὰ φευγόντων. "none of the enemy standing their ground, but all giving way." And Polybius, in his description of Horatius Cocles, they feared οὐχ' οὕτω τὴν δύναμιν, ὡς τὴν ὑπόστασιν αὐτοῦ. "not so much his strength, as his firmness and resolution, not to give way." And indeed, there is something in faith that can, with intrepidity, sustain all the assaults of temptations, and not suffer it to be moved from an assent to a truth once known. Now if we join all this together, we may assert that faith is so firm an assent to divine truth, that it sets things future before us, as if they were present, and that it is a prop to the soul, on which it fixes its foot, without yielding to any assault whatever.

XIV. Nor ought it to be omitted, that the apostle calls faith ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων, the evidence of things not seen. But ἔλεγχος denotes two things. 1st, A certain demonstration. Aristotle, Rhetoric. c. 14. says, Ἐλεγχος δὲ ἐστίν, ὃ μὲν μὴ δυνατὸς ἄλλως ἔχειν, ἀλλ' οὕτως ὡς ἡμεῖς λέγομεν. demonstration is what cannot possibly be

otherwise, but must necessarily be as we affirm." 2dly, Conviction of soul arising from such a demonstration of the truth: as Aristophanes in Pluto, οὐ γ' ἐλέγξει μ' οὕπο δύνασαι περὶ τούτου, "you cannot convince me of that." There is therefore in faith, if it be ἐλέγχος [an elenchus], a demonstration, a certain conviction of soul, arising from that clear and infallible demonstration. But this demonstration of truth rests on the testimony of God, who cannot deceive, from which faith argues thus: Whatever God, who is truth itself, reveals, cannot but be most true, and worthy of all acceptation, though perhaps I may not be able to see it with my eyes, or fully conceive it in my mind.

XV. All this tends to instruct us that the assent, which is in faith, has a most certain assurance which no certainty of any mathematical demonstration can exceed. Wherefore they speak very incautiously, who maintain, there may be falsehood in divine faith, since the proper object of faith is the testimony of God; which is necessarily true and more certain than any demonstration. Nor can any places of Scripture be brought, in which any thing that is not true is proposed to man's belief.

XVI. But we are here to remove another difficulty: if faith is such a certain and firm assent, are those then destitute of true faith who sometimes waver even with respect to fundamental truths? I answer, 1st, We describe faith, considered in the idea, as that Christian virtue or grace, the perfection of which we all ought to aspire after; and not as it sometimes subsists in the subject. 2dly, There may at times be waverings, staggerings, and even inclinations to unbelief, in the best of believers, especially when they are under some violent temptation, as is evident from the waverings of Asaph, Jeremiah, and others about the providence of God: but these are certain defects of faith, arising from the weakness of the flesh. 3dly, Faith presently wrestles

with those temptations; it never assents to those injections of the devil, or the evil desires of the carnal mind, nor is ever at rest, till, having entered the sanctuary of God, it is confirmed, by the teaching Spirit of faith, in the contemplation and acknowledgment of those truths, about which it was staggered. There, at length, and nowhere else, it finds rest for the soles of its feet.

XVII. That which follows this assent is the love of the truth thus known and acknowledged; and this is the third act of faith, of which the apostle speaks, 2 Thess. 2:10. For since there is a clear manifestation of the glory of God in saving truths, not only as he is true in his testimony, but also as his wisdom, holiness, justice, power, and other perfections shine forth therein, it is not possible but the believing soul, viewing these amiable perfections of the Deity in those truths, should break out into a flame of love to exult in them, and glorify God. Hence the believer is said to "give glory to God," Rom. 4:20, and to "love his praise" (glory), John 12:43. Above all, the soul is delighted with the fundamental truth concerning Christ. Loves it as an inestimable treasure, and as a pearl of great price: it is precious to believers, 1 Pet. 2:7, yea, most precious. It is indeed true that love, strictly speaking, is distinguished from faith; yet the acts of both virtues, or graces, are so interwoven with one another, that we can neither explain nor exercise faith without some acts of love interfering; such as is also that of which we now treat. This also is the observation of some of the greatest divines before me; as, not to mention others at present, Chamierus, Panstrat. T. 3. lib. xii. c. 4, No. 16; Wendelin, Theol. lib. ii. c. 24. ad Thes. 8. And both of them cite Augustine in their favour, who, asking, What is it to believe in God? answers, "It is by believing to love." See also Le Blanc, a divine of Sedan, in Thes. de fidei justificantis natura, &c. sect. 95. But if any will call this love, according to the gloss of the schools, an imperate or commanded act of faith, he is indeed welcome to do so for us; if he

only maintain that it is not possible but the believing soul, while in the exercise of faith, must sincerely love the truth as it is in Christ, when known and acknowledged, rejoicing that these things are true, and delighting itself in that truth: far otherwise than the devils and wicked men, who, what they know to be true, they could wish to be false.

XVIII. Hence arises a fourth act of faith, a hunger and thirst after Christ. For the believing soul knowing, acknowledging, and loving the truths of salvation, cannot but wish that all those things, which are true in Christ, may also be true to him, and that he may be sanctified and blessed in and by those truths: and he seriously desires that, having been alienated from the life of God through sin, he may be again sealed unto the glory of God by free justification, and in that by sanctification. This is that hunger and thirst after righteousness, mentioned Matt. 5:6. And what reason can be given why he, who believes and feels himself a most miserable creature, and is fully persuaded that he can be delivered from his misery by nothing either in heaven or on earth; who sees, at the same time, the fulness of that salvation, which is in Christ, and is assured he can never obtain salvation, unless he be united to Christ; who, from his very soul, loves that truth that treats of the fulness of salvation which is in Christ alone, and in communion with him; how is it possible, I say, that such a person should not seriously and ardently desire to have Christ dwelling in him, seek and pant after this, and indeed with such longings, as nothing short of the possession of the thing desired can satisfy, as hunger and thirst are only allayed by meat and drink?

XIX. This hunger and thirst are followed by a receiving of Christ the Lord for justification, sanctification, and so for complete salvation, which is the fifth, and indeed, the formal and principal act of faith. Thus the heavenly Father freely offers his Son to the sick and weary



soul, and Christ the Lord offers himself with all his benefits, and the fulness of salvation which is in him, saying, "Behold me, behold me," Is. 65:1. And the soul, now conscious of its own misery, and with joy and hope observing the fulness of salvation that is in Christ, and earnestly desiring communion with him, cannot but lay hold on and receive, with the highest complacency of soul, that extraordinary blessing thus offered, and thus by receiving, appropriate or make it his own; and by this act, at length, Christ becomes the peculiar property of the believing soul. Thus it lays claim to whatsoever is Christ's, which is offered at the same time with Christ; and above all, the righteousness of Christ, which is the foundation of salvation. And in this manner, by apprehending Christ, he is united to him; and being united to him, he is judged to have done and suffered what Christ, as his surety, did and suffered in his room and stead. And thus it is easy to understand, how we are justified by faith on Christ.

XX. The scripture more than once represents this act of faith in express terms. Remarkable is the passage, John 1:12, "As many as received him," which is equivalent to "them that believe on his name;" and Col. 2:6, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord:" to which may be added what the Lord has very emphatically said, Isa. 27:5, יחזק במעוי, "Let him take fast hold of my strength, or my tower," so as not to let it go. For חחויק, take fast hold of, and שלח, let go, are opposed, Prov. 4:13.

XXI. But because the soul, thus apprehending Christ for salvation, does, at the same time, recline and stay itself upon him, therefore this act of faith is explained by this metaphor also, as Psalm 71:6, "By thee עליך נסמבתי have I been holden up" (stayed). Isa. 48:2, "Stay themselves upon the God of Israel," pretending to and feigning a true faith: נשען "He is stayed," is another term used, Isa. 50:10, "Stay upon his God;" add Isa. 10:20, 2 Chron. 16:7, 8. If you would subtly

distinguish this act of the believing soul, thus reclining and thus staying itself upon Christ, from the act of receiving Christ, and make it posterior thereto, I shall not oppose it. Let us therefore call this the sixth act of faith.

XXII. Which we think is very significantly expressed by the Hebrew word האמין, which properly signifies, to throw oneself, in order to be carried, on the truth and power of another, as an infant throws itself to be carried on the arms of its nurse. For it is derived from אמן, which properly signifies to carry: hence אומן, a carrier, a nursing father, Numb. 11:12; carry them in thy bosom, as האמן, a nursing father beareth the sucking child: and האמן signifies to be carried, Isa. 60:4, thy daughters shall be nursed (carried) at thy side. Instead of which it is said, Isa 66:12, על צד תנשאר, ye shall be borne upon her sides. And Christ really בחיקו ישא, carries, believers as nurslings, in his bosom, Isa. 40:11; for Moses also uses that similitude, "The Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bare his son," Deut. 1:31; "Underneath are the everlasting arms," Deut. 33:27. האמין, therefore, in virtue of its signification, denotes to give up oneself to be carried by Christ, and so to cast himself into his bosom and arms. By which similitude the activity of the believing soul towards Christ is most elegantly expressed.

XXIII. Moreover, when the believer so receives Christ and leans upon him, he not only considers him as a Saviour, but also as a Lord. For he receives a whole Christ, and receiveth him just as he is: but he is no less Lord than a Saviour. Yea, he cannot be a Saviour, unless he be likewise a Lord. In this doth our salvation consist, that we neither belong to the devil, nor are our own, nor the property of any creature, but of Christ the Lord. Faith therefore, "receives Christ the Lord," Col. 2:6. Nor does Christ offer himself as a husband to the soul upon any other condition, but this, that he acknowledge him as

his Lord, Ps. 45:10, 11. And when the soul casts himself upon Jesus, he, at the same time renounces his own will, and surrenders himself up to the will of Jesus, to be carried whithersoever he pleaseth. Whence there is also in faith a humble surrender and giving up oneself, whereby the believer, as in duty bound, yield himself and all that is his, to Christ, who is freely given him. "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine," Cant. 6:3; 2 Cor. 8:5, "Gave their own selves to the Lord." Almost in the same form as Amasai, with his companions, gave themselves up to David, 1 Chron. 12:18, "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse." And this our surrender to Christ, which we account the seventh act of faith, is the continual fountain and spring of all true obedience, which is therefore called "the obedience of faith," Rom. 1:5.

XXIV. After the believing soul has thus received Christ, and given himself up to him, he may and ought thence to conclude that Christ, with all his saving benefits, are his, and that he shall certainly be blessed by him, according to this infallible syllogism or reasoning of faith: "Christ offers himself as a full and complete Saviour to all who are weary, hungry, thirsty, to all who receive him, and are ready to give themselves up to him: but I am weary, hungry, &c. Therefore Christ has offered himself to me, is now become mine, and I his, nor shall any thing ever separate me from his love." This is the eighth and the reflex act of faith, arising from consciousness or reflection, Gal. 2:20, 2 Tim. 1:12, Rom. 8:38.

XXV. Hence, in fine, the soul, now conscious of its union with Christ by faith, obtains trust or confidence, tranquillity, joy, peace, and bold defiance to all enemies and dangers whatever, a glorying in the Lord, a glorying in adversity; while the soul leans (stays itself) with delight on its beloved; with stretched-out arms throwing itself, or with its elbow sweetly leaning upon him (מרפק signifies according to the

Talmudists, the arm-pit), being assured of mutual communion and mutual love, while it sings, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me," Song 7:10; it piously exults and delights itself in its Lord, is inebriated with his love, rejoices "with joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Pet. 1:8, and savingly melts at the glowing flames of reciprocal love; in one word, "rejoices in the hope of the glory of God," Rom. 5:2.

XXVI. We shall now briefly comprise, as it were in one view, what we have so largely explained. Faith comprehends the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of Christ in the light of grace, the truth of which mystery the believer acknowledges with full assent of mind, on the authority of the testimony of God. And not only so, but he is also in love with that truth, exults therein and glorifies God; he likewise ardently desires communion with Christ, that the things which are true in Christ, may be also true to him for salvation: wherefore, when Christ is offered to him by the word and Spirit, he receives him with the greatest complacency of soul, leans and rests upon him, and gives and surrenders himself to him; which done, he glories that Christ is now his own, and most sweetly delights in him, reposing himself under the shadow of the tree of life, and satiating himself with its most delicious fruits. This is the "faith of God's elect," Tit. 1:1, an invaluable gift—the bond of our union with Christ; the scale of paradise; the key of the ark of the covenant, with which its treasures are unlocked; the never-ceasing fountain of a holy, quiet, and blessed life.

XXVII. If any imagines that he speaks more exactly, when he distinguishes these acts of faith, so as to think some of them precede or go before faith strictly so called, as the knowledge of revealed truth, to which some excellent divines add a pious affection of the will towards God; that other acts belong to the very form or essence

of faith, as assent, hunger and thirst after righteousness, the receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour, and the soul's flying to him for refuge; and that others are accidental, which agree only to a confirmed and strengthened faith, as the certainty or assurance that Christ is now become mine, and the most delightful reliance upon him as mine, joined with exultation and glorying in him: we see no reason why such a person may not enjoy his accuracy, without any displeasure to us: for we only intended to show, that all these things concur in the full practise and exercise of faith.

XXVIII. From what has been said, it is evident that the faith usually called historical and temporary, though I question the propriety of that name, very widely differs from saving faith, which we have thus far described. They call an historical faith a naked assent to the things contained in the word of God, on the authority of God, by whom they are asserted, but without any pious motion of the will. But since this assent may be given not only to the historical parts of Scripture, but also may extend to the precepts, doctrines, promises, and threatenings, the character historical given to that faith, seems to be too restricted. Unless perhaps it be so called, with respect to the manner in which it is conversant about its object. For, as he who reads histories of transactions, with which he has no concern, barely contemplates them, without being inwardly moved or affected by them; so they who have that kind of faith do only, in an idle and careless manner, observe and think of those things which are taught in the word of God, but do not reduce them to practice: though it is not universally true, that even the most ancient histories, and the things which concern another world, are read without any affection, emotion, and application. It had therefore been better to call this faith theoretic, or a naked assent.

XXIX. Our Lord, Matt. 13:21, calls that a temporary faith, which, besides that general assent, exults in the known and acknowledged truth, makes profession thereof, and stirs up many emotions in the heart and actions in the life, which exhibit some appearance of piety; but for a time only, while every thing is prosperous under the Gospel; but falls off, when the storms of persecution assault it. This is wisely called by our Lord πρόσκαιρος, temporary, or for a while. But as it may, and even does, frequently happen, that, in the prosperous state of the church, men may persevere to the end of their life in this profession of faith and imaginary joy, and in such a course of life, as they suppose to be sufficient for the purposes of piety; so this being a constant but not saving, is not so properly called temporary faith, that being the title which our Lord only gave to the faith of apostates. We might rather perhaps better call it a presumptuous faith.

XXX. But it is needful for our consolation, that we distinctly know, how this may be distinguished from a true, lively, and saving faith, which it boldly, though falsely resembles. And first, there is no small difference in the acknowledgment of revealed truths; to which, as to truths, this presumptuous faith really assents, but as it is destitute of the true light of the Spirit, it sees not the proper form or beauty of these truths, and as they are truths in Christ; it does not observe the perfections of God shining in them; does not rightly estimate their value: when it begins first to know them, it is indeed taken with the novelty and rarity of them, but neither burns with an ardent love to them, nor labours much to have them expressed in life and conversation, as well as impressed upon the soul: and as often as other things present themselves to the mind, which flatter it with a great pretended show of pleasure or profit, it easily suffers the ideas of those truths, which oppose that advantage, to be blotted out, and almost wishes these were no truths, which, in spite of itself, it is

constrained to acknowledge for such. But these things are quite the reverse in true faith, as we showed, Thes. XVII.

XXXI. Secondly. There is a great difference in the application of the promises of the Gospel. For presumptuous faith does not proceed in the right method; it rashly imagines, that the salvation, promised in the Gospel, belongs to itself; but this is either upon no foundation, or upon a false one. For sometimes these persons, without any trial or self-examination, which they avoid as too troublesome, and inconvenient to their affairs, foolishly flattering themselves, proudly lay claim to the grace of our Lord; and securely slumber in this vain dream, without either inquiring, or being willing to inquire, what foundation they have for this their imagination. Sometimes, again, they lay for a foundation of their confidence, either that perverse notion concerning the general mercy of God, and easy way to heaven, of which nothing, that I know of, is mentioned in the Gospel covenant; or an opinion of the sufficiency of their own holiness, because they are not so very vicious as the most profligate: or the external communion of the church in religious worship; or the security of their sleeping conscience, and the pleasing fancies of their own dreams, which they take for the peace of God and the consolation of the Holy Spirit. With these and the like vanities of their own imagination they deceive themselves, as if these things were sufficient marks of grace. But true believers, from a deep sense of their misery, panting after the grace of the Lord Jesus, and laying hold of it with a trembling humility, dare not boast of it as already theirs, till, after a diligent scrutiny, they have found certain and infallible evidences of grace in themselves. It is with a profound humility, a kind of sacred dread, and a sincere self-denial, that they approach to lay hold on the grace of Christ. Nor do they, boast of having laid hold of this, till, after an exact examination, first of the marks of grace, and then of their own hearts. But it is otherwise, in

both these respects, with presumptuous persons; who rashly lay hold on what is not offered them in that order (for God does not offer security and joy to sinners, before the soul is affected with sorrow for the guilt of its past sins, and a due solicitude about salvation), and then presumptuously boast of their having laid hold on grace; but they cannot produce any necessary arguments to make the same appear.

XXXII. The third difference consists in that joy, which accompanies or follows both sorts of faith, and that is twofold; 1st, In respect to the rise. 2dly, In respect of the effect of that joy. In presumptuous faith, joy arises partly from the novelty and rarity of the things revealed (for the knowledge of a truth, which is more rare and abstruse gives, delight to the understanding; as the enjoyment of a good does to the will) partly from that vain imagination, that the good things offered in the Gospel, belong to them; of which they have, from the common gifts of the Holy Spirit, some kind of taste, but a very superficial one, affecting only the outside of their lips. But in a living faith, there arises a joy much more noble and solid, from a love of those most precious truths, by the knowledge of which the soul, taught of God, rightly esteems itself most happy; from a hope that maketh not ashamed, and a sure persuasion of its own spirit, with the superadded testimony of the divine Spirit concerning the present grace of God and future glory; and lastly, from a most sweet sense of present grace, and a real foretaste of future glory. And as the causes of both these joys are so diverse, no wonder, though the effects are very different too. The first makes the soul full of itself, leaves it empty of the love of God, and, by a vain tickling of its own imagination, heightens the sleep of carnal security. But the latter strikes believers with an incredible admiration of the unmerited philanthropy, or love of God to man, inflames them with a mutual return of love to the most kind and bountiful Jesus, and inspires



them with a solicitous care, lest they commit any thing unworthy of that infinite favour of God, or grieve the Spirit of grace, who hath dealt kindly with them.

XXXIII. The fourth difference consists in the fruits. For presumptuous faith either sinks men in the deep sleep of security, which they increase by indulging the flesh; or brings with it some outward change of conduct for the better, and makes them, in a certain measure, to "escape the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. 2:20; or when it operates in the brightest manner, it excites some slight and vanishing purposes, and endeavours after a stricter piety, but does not purify the heart itself, nor introduce new habits of holiness; and whenever either the allurements of the world and flesh, or some inconveniences attending Gospel piety, assault them more strongly than usual, they immediately grow weary in that course of goodness they had entered upon, and return as "swine that were washed, to their wallowing in the mire." By that superficial knowledge of evangelical truth, and of a good, so pleasing and useful, as well as honourable, which is held forth by the Gospel, and which is not deeply imprinted on their minds, they are, indeed, stirred up to some amendment of life: but when the matter stands either upon the acquisition of some present good, or the avoiding some imminent calamity, the ideas of true and of good, which the Gospel had suggested to them, are so obliterated and defaced, that they prefer the obtaining a present pleasure or advantage, or the avoiding a present impending evil, to all the promises of the Gospel and all evangelical piety. But a living faith impresses on the soul, in such deep characters, the image of what is right and good, that it accounts nothing more lovely than, to endeavour after it, to the utmost of its power; it paints in such lively colours the most shining holiness of the Lord Christ, that while the soul beholds it with supreme

affection, it is transformed into its image, 2 Cor. 3:18; it so pathetically represents the love of a dying Christ, that the believer accounts nothing dearer than, in return, both to live and die to him, Gal. 2:20; the meditation of the promised happiness is so deeply engraved on his mind, that he is ready, for the sake of it, to try all things, to bear all things, 2 Cor. 4:16–18; and thus it purifies the heart itself, Acts 15:9, in order to the practice of a sincere and constant piety; which, in consequence of a more lively or more languid faith, is itself either more lively or more languid.

XXXIV. Having considered these things concerning the nature of a living faith, and how it differs from that which is presumptuous, let us now further inquire, how a person may be conscious of his own faith. Now that it is both possible and frequent for believers to have a consciousness of their own faith, Paul not only teacheth us by his own example, 2 Tim. 1:12, "I know whom I have believed," but also by that admonition directed to all, 2 Cor. 13:5, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Which admonition would have been in vain, was it impossible for them, by examining and proving themselves, to attain to the knowledge of what they search after. Yea, that it is possible, he expressly enough insinuates, by adding, "know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you?"

XXXV. Nor is it difficult to understand, how this consciousness of faith may arise in believers: for first it becomes them to be well instructed, from the word of God, about the nature of saving faith. Nor is it necessary to harass the minds of the weak with a multiplicity of marks; only let the principal and essential acts of a true faith be explained to them in a simple and clear manner, let the difference between a strong and weak faith be inculcated; between a lively and a languid; between a calm faith, and that shaken by many

temptations; and let them be put in mind, that not only a weak, a languid, and a shaken faith is nevertheless genuine and true; but also that, in examining themselves, a weak faith is not to be tried by the idea of a strong faith; nor a languid by that of a lively; nor that which is shaken by the idea of a calm and quiet faith; but that each is to be compared with its own proper idea. This being well observed, let every one examine himself, whether he puts forth acts agreeable to what we have now described. Which none who attends to himself can be ignorant of: as every one is immediately conscious to himself of what he thinks and wills, for this very reason that he thinks and wills it: for faith is an act of the understanding and will.

XXXVI. But some one may, perhaps, reply, if it is so very easy to have a consciousness of one's own faith, whence then is it, that very many believers are tormented with such troublesome waverings about this matter? There is more than one reason for this: 1st, It often happens, that they have either formed to themselves a wrong notion of saving faith, or unadvisedly taken up with what others have as incautiously drawn up to their hand. Thus we have learned by experience, that not a few afflicted souls have thought, that the essence of faith consists in the assured persuasion, and delightful sense of divine love, and in the full assurance of their own salvation. And not observing these things in themselves, they have, by an unfavourable sentence, crossed themselves out of the roll of believers. But these very persons being better informed of the nature of faith, and taught that these things were rather glorious fruits of an established, than essential acts of a true faith, have gradually returned to a more composed mind. 2dly, It also sometimes happens, that believers being tossed with so many storms of temptations, do but little, nay, are unable to distinguish the proper acts of their own souls: for, while they are in that case, they perform every thing in such a confused, such a feeble and inconsistent manner, that, during that disorder, they cannot

clearly discern the state and frame of their own heart; while the thoughts of their mind, and the emotions of their will succeed and cross each other with a surprising variety. 3dly, Sometimes too it is difficult, especially in an afflicted state of soul, to compare their own actions with the description of true faith, or, to speak more clearly, to compare the rule with that which they want to bring to it, especially when one has proposed to himself the idea of a lively faith, and finds in himself only a languid one. In that case, it can scarcely be otherwise, but that, when he sees so little agreement, nay, the greatest difference between the two, he must form a less favourable judgment of his own faith.

XXXVII. It is not, indeed, absolutely necessary to salvation, that one should know that he believes: for the promise of salvation is annexed to the sincerity of faith, Mark 16:16; John 3:16; not to the knowledge one may have of his faith. Yet it is nevertheless expedient, that every one should, by an accurate scrutiny, inquire into the sincerity and truth of his faith. 1st, In order to render due thanks to God for this invaluable gift. For if Paul did so often return thanks to God for the faith of others, Eph. 1:15, 16; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3, 4; 1 Thess. 1:2, 3; 2 Thess. 1:3, how much more incumbent is it to do so for one's own faith? But he cannot do this, unless he knows that he does believe. 2dly, That he may have strong consolation in himself: for the consciousness of our faith gives us assurance of salvation; thus the apostle joins these two together, 2 Tim. 1:12: "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 3dly, That with the greater alacrity he may run the race of piety: for he who is assured that he acts from faith, is also assured that "his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord;" and this assurance makes the believer "steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," 1 Cor. 15:58.

## Chapter V: Of Justification

I. THAT faith, which we have in the last Chapter treated of, as saving, is usually also called justifying in the divinity schools. And since justification is its first memorable effect, it will by no means be improper to speak of it now, and that with the greater accuracy, as it so nearly concerns the whole of religion, that we stumble not in explaining this article. The doctrine of justification diffuseth itself through the whole body of divinity, and if the foundation here is well laid, the whole building will be the more solid and grand; whereas a bad foundation or superstructure threatens a dreadful ruin. The pious Picardians, as they were called in Bohemia and Moravia, valued this article at its true price, when, in their Confession of Faith, Art. 6, speaking of Justification, they thus write: "This sixth article is accounted with us the most principal of all, as being the sum of all Christianity and piety. Wherefore our divines teach and handle it with all diligence and application, and endeavour to instil it into all." Let us, to the utmost of our power, imitate them in this, beginning with its name.

II. To justify, in Hebrew **הצדיק**, in Greek **δικαιῶν**, is very frequently and ordinarily used in a declarative sense, and signifies to account, declare, prove any one just. Which is manifest from those places of Scripture, where it occurs as the act of a judge, as Ps. 82:3, "**הצדיק** do justice to (justify) the afflicted and needy;" and this is especially the case when it is opposed to condemnation, as Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Isa. 5:22, 23.

III. And doubtless this word has such a signification, when God is said to be justified, as Ps. 51:4: "That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest:" that is, that thou mightest be declared, proved, acknowledged to be just, when thou pronoucest sentence. In like manner, Matt. 11:19, "Wisdom is justified of her children:" that is, they who are truly regenerated of God by the Gospel, have accounted the wisdom of God, which the Scribes and Pharisees falsely accounted foolishness, to be, as it really is, the most consummate wisdom, and cleared it from the calumny of folly with which it was branded. In the same sense it is said, Luke 7:29, "All the people and the publicans justified God."

IV. Nor can this word have any other than a forensic signification, when Christ is said to be "justified," 1 Tim. 3:16: and still more fully, Isa. 50:8, where the Lord himself thus speaketh: "He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary? Almost in the same manner as the apostle speaks of the elect, Rom. 8:33, 34. How was Christ justified? 1st, When the Father declared that he was holy and without spot, according to his mind and will, and even such "in whom he was well pleased," Matt. 3:17, and 17:5. 2dly, When he pronounced him innocent of all the crimes with which he was falsely accused, and for which he was unjustly condemned. 3dly, When he declared that he had made full satisfaction to his justice, and was no longer under the guilt of those sins which, as surety, he took upon himself. The two former acts of justification respect Christ as man; the last, as mediator. And in this view, he is called "the righteous or just servant of God," Isa. 53:11; not only as holy and without sin in himself, but as one who had also fulfilled all that righteousness to which he bound himself by his voluntary engagement, whereby, though he was the son, yet he became the servant of God, and by his resurrection was declared to have performed the whole, and so was exalted to that state, that he

might be able to justify many, or procure righteousness for many, by virtue of his own righteousness.

V. But we are not to imagine we have accomplished any great matter, when we have shown that justification is often taken in a forensic or law sense. For scarce any who love to be called Christians have such a bold front or stubborn mind as to deny it. Certainly the popish doctors themselves generally own it: Bellarm. de Justificat. lib. i. c. 1, Becan. Sum. Theol. T. II., Tract. 4, c. 3, Tirin. Controvers. xv. No. 1. Nor do they deny that Paul himself sometimes treats of justification in that sense: Estius, in Comm. ad Rom. 2:13, observes, that to be justified there is the same thing as to be "adjudged, declared, accounted righteous, according," says he, "to the most usual language of Scripture." Which interpretation Ruardus Tapperus also approves, ad Art viii. p. 32. I will do my\* townsman the honour to quote his words. "As to what was aforesaid," says he, "it is to be considered that, in Scripture, to be justified not only signifies to be endowed and adorned with righteousness, but sometimes also to be pronounced, declared, adjudged, allowed, and esteemed just or righteous. According to which interpretation blessed Augustine explains the apostle Paul's expression." The doers of the law shall be justified; "that is," says he, "shall be accounted and esteemed just." In like manner, Cornelius a Lapide, on Rom. 8:33. "It is God that justifieth," thus comments: "It is God that acquits these elect persons; namely, his faithful people and true Christians from their sins, and absolves from the charge brought against them by sin and the devil, and pronounces them just or righteous. The state of the controversy, therefore, between us and the doctors of the church of Rome, is not whether justification be sometimes taken in a forensic or law sense; for that is confessed on both sides.

VI. What then? Are we thus to state the question? Namely, whether the term, to justify, has always in Scripture a forensic sense? But the most eminent protestant divines do not affirm this, and therefore it would be too harsh and inhuman to charge them with prevarication on that account. Beza on Tit. 3:7, thus comments: "I take the term justification in a large sense, as comprehending whatever we obtain from Christ, as well by imputation as by the efficacy of the Spirit in our sanctification, that we may be ἄρτιοι, that is, perfect and complete in him. Thus also the term justify is taken, Rom. 8:30. Much to the same purpose Thysius in Synops. Purior. Theolog. Leyden. Disput. xxiii. §. 3: "Nor yet do we deny, that on account of their very great and close connexion justification seems sometimes to comprise sanctification also, as a consequent. Rom. 8:30, Tit. 3:7, &c." I shall add one testimony more, namely, Chamierus Panstrat. T. III. lib. x. c. i. No. 6, who speaks to this purpose: "We are not such ridiculous judges of words as not to know, nor such impertinent sophisters as not to allow, that the terms justification and sanctification are put one for the other; yea, we know that they are called saints principally on this account, that in Christ they have remission of sin. And we read in the Revelations, 'let him that is righteous be righteous still;' which can only be understood of the progress of inherent righteousness; and we deny not that there may be a promiscuous use of the words perhaps in other places."

VII. And indeed, this ingenuousness of these very great men is not to be too much canvassed, who, though they have granted so much to their adversaries, have yet, in the main question, happily triumphed over them. Nevertheless we see no sufficient reasons why they should have been so liberal to them. There had been no violence put on the alleged passages, if in them the term justification should be taken in the sense in which Paul commonly takes it; nor doth it appear that all things would have flowed less agreeably.



VIII. What should hinder us from explaining Rom. 8:30, in this manner? "Whom he did predestinate;" that is, whom by his most free and immutable decree he has chosen to grace and glory, "them he also called;" that is, by his word and Spirit he sweetly invited, and powerfully drew them from a state of sin and misery to communion with Christ, and being endowed with faith regenerated them: "and whom he called, them he also justified;" that is, as soon as they were united to Christ by the Holy Spirit and by faith, he, on the account of the merits of Christ imputed to them, acquitted them from the guilt of sin, and adjudged them to have a right to all the good things of Christ, as well in grace as in glory: "and whom he justified, them he also glorified;" that is, he not only gave them a right but also put them in actual possession of the greatest blessings, 1st, By sanctifying them, and transforming them more and more to his own image, and making them partakers of a divine nature, which doubtless is a great degree of glory. 2dly, By plentifully pouring in upon them the sweetest consolations of his Spirit, which are, as it were, the preludes of joy and happiness. 3dly and lastly, By making them perfectly happy, first in soul, and then in soul and body together.

IX. But we think it far more proper to comprise sanctification under glorification, than to refer it to justification. For it is familiar to the Holy Spirit, to delineate holiness under the names of beauty, ornament, and glory. Thus Ps. 93:5, "Holiness becometh thine house." Ps. 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness". Nay, by the very term glory, holiness and righteousness are expressed: Ps. 45:13, "The king's daughter is all glorious within." But what else is meant there by that glory but the genuine holiness of believers? Or as Peter speaks, 1 Epist. 3:4, "The hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price:" add Isa. 62:2. "And the Gentiles shall

see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory." Where these two words are used alternately one for the other, and justly, for the highest pitch of our glory consists in a perfect conformity to God, 1 John 3:2. But holiness is the image of God, Eph. 4:24; so that saints who accurately express or resemble that image, are on that account called the "glory of Christ," 2 Cor. 8:23. Why then should we not account our conformity to God in holiness, as no contemptible first-fruits of glory? Certainly, Paul calls the progress made in sanctification a transformation, or a being changed from glory to glory," 2 Cor. 3:18.

X. It is plain that with the same propriety, we may understand by justification, Tit. 3:7 absolution from guilt, and an adjudging to eternal life. For, the first work of a man, who is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, is the work of faith, the infallible consequent of which is, the remission of sins; this is either succeeded by, or attended with, the hope of the inheritance of eternal life. What probable reason is there then to make us depart from this sense? And if we would have sanctification contained in any of the words which the apostle makes use of, why shall we not rather refer it to "regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Ghost?" For really, sanctification differs no otherways from the first regeneration and renovation, than as the continuance of an act differs from the beginning of it. And we are sure, that the apostle exhorts the Romans, who had been for some time regenerated, to a progress in sanctification, when he writes, Rom. 12:2, "be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds," and in like manner, Eph. 4:23, "be renewed in the spirit of your mind." As the beginning of this renovation goes before justification, strictly so called, so the progress of it serves to promote the certainty and the sense of justification; and in both respects it was excellently well said by the apostle, that the elect are regenerated by the Holy Spirit shed on them abundantly; that being thus justified by his grace, that is,

acquitted from sin, and conscious to themselves of absolution, they might lawfully, yea, in full assurance, hope for the inheritance of eternal life.

XI. As to Rev. 22:11, "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still," it does not appear that any fuller sense can be put on these words than if we thus explain them: whoever is reputed righteous before God by faith on Christ, should think it his duty or concern to verify by his actions, this his justification before men and to his own conscience; and so by faith and the exercise of it, and by studying the word of God, he may have a more abounding consolation concerning his righteousness. And by this reasoning too, the forensic use of this term is still retained.

XII. Others also allege, 1 Cor. 6:11, "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." But even this testimony does not prove that justification is equivalent to sanctification, rather the contrary. For, after the apostle had said, that the "Corinthians were washed," that is, delivered from the power of sin, he more particularly shows, wherein that washing consisteth. Now the power of sin over man is twofold. 1st, That it compels him to the servile works of wickedness. 2dly, That it condemns him. The dominion is destroyed by sanctification: the power of condemning by justification. Both these are bestowed on the elect "in the name of the Lord Jesus;" that is, on account of his merits, and by his authority and will, "and by the Spirit of our God," who is the author of sanctification, and sweetly insinuates the sentence of justification into the minds of believers. Both these benefits are sealed in baptism, to the washing of which there is here an evident allusion. Nor should it offend us, that sanctification is here put before justification; a diligent enquirer cannot but know, that the Scripture does not always exactly observe

that order, as that things first in time are set in the first place. Thus even Peter puts vocation before election, 2 Pet. 1:10. Besides, justification consists of various articles, as we shall show more distinctly in its place.

XIII. However, I cannot conceal that there are two places in which the term הצדיק justify, may seem to denote something more than a mere declaration of righteousness, though that be also included. The first is, Is. 53:11. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant יצדיק לרבים justify many." It is indeed true, that our Lord Jesus Christ is constituted judge by the Father, and consequently empowered to absolve his elect, who were given him: but here he is not represented as a judge, pronouncing sentence, but as the cause, which, both by merit and efficacy, brings and gives to his own people that righteousness, on account of which, they may be absolved at the bar of God; and the unusual construction of the word with ל, the article, of the dative case, calls for our notice. It is therefore the same as if the prophet had said, "יעשה הצדקה לרבים, he will make a righteousness unto many," that which he himself performed as the cause of righteousness, he will communicate to many; and thus, "δικαιωμα, his righteousness, will redound to many, and unto justification of life," as the apostle speaks, Rom. 5:18, which I would have to be compared with this passage.

XIV. The other testimony I hinted at, is Dan. 12:3, where the faithful preachers of the gospel are said to be "מצדיקו הרבים, justifying many." None doubts that it belongs to the office of the ministers of the gospel to publish, in the name of God, absolution from sin to the contrite in heart. But the compass of their function is much more extensive, namely, that by their preaching, example, and prayers, they may bring as many as possible to such a state, as remission of sins may be preached, and that with special application unto them,

who, by faith and repentance, are reconciled unto God, and are diligent in the practice of holiness. The ministry of reconciliation with which they were intrusted comprises all this. They who are diligent in the performance of these things, are said to justify many, because they stir them up to repentance, which is the beginning of righteousness or holiness; to faith, whereby they lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, on account of which they may be pardoned; to the practice of a holy life, which when they prove by their works, they may obtain fuller assurance of their justification by the ministers in the name of God.

XV. We have been the fuller on the signification of this word justify, that, at the same time, we might show the force of various testimonies of Scripture, nothing being more pleasant and useful than the study of this. But when treating of justification, we shall always take that term in the declarative sense. Which being observed once for all, let us now address ourselves to the more distinct examination of the thing itself.

XVI. The declaration of God concerning men, either regards some of their particular actions, or their whole state. The actions of men are considered, either in relation to the rule of the divine will, or in comparison with the actions of others, whether more or less evil. God pronounces absolutely on actions, when he declares them either evil, condemning man in them; as Nathan said to David in the name of God, 2 Sam. 12:9. "Thou hast despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight," or good, justifying a man in them; in which sense David, having his eyes intent on the justice of his cause against his enemies, prays, Ps. 7:8: "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is within me." Thus God justified Job, when he declared that he "spoke of him the thing which is right," Job 42:8.

XVII. The example of Phinehas is here very memorable, Ps. 106:30, 31: "Then stood up Phinehas and executed judgment; and so the plague was stayed. And that was accounted unto him for righteousness, unto all generations for ever more." The fact of Phinehas was thus: Zimri, one of the princes of the tribe of Simeon, brought into his tent, with an incredible impudence, Cozbi, a daughter of the king of Midian, in the sight of the princes of his people, with an intent to pollute her and himself with whoredom; while Moses, with the whole congregation, stood in tears at the door of the tabernacle, to deprecate the vengeance of God already broke out. Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the high-priest, and himself a priest, could not bear this sight; but being inflamed with a mighty zeal, and moved with the indignity of the action, rushed from amidst the congregation, and taking up a javelin, thrust them both through in the very act of their whoredom.

XVIII. There were many things in this action, which to outward appearance were faulty. 1st, Phinehas was a priest, whom it did not become to imbrue his hands in human blood. For if it brought guilt on a priest, to be expiated by sacrifice, to have touched a dead body, much more to have made a living man a dead carcase. 2dly, He was none of the judges of Israel, whom Moses, at the command of God himself, deputed to punish the guilty, by hanging them up before the Lord, Numb. 25:4, 5. 3dly, He did not observe the due order or course of justice, because he began with the execution. 4thly, The whole seemed to breathe an enraged passion of mind, rather than a zeal tempered with due lenity. For these reasons, Phinehas might be thought to have been guilty of a horrid murder, and, on that account, to have forfeited the honour of the priesthood.

XIX. But it is plain, it appeared otherwise in the sight of God, who pronounced the action right, commending this zeal of his, and

declaring, that he was so pleased with it, that therefore he averted his great wrath from the children of Israel. And Phinehas was so far from being divested of the priesthood on that account, that, on the contrary, God adjudged to him and his seed after him a perpetual priesthood, by a covenant of peace that was to last for ever, Numb. 25:11, 12, 13. And this is what David sings, "it was counted unto him for righteousness," that is, it was judged that he had acted in a due and regular manner, and was therefore more worthy of praise and reward, than of blame and punishment.

XX. And as this man was justified in that absolutely, so others are justified in their actions, comparatively, or when compared with the actions of others which are worse. In this sense it is said, Jer. 3:11, "the backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah." That is, by her works hath showed herself more righteous and innocent, professing according to the sentiments of her heart, and not acting so hypocritically and deceitfully as the prevaricating and dissembling Judah, who would appear, as if she was converted to me, while in the mean time she profanes my name. In like manner, Ezek. 16:31: "Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations, which thou hast done." Thou hast behaved in such a manner, that, in comparison of thee, they may seem to be innocent.

XXI. Thus much for the declaration of God concerning the actions of men. On the other hand, his declaration as to their state, is of several kinds. For either God considers them as they are in themselves, according to inherent qualities, either vicious through corrupt nature, or holy and laudable through reforming grace; or as they are reputed in Christ the surety.

XXII. God can neither consider nor declare men to be otherwise than as they really are. For "his judgment is according to truth," Rom. 2:2,

and therefore they, who are still under the dominion of sin, and walk with delight, according to their depraved lusts, are judged and declared by God to be unregenerate, wicked, and slaves of the devil, as they really are; for "by no means does he clear the guilty," Exod. 34:7; but they who are regenerated by his grace, created anew after his image, and heartily give themselves up to the practice of sincere holiness, are by him absolved from the sin of profaneness, impiety, and hypocrisy; and are no longer looked upon as dead in sins, slaves to the devil, children of the world; but as true believers, his own children, restored to his image and endowed with his life. It was thus he justified his servant Job, declaring, "That there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and esheweth evil," Job 1:8.

XXIII. And this is still the case of all believers. The devil indeed, who is the accuser of the brethren, frequently charges them with hypocrisy before God, as if they did not serve him in sincerity; and he not only thus accuses them before God, but he also disquiets their conscience, as if all their faith and piety were only a mask and outward show, by which they have hitherto imposed, not only on others, but also on themselves. In order to calm the consciences of believers, when thus shaken by the false accuser, they have need to be absolved from this accusation, and justified from this false testimony before God; which God also daily does, assuring the elect of the sincerity of their conversion, by the testimony of his Spirit, and thereby showing, that the praise of a true Jew is of him, Rom. 2:29. This justification is, indeed, very different from that other, of which we shall presently treat, wherein the person is absolved from sins whereof he is really guilty, and which are forgiven him on Christ's account. In this we are speaking of, he is acquitted of sins, which he is not chargeable with, and is declared not to have committed.



XXIV. The foundation of this justification can be nothing but inherent holiness and righteousness. For as it is a declaration concerning a man, as he is in himself, by the regenerating and sanctifying grace of God, so it ought to have for its foundation, that which is found in man himself: "He that doth righteousness is righteous," says John, 1 John 3:7; and Peter says, Acts 10:34, 35, "of a truth, I perceive, that, in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with God." And Luke, in the name of God, gives this testimony to the parents of John the Baptist, that "They were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless," Luke 1:6. But yet inherent righteousness is not the foundation of this justification, from its own worthiness, or because it is a holiness exactly commensurate with the rule of the law, but because it is the work of the Holy Spirit in the elect, which God cannot but acknowledge and delight in as his own, and because the failings with which it is always stained in this world, are forgiven for Christ's sake.

XXV. In this sense we think the apostle James speaks of justification, in that much controverted passage, James 2:21, 24, where he declares, that "Abraham was not justified by faith only, but also by works," and insists upon it, that every man ought to be justified in this manner. For the scope of the apostle is to show, that it is not sufficient for a Christian to boast of the remission of his sins, which indeed, is obtained by faith only, but then it must be a living faith on Christ: but that besides, he ought to labour after holiness, that, being justified by faith only, that is, acquitted from the sins he had been guilty of, on account of Christ's satisfaction, apprehended by faith, he may likewise be justified by his works, that is, declared to be truly regenerated, believing and holy; behaving as becomes those who are regenerated, believing and holy. Thus our father Abraham behaved, who, having been before now justified by faith only, that is, obtained

the remission of his sins, was afterwards also justified by his works. For when he offered up his son to God, then God said to him, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me," Gen. 22:12. And James insists upon it, that this last justification is so necessary to believers, that, if it be wanting, the first ought to be accounted only vain and imaginary.

XXVI. These things are evident from Scripture: but, lest any, after the manner of the world, should ridicule this, I inform the more unskilful, that this is no invention of mine, but that the most celebrated divines have, before me, spoken of such a justification according to inherent righteousness and of works. Bucerus, in altero Colloquio Ratisbonensi, p. 313, says, "We think that this begun righteousness is really true and living righteousness, a noble and excellent gift of God; and that the new life in Christ consists in this righteousness, and that all the saints are also righteous by this righteousness, both before God and before men, and that, on account thereof, the saints are also justified by a justification of works, that is, are approved, commended, and rewarded by God." Calvin teaches much the same, Instit. lib. iii. c. 17, sect. 8, which concludes with these words, "The good works done by believers, are counted righteous, or, which is the same, are imputed for righteousness." The very learned Ludovicus de Dieu has at large explained and proved this opinion, in Comment. ad Rom. 8:4. And he quotes, as agreeing with him herein, Daniel Colonius, formerly regent or professor of the French college at Leyden. The same is also maintained by the Rev. Dr. Peter de Witte, that very able defender of the truth, in Controversia de justificatione adversus Socinianos. And Triglandius explains the passage of James to the same purpose with us, making use of the very same distinction of justification, in Examine Apologiæ Remonstrantium, c. 21, p. 316.

XXVII. Let us now at length proceed to treat of the justification of man as a sinner, but considered as in Christ the surety. As this subject is the foundation of all solid comfort, so it is full of mysteries and perplexed with many controversies: nevertheless it is clearly delivered in the Scriptures, if men would only be satisfied with their simplicity, and not shut their eyes against the light which so freely shines upon them, nor give way to curious niceties, and the roving of a luxuriant fancy. We thus define the Gospel justification of a sinner: it is a judicial but gracious act of God, whereby the elect and believing sinner is absolved from the guilt of his sins, and hath a right to eternal life adjudged to him, on account of the obedience of Christ received by faith.

XXVIII. This is evident that all men, considered in themselves, are abominable sinners before God, and obnoxious to eternal death. Paul before proved both Jews and Gentiles to be all under sin; so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God, Rom. 3:9, 19. But since, as we observed before, the judgment of God is always according to truth, it cannot be otherwise but that God declare those, who in themselves are sinners and liable to death, to be really so in themselves; yet the Scripture declares that God justifies sinners, that is, acquits them from sin and from being liable to eternal death, and adjudges them a right to eternal life. And unless this were the case, the salvation and hope of all mankind had been at an end. But certainly, God does this agreeably to his truth and justice. It is therefore necessary that they, who are sinners in themselves, should appear in another light to a justifying God, namely as considered in another, whose perfect righteousness may be so imputed to them as, in virtue thereof, they may be reputed righteous. And this is the mystery of our justification in the faith of Christ.

XXIX. After all had sinned in Adam, and come short of the glory of God, the only-begotten son of God offered himself as surety to the Father, and promised, that, at the time appointed, he would fulfil all the demands of the law for the elect. And he also executed this with all fidelity: he was born of a virgin, without any spot of sin, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and endowed with original righteousness, in order to remove the guilt of original sin, and make up the defect of original righteousness, which the elect are born without. Besides, from his very infancy, and through the whole course of his life, especially at the close thereof he endured all manner of sufferings, both in soul and in body, humbling, nay emptying himself, and being obedient to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross; that he might bear, in their stead, the punishment due to the sins of his chosen people; the dignity of the person who suffered abundantly compensating what was wanting in the duration of the punishment, which otherwise must have been eternal. In fine, he fully performed for his people all that the law required, in order to obtain a right to eternal life. Had the elect themselves, in their own persons, performed what Christ did for them, there is no doubt but they would have obtained that, for which they might have been justified by God, nay, they must have been so, at least according to the covenant.

XXX. Moreover, since whatever of this kind Jesus performed, he did it by a voluntary undertaking with the Father's approbation, in the room and stead of the elect: it is deservedly imputed to them, and placed to their account: just as what a surety pays for a debtor, or in his stead, is accounted as paid by him to the first creditor. Paul, in the fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, has handled this point in an excellent and divine manner, the sum of which is contained, ver. 19: "As by one man's disobedience many were made

(constituted) sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made (constituted) righteous."

XXXI. Moreover, to set the ground of this imputation in a clearer light, we must observe that Christ, according to the eternal counsel of the Father, not only undertook all these things for the elect, and fulfilled them agreeably to his undertaking, but also that the elect, before the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them for justification of life, are so closely united to him by faith, as to be one body, 1 Cor. 12:13, and which is still more indivisible, or indissoluble, one spirit with him, 1 Cor. 6:17; nor are they only united, but he and they are one, and that by such an unity or oneness, in which there is some faint resemblance of that most simple oneness whereby the divine persons are one among themselves, John 17:22, 23. But in virtue of this union or oneness, which the elect have with Christ by faith, they are accounted to have done and suffered, whatever Christ did and suffered for them.

XXXII. Elect sinners, destitute of any righteousness of their own, that is, not having in themselves that for which they have a right to eternal life, are by faith found in Christ, having that righteousness, which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3:9: and that in this manner—they are acquitted from obnoxiousness to eternal death, on account of the voluntary sufferings of Christ, which were completed by a most cruel and dreadful death. Original sin is pardoned, and the soul presented unspotted before God, on account of his most pure nativity, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin. Eternal life is adjudged to be communicated to them in certain degrees of it, on account of the most perfect obedience of his whole life. This is the sum of this mystery, which, being comprehended in a few words, we have thought proper thus to lay before the reader's contemplation, as

it were, in one view. But there are not a few things which require fuller explication.

XXXIII. The JUDGE in this cause is God, Rom. 8:33, Is. 43:25. For he is "that one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," James 4:12. And as he alone has a right and power to inflict due punishment on the sinner, so likewise he alone has a right to acquit him, because he is "the judge of the whole world," Rom. 3:6.

XXXIV. What is in general said of God, essentially considered, is especially appropriated to the Father, considered hypostatically or personally, who is "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," Rom. 3:26, and "who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. 5:19. Where the distinction made of God from Christ sufficiently shows, that God the Father is there meant. Reason also requires, that justification be especially ascribed to God the Father. For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, appears in judgment in behalf of the guilty, as surety, as advocate, and in fine, as furnishing them with those evident proofs, by which they may be able to demonstrate that divine justice has been satisfied for them. The Holy Ghost, by working faith in the guilty, makes them to lay hold on and present the surety and his satisfaction in judgment. And in this respect both stand on the side of the guilty. But the Father acts as Judge, who righteously, and at the same time mercifully, absolves the guilty, on account of the satisfaction of the Son, apprehended by the power of the Holy Spirit.

XXXV. But a certain person has rashly asserted, that the Son and Holy Ghost cannot, for the reasons above mentioned, act the part of Judge, and pronounce sentence; for in the economy of our salvation, the persons in the Trinity sustain various relations, which are to be reconciled with, and not placed in opposition to, each other. He who

sometimes is described as surety, is at other times represented as Judge, John 5:27. And indeed, Christ himself claims the power of forgiving sins, Matt. 9:2. And, in the day of the general judgment, himself will peremptorily pronounce the justifying sentence upon the elect. Nor is it inconsistent for one and the same person to be both the meritorious cause of justification, and the advocate of the guilty, and at the same time, the Judge of the cause. All these relations agree in one Christ, and teach us that fulness of salvation which is to be found in him.

XXXVI. The Holy Ghost also hath his own proper office in this matter, for it is he who brings in and seals that sentence of absolution, pronounced in the court of heaven, to and upon the believing soul in the court of conscience, and so pacifies and cheers it; he shows it "the things that are freely given to it of God," 1 Cor 2:12, and "bears witness with the spirit of believers," Rom. 8:16, that they are reconciled to God. Hence it appears, that none of the divine persons is to be excluded from pronouncing sentence.

XXXVII. That thing for which we are justified, and which some call the matter of our justification, is the perfect righteousness of Christ alone; this Christ finished for his elect, "for their sakes sanctifying himself," John 17:19. The Father imputes the same to his chosen people, as he imputed their sins to Christ: "he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5:21. But it is impossible to explain how Christ was made sin for us, unless in that sense, in which our sins are imputed to him, that he might suffer for them; and we are made righteousness in him in the same manner that his righteousness is imputed to us, that, on account of it, we may receive the crow. It is evident that in Scripture, the righteousness of Christ is called our righteousness; for, he is "the Lord our righteousness," Jer.

23:6: "he of God is made unto us righteousness," 1 Cor 1:30. Now it is ours inherently, or by imputation, for there can be no third way: it is not ours inherently; for, in that sense, Paul opposes it to ours, Phil. 3:9, nor does the nature of the thing admit, that acts, performed by Christ, can inherently be ours. It therefore remains, that it is ours by imputation; God imputing to man righteousness without works, Rom. 4:6.

XXXVIII. Arminius, by his subtlety, frames vain empty quibbles, when he contends, that the righteousness of Christ cannot be imputed to us for righteousness, because it is righteousness strictly speaking; laying this down as a foundation, that what is imputed to us for righteousness, is not properly righteousness. Which none will admit who has considered, that every judgment of God is according to truth; whence it follows, that nothing can be imputed to any one for righteousness, which is not really righteousness. But it is imputed to us, that is, put to our account as if it was ours; for, though it was not performed by us, yet it was performed by Christ for us, and in our room. Nor in doing this, does God judge otherwise than as the thing is; for, he judges not, that we in our own persons have fulfilled that righteousness, which is not true; but that Christ has so fulfilled it for us, as that, by the merit thereof, we may justly be rewarded. This is so true, that it is the sum of the whole gospel.

XXXIX. And whereas that righteousness of Christ is in every respect complete, and God has acknowledged, that full satisfaction was made to his law to the very utmost, when he raised Christ from the dead, and called him his righteous servant; it is not necessary that any thing should come from us to acquire either freedom from punishment, or a right to life. I add, that it could not in justice be demanded of us; for the least farthing cannot be demanded by the principal creditor, after the surety has paid him in full for the debtor.



It therefore appears, that they do injury both to the satisfaction of Christ and to the justice of God, who contend, that any thing is to be done by men, that is to be added to the merits of Christ as the matter of our justification. For if by the satisfaction of Christ, the demand of the law, which prescribes the condition of life is perfectly fulfilled, nothing can or ought to be joined thereto, that the glory may remain pure and entire to Christ alone. If there were but the least thing wanting in Christ's satisfaction, which the law required for righteousness, it would not deserve even the name of satisfaction; nor would Christ have merited any thing, either for himself or for us. For nothing is admitted in this judgment, but what answers all the demands of the law.

XL. The Scripture confirms this truth, when it sets the grace of Christ in diametrical opposition to our works, maintaining, that there can be no mixture of the one with the other. "If righteousness comes by the law," saith the apostle, that is, if, by our works, we can acquire a right to life eternal, "then Christ is dead in vain," Gal. 2:21. And more clearly, Rom. 11:6. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." In order clearly to discern the force of the apostle's inference, it is to be observed, that there are but two ways by which we can come to the possession of salvation, according to the two covenants entered into between God and man: either one has a right to life because he has fully satisfied the demand of the law, according to the covenant of works, and to him that thus "worketh is the reward reckoned of debt," Rom. 4:4; or he hath a right to life, because the surety of a better testament has made satisfaction for him, which of pure grace and most unmerited favour is imputed to him, who worketh not, in order to acquire that right, ver. 5, according to the covenant of grace. As these covenants do in the whole essence of them differ, and in this respect are

contradistinguished from, and set in opposition to, each other, it is evident they conjoin inconsistencies, who would join together our works with the grace of God, our righteousness with the righteousness of Christ, in the matter of justification.

XLI. And, indeed, the apostle expressly declares, that there is nothing in us which can here come into the account, Rom. 3:24. "justified freely by his grace." In respect of God, it is of pure grace, which, as we just said, admits of no partnership with our works. In respect of us, it is freely, without any thing in us as the cause of it. For the adverb δωρεάν, freely, signifies this: not so much hinting here, that justification is a free gift, as the apostle calls it, Rom. 5:16, (for that the following words denote, τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι, by his grace), as that there is nothing in us by which to obtain it. The Greek word, δωρεάν, freely, answers to the Hebrew דָּנָה, that is, without a cause, which in that case is found to be false and feigned; as Ps. 69:4, "שנאי הוֹנֵם they that hate me without a cause," which is the same thing as, "איבי שקר, my lying enemies." The former is translated by the Septuagint, or Greek interpreters, μισοῦντες μὲ δωρεάν. Just as John 15:25: "ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν, they hated me without a cause." In like manner, Ps. 35:7, "הוֹנֵם, δωρεάν, without a cause have they hid for me their net in a pit." Where δωρεάν does not signify any donation or gift, but the absolute denial of any cause, which could render a man deserving of such treatment. When the apostle therefore says, we are justified δωρεάν, freely, he teaches us, that there is nothing in us, upon which to found the gracious sentence of our justification, or for which we can be justified. Excellently well says the Greek Scholiast: "Δωρεάν, τουτεστιν άνευσων κατορθωμάτων, freely, that is, without any merit in thee."

XLII. And this reason may be added, that nothing can avail, in the business of justification, but what is entirely perfect, and can answer

the law of God in all things. For in justification there is "a declaration of the righteousness of God," Rom. 3:25, 26. But that requires "the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled," Rom. 8:4. The righteousness of the law cannot be fulfilled, but by a perfect obedience. Chrysostom speaks well on this place: "What is righteousness? It is the end, the scope, the righteous action. For what does the law want, what does it always command? To be without sin." But no person pretends to this, but the presumptuous and the liar, 1 John 1:8. We therefore conclude, that a sinner cannot be justified by any act of his own.

XLIII. The FORM of justification consists in these two acts. 1st, The discharging of unrighteousness. 2dly, The adjudging of righteousness.

XLIV. Unrighteousness or sin has a double power over the sinner. 1st, A power of condemnation. 2dly, A power of dominion. The law asserts both these powers: the former, by declaring him, who sins, to be guilty of death, Rom. 1:32; the other, by giving up the conquered, by a just sentence, to the conqueror, 2 Pet. 2:19. Wherefore it is said, that "the law is the strength of sin," 1 Co. 15:56. Because sin has its power from the law, which pronounces the sinner accursed, and the servant of corruption. Nay, the most holy law of God itself is called by Paul, "the law of sin and of death," Rom. 8:2. Not as if it allowed of any sin, much less commanded it; but because, by its righteous sentence, it gives up the sinner and his children to sin, that it may tyrannize over them as unworthy of the life of God both in holiness and glory. Now sin does this, both by pushing the sinner on to farther degrees of wickedness, and by hastening and aggravating his condemnation. Who can doubt but all these things are justly determined by God against the sinner? Why, then, should not this sentence, which is founded on the law of the covenant of works, be called a law? And seeing sin exercises, according to this law, a

dominion over the sinner, and condemns him to death, very appositely and emphatically has Paul called it "the law of sin and death". Sin, therefore, in the judgment of God, insists upon two things against the sinner, that it may condemn him, and for ever have dominion over him; and alleges for itself the righteous law of God. And indeed the law, so long as satisfaction is not made to it, cannot, in this action or process, condemn sin, that is, silence or extenuate its accusation, lay aside its claim, and pronounce it partial or unjust.

XLV. But now the satisfaction of Christ being substituted and apprehended by faith, by which the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled, the man is then justified, and sin condemned, both its claims being rejected. God declares, 1st, That there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, that all their sins are pardoned, and that none of them shall avail to condemnation; because the surety has, in the fullest manner, undergone the punishment due to them. And in that respect, forgiveness of sin is called justification, Rom. 4:6, 7. 2dly, That sin shall no longer reign in their mortal body; for since Christ did also, of his own accord, subject himself to those laws, which were the handwriting of sin, they are no longer under the law of sin, but under grace, Rom. 6:14. This justifying sentence of man, and condemning sentence of sin, are founded on the same law of God, which, if the satisfaction of Christ be set aside, is "the law of sin and death;" but if that satisfaction be supposed, it is "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," delivering man with a liberal hand. For after Christ has once obeyed "in the likeness of sinful flesh" for the elect, God declares, that every thing which sin could possibly demand was done according to the law, and pronounces a sentence of liberty from sin to those who by faith receive this grace of the Lord Christ, both with respect to its

condemning and dominant power, as the apostle, Rom. 8:1, 2, 3, divinely illustrates.

XLVI. This deliverance from the guilt and dominion of sin has, indeed, an indissoluble connexion with happiness; therefore they "whose iniquities are forgiven," are declared "blessed," Rom. 4:7: nevertheless this alone is not sufficient to happiness. For he who now is set free from sin, has not immediately a right to life; as is manifest in Adam while innocent, who, as long as he continued such, had no condemnation to fear, nevertheless had not yet acquired a right to eternal life. It is therefore necessary, that that right be also adjudged to man in justification. Which God does on account of a perfect obedience, agreeably to that promise of the law: "The man that doth these things shall live in them," Lev. 18:5. But what Christ has done for his people, they are accounted, as we have already often said, to have done in their own person. And in this manner "grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. 5:21.

XLVII. The MEAN, by which we receive the righteousness of Christ, and justification depending thereon, is faith, and that only. For if there were any thing besides faith, it would by our own works, proceeding from the other Christian virtues. But Paul will have them entirely excluded, Gal. 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Rom. 3:28, "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." All the Christian virtues or graces are contained in these two, faith and love, which comprehend every affection of a pious soul. It is the property of love to give up and offer oneself and all he has to God; of faith, to

receive and accept of God freely giving himself to us. And, therefore, faith alone is adapted to receive and appropriate the righteousness of Christ, on account of which we are justified. And this is a truth so certain and clear, that not a few of the doctors of the school of Rome, and they the principal and of greatest reputation among them, have acknowledged it, from the very same passages of Scripture which we have advanced. Titelmannus, in his Paraphrase on Gal. 2, says: "We then firmly believe, that none can be justified before God by the works of the law, but only by faith in Christ." Estius, in like manner: "It is evident, that the particle but is in Scripture often taken adversatively, to denote but only," adding, that all the interpreters, both Greek and Latin, agree in this interpretation, and that it is gathered from what follows, and from Rom. 3:28. Sasbout is also express to the same purpose, who maintains, that Paul's expression is an Hebraism, and that, according to the Hebrews, the negative particle not is to be repeated from what went before: "A man is not justified by works, not but by faith." And he adds: "if you ask, whether it may be rightly concluded from that proposition, a man is not justified but by faith, therefore we are justified by faith alone? we are to say, It may." A little after he adds: "In this our day the Catholic writers can, on no account, bear that proposition, imagining that there is poison concealed in that particle only, and therefore to be disused. Yet the ancients had no such aversion to that particle, nor Thomas Aquinas: if any, says he, were righteous under the old law, they were not righteous by the works of the law, but only by the faith of Jesus Christ. Paul's true meaning is, not unless by faith, that is, by no merits of our own." Thus Sasbout on Gal. 2:16.

XLVIII. But we are farther to inquire, how faith justifies. Not certainly in that sense, as if God graciously accepts the act of faith, and new gospel obedience flowing therefrom, in the room of the perfect obedience which, from the rigour of the law, we are bound to

perform in order to justification; as the Socinians, and Curcellæus, who imitates them in this respect, explains it; understanding by faith the "observance of the precepts of the gospel, which God has prescribed by Christ." For this is to make void the whole gospel. The gospel has not substituted our faith, but Christ's obedience, by which the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, in the room of that perfect obedience which the law required in order to justification. It is also false, that faith and new obedience are one and the same thing. I own that faith is a virtue or grace, commanded by the law of God; and that a believer, by his very believing, obeys God. I likewise confess, that we are to look upon nothing as a true and living faith, which is not fruitful in good works. But yet faith is one thing, and the obedience flowing from it quite another, especially in the matter of justification, of which we now speak, where Paul always contradistinguishes the obedience of all manner of works to faith. For it is a rash attempt to confine to a certain species or kind of works, what the apostle says concerning them all in general. The force of truth extorted from Schlichtingius this assertion: "Faith, in its strict and proper signification, bears the same relation to obedience, as the cause to the effect, as the tree to the fruit, as the mother to the daughter," contra Meisnerum, p. 325. In fine, neither the truth nor the justice of God allow our faith and our obedience, which are imperfect, to be admitted as perfect. For it is the will of God, that the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in our justification, and not that any thing be derogated from it, as we proved sect. xlii.

XLIX. Others think proper to say, that faith is here considered as a condition, which the covenant of grace requires of us, in order to our justification. A certain learned divine of ours, in a volume of disputations lately published, speaks thus: "Nothing can be said with greater probability, simplicity, and more agreeable to Scripture, than that justification is therefore ascribed to faith; because faith is the

condition which the gospel requires of us, in order to our being accounted righteous and innocent before God." And a little after: "Yea, since we affirm, that faith alone justifies, we do not intend, that the alone act of believing, taken precisely as it is opposed to acts of love and hope, and distinguished from repentance, is the condition which the new covenant or the gospel requires, in order to obtain remission of sin, and be absolved from them on account of Christ. For the hope of pardon, and love to God, sorrow also for sin, and purpose of a new life; in a word, all the acts requisite to a genuine and serious conversion, are also somewhat necessary, and altogether prerequisite, in order for any to be received into the favour of God, and from thenceforward to be accounted a justified person; yea, that a living faith that works by love, which we affirm alone to justify, includes and implies all these things." And the learned person imagines these are such truths, as the doctors both of the Romish and reformed schools receive with common consent. He also adds: "As often as the apostle affirms, that we are not justified by works, but by faith, he intends nothing else, but that none can, on any account, be justified by such observance of the law as the legal covenant requires, in order to obtain life thereby, and escape the curse of God: but that God accounts as righteous, and out of mere grace freely forgives all the sins of those, who with sincerity receive the gospel, and from faith perform obedience thereto." These things justly call for our animadversion.

L. 1st, With this very learned person's leave, I doubt whether he can persuade any, who is not altogether unskilled in theological matters, that what he has proposed, is the received opinion of the reformed school. I find nothing of this in their confessions and catechisms; but there is a great deal, which does not differ much from the words of the learned person, in the writings of those, whose unhappy names



and heretical principles, I from my very heart believe are detestable to him.

LI. 2dly, When the discourse is about the relation which faith bears to justification, the learned person does not seem with sufficient caution, to repeat so often the act of believing. For, it is well known, that the reformed churches condemned Arminius and his followers, for saying that faith comes to be considered in the matter of justification, as a work or act of ours; whereas, the Dutch confession speaks far more accurately; namely, that "faith is here instead of an instrument, whereby we are joined together with Christ in a partnership or communion of all his benefits." I am well aware, that this is not very agreeable to the learned person, who maintains, that faith can be said to be the instrument of justification no other way, but as it is a kind of condition prerequisite on our part thereto. But when the remonstrant apologists, in order to relieve themselves from that strict expression of our confessions by their softening interpretations, wrote; that faith is therefore said to be the instrument of justification, "as it is a work performed by us according to the command and by the grace of God. For a condition, so far as it is performed, may in some measure be said to become a mean or instrument, whereby we obtain the thing promised on such a condition." Apolog. p. 112 a, the reformed protested, that they were displeased with this explication. They deny not, that our master, Christ himself, says, John 6:29, that faith is a work: neither do they refuse that, in the matter of justification, the apprehending and receiving Christ is an act of faith; and that faith ought to be so far considered as active. Yet they deny, that faith justifies as it is an act prescribed by God (for thus it would stand in the same relation with the other works enjoined by the law); but they affirm, that we are justified by that act, as by it we apprehend Christ, are united to him, and embrace his righteousness. Which they usually explain by this

similitude: a beggar's stretching forth his hand, by which, at the command of a rich man, he receives the free gift of his charity, is the act of the beggar prescribed by the rich; but it doth not enrich the beggar, as it is an act, but as by this means he applies the gift to himself, and appropriates it or makes it his own. These things are too evident to be obscured by any quibbles or subtleties whatever.

LII. 3dly, Nor do I think it an accurate way of speaking, that faith is the condition which the gospel requireth of us, in order to be accounted righteous and without guilt before God. The condition of justification, properly speaking, is perfect obedience only; this the law requires: nor does the gospel substitute any other; but declares that satisfaction has been made to the law by Christ our surety; moreover, that it is the office of faith to accept that satisfaction offered to it, and, by accepting, appropriate the same. Which is quite a different thing from saying, (as the Socinians and Remonstrants do, and which I know not whether the learned person would choose to say), that, in the room of perfect obedience, which the law prescribed as the condition of justification, the gospel now requireth faith, as the condition of the same justification. Though some of the reformed have said, that faith is a "condition sine qua non, without which we cannot" be justified; yet they were far from being of opinion, that faith is a condition properly so called, on performing which man should, according to the gracious covenant of God, have a right to justification as to a reward. This is very far from the mind of the truly reformed. See what the celebrated Triglandius has fully, solidly, and perspicuously reasoned against the subtle trifling of the Remonstrants in *Examine Apologiæ*, c. xx., xxi.; and Isaac Junius in *Antapologia*, p. 236.

LIII. 4thly, Neither is it according to the mind of the reformed church, that the acts of hope and love, nay, all those which are

required to a true and serious conversion, are included in justifying faith as justifying, and concur with faith, strictly so called, to justification. When the Remonstrants said in their confession, that "faith contains in its compass the whole of a man's conversion prescribed by the gospel; nay, the prescript of faith can here be considered in no other light than as, by its natural propriety, it includes the obedience of faith, and is as a fruitful parent of good works, and the fountain and source of all Christian piety and holiness," c. x. §. 2, 3: the Leyden professors in their censure remarked, that "the adversaries, who write in this manner, and throw off the mask, ascribe to faith the Socinian-Popish faith of justification, which Peter Bertius, a principal asserter of this, found to be the way to popery." And this assertion of theirs they make out by solid arguments. And when the Remonstrant apologist foolishly said, that this his opinion differed not from the common doctrine of the reformed churches, the venerable Triglandius replied, that "it was clearer thin noon-day, that this was too barefaced an assertion." The whole comes to this, that no faith justifies, but that which is living and fruitful in good works; that acts of love and holiness are required a fruits of faith, as testimonies of Christ dwelling in us, as marks of our regeneration, as what go before salvation, and without which there can be no full assurance of it. But that those acts of love, holiness, and conversion concur with faith to justification, and are included in justifying faith, as such, is a strange way of speaking to reformed ears, nor agreeable to Scripture, which always, in the matter of justification, sets faith in opposition to all works whatever.

LIV. 5thly, Some time ago I read in Socinus, before the sentiments of this celebrated person came to hand, the same exception which he makes, that by the works which Paul excludes from justification, is understood the perfect observance of the law, such as the legal covenant requires. For thus he says, de Servat. P. 4. c. ix.: "The works

to which faith is opposed are not every kind of works, nor taken and considered in every light; but, as we have observed elsewhere, these works denote an absolute and perpetual observance and performance of the divine law, through the whole course of life." But our divines openly declared against this exposition, who contend that all works, however considered, are opposed to faith. The apostle's words are plain, "he that worketh not, but believeth;" and his mind or intention, as Lubbertus has learnedly observed, is to be considered from the state of the controversy then in debate. But the state of the controversy was not, whether a man could be justified by a perfect observance of the law, if there were any one who could keep it perfectly? This none in his senses will deny. Neither was it whether there are many who, since Adam's first sin, have for the whole of their life done nothing amiss, but have attained to every perfection both of parts, degrees, and perseverance? Which none in his right mind will affirm. But the matter in question was, whether the Jews could be justified by that observance of the law, which they were able to perform? They certainly thought, that they could be justified if they only observed the moral law to the utmost of their power, and gave those satisfactions for their failings which the ceremonial law had prescribed. But the apostle denies this, resting his argument on that maxim, that the righteousness which can be valid at God's tribunal, must be perfect in all its parts: but since none can pretend to any such works, he concludes that no works, of what kind soever, can contribute any thing to obtain justification. The apostle, doubtless, excludes those works in which they commonly trusted, who endeavoured to establish their own righteousness. But it is not credible, that any of them could say, that he kept himself pure, through the whole course of his life, from every, even the least, stain of sin. These things are evident.

LV. But I would not have it wrested to the worst sense, in that I have, in some things, compared the opinion of this celebrated person with that of Socinus and the Remonstrants. It was not with the view, to rank a man, in other respects orthodox, and usefully employed in the service of the church of God, with those perverters of our faith. This of all things is farthest from my mind and manner. But my design was only to warn those under my care, and who may reap benefit by the very learned labours of this person, with considerable increase of knowledge, against these and the like expressions; in which, through a disgust for controversy, and a too eager desire of laying disputes aside, he seems to yield rather too much to our adversaries. Peace, indeed, is to be pursued, but by no means at the expense of truth.

LVI. The genuine opinion of the reformed is this: that faith justifies, as it is the band of our strictest union with Christ, by which all things that are Christ's become also ours, as we explained Sect. XXXI. Or, which is the same thing, as it is the acceptance of the gift offered, rendering the donation firm and irrevocable. And this is what the apostle intended when he wrote, Rom. 4:5, that "faith is counted for righteousness," that is, faith is judged to be that with which the right of demanding the reward is connected; a way of speaking borrowed from merchants: thus in the book of God's accounts there is set down what he hath given to us, and what we are indebted to him. But when in the other page our complete obedience, and the payment of the debt, could not be inserted, what is written there to balance the account? In the first place, our righteousness, or the righteousness of Christ wrought out for us: then our faith,\* by which we receive that righteousness offered to us, and present it to God as ours.

LVII. It is moreover to be observed, that justification, if we take in whatever can be comprised under that name, consists of various articles or periods, which we will describe in the most pointed

manner we can. And first, God's sentence of absolution regards either all the elect in general collected into one mystical body, or relates to each in particular. I observe two articles with respect to that general sentence: the first of which commenced immediately upon the fall, when Christ, having entered into suretiship-engagements for elect sinners, obtained by his covenant, which the Father was assured he would most faithfully perform, that Satan should be condemned in the serpent; his right over man, which he acquired by wicked arts, be made void as to the elect; and the elect, on the other hand, who are comprehended under the seed of the woman, be declared, in Christ their Head, no longer friends or subjects, but enemies and conquerors, of the devil. For all these things are contained in the first gospel-promise; which pre-supposes that suretiship of Christ whereby he took upon himself all the sins of the elect, and on account of which God declared, he never intended to exact them from any of his chosen: because, on admitting a surety, the principal debtor is freed from all obligation to make satisfaction. And this is the first effect of Christ's suretiship, the declaration of that counsel of God, by which he had purposed to justify the ungodly, and not to impute sin to those who are inserted as heirs in the testament.

LVIII. The other article of this general justification relates to the time, in which God declared that full satisfaction was made to his justice by a dying Christ. Of which Paul treats, 2 Cor. 5:19. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." He, together and at once, reconciled to himself the whole world of his elect; and declared that he would not impute their trespasses to any of them, on account of the perfect satisfaction of Christ. For when he raised Christ from the dead, he gave him a discharge, in testimony that the payment was made; and when he rent the veil of the temple he also tore the hand-writing

consisting in ordinances, which till that time loudly proclaimed that payment was not yet made. But who can doubt, that a creditor, tearing the hand-writing or bond, and giving a discharge to the surety, declares, he will not, and even in law cannot, demand any satisfaction of the principal debtor?

LIX. But justification is not confined to these bounds. Besides that general declaration of God, there is also another, applied to every believer in particular. And this again has its distinct articles. The first is, when the elect person, who is redeemed, regenerated, and united to Christ by a living faith, is declared to have now actually passed from a state of condemnation and wrath to a state of grace or favour. For the elect sinner, though redeemed by Christ, and so far reconciled to God, as that He declares he is never actually to be condemned; yet that right, purchased by Christ, is not applied to him till he is regenerated, and united to Christ by faith. Till then he is in "the present evil world," Gal. 1:4; "alienated and an enemy," and "under the power of darkness," Col. 1:13, 21. But immediately on his receiving Christ by faith, God declares in the court of heaven, that he is no longer under wrath, but under grace; though perhaps the justified person may yet be ignorant of it. And in this sense God is said to "justify the ungodly," Rom. 4:5; him who is so in himself, and actually continues such till he is born again, when that faith is freely bestowed on him for which he is immediately justified.

LX. The second article is, when that sentence of God, which was pronounced in the court of heaven is intimated and insinuated to the conscience by the Holy Spirit; so that the believer knows, feels, and experiences that his sins are forgiven. To this David has an eye, Ps. 32:5. "And thou forgavest (or thou hast taken away) the iniquity of my sin;" that is, thou madest me to know and experience this, by speaking to my heart.

LXI. The third article is, when the sinner, being actively and passively justified, is admitted to familiar converse with God, and to the mutual participation of the most delightful friendship. For it may happen, that God may have removed the tokens of his anger from the elect sinner, and given him assurance of it, and yet not directly have admitted him to an intercourse of familiarity: in the same manner, almost, as David had forgiven Absalom's parricide, and declared it by Joab, by ordering his return from Geshur to Jerusalem; yet he did not immediately admit him to court, much less to his presence-chamber, and least of all to the kisses of his mouth, 2 Sam. 14. David himself is an example of this. Nathan had told him, in the name of God: "The Lord hath put away thy sin," 2 Sam. 12:13; and yet for some time he was racked with grievous sorrows, crying out from the bottom of a contrite heart, and a sense of broken bones: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions," Ps. 51:1. That is, as he explains it, ver. 12, "restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." This near and intimate access to God, as the author of his most joyful exultation, is the real declaration of his justification. And it is to be observed, that such a declaration is often repeated. [For instance], when a believer happens to fall into some grievous sin, or into a languid and drowsy frame of soul, then his familiarity with God is not a little interrupted; but after he is roused out of that sin or from that drowsy frame by the preventing grace of God, and has been sufficiently exercised with the stings of conscience, then God applies that general sentence of the pardon of all his sins, which was pronounced immediately upon his regeneration, to this particular act or state, and suffers himself to be prevailed on at length to renew this most delightful friendship.

LXII. The fourth article is immediately after death; when God assigns to the soul, on its departure from the body, an eternal



mansion in his own blessed habitation, Heb. 9:27: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

LXIII. The fifth and last article is at the last day, which is therefore called "the day of judgment," Matt. 12:36; when the elect shall be publicly justified, and, in the view of the whole world, declared heirs of eternal life. Which justification, indeed, may be called universal, as all those who are to be justified shall appear together before God's tribunal; nevertheless it will be most particular, as every one shall be recompensed according to his works. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. 5:10.

LXIV. Let us briefly explain the whole manner of this justification in the next world. Christ, the Judge, being delegated to that office by the Father, Acts 10:42; 17:32, will pronounce two things concerning his elect: 1st. That they are truly pious, righteous, and holy; and so far this justification will differ from the former: for by that "the ungodly is justified," Rom. 4:5; whereas here God, when he enjoins his angels to summon one of the parties to be judged, says, "Gather my saints together," Ps. 50:5; if, as many suppose, these words refer to the last judgment. See Matt. 13:40, 41, 43, 49. 2dly. That they have a right to eternal life, Matt. 25:35.

LXV. The ground of the former declaration is inherent righteousness, graciously communicated to man by the Spirit of sanctification, and good works proceeding therefrom. For on no other account can any person be declared pious and holy, but because he is endowed with habitual holiness, and gives himself to the practice of godliness. Matt. 12:37, "By thy words thou shalt be justified," that is, be declared just or righteous; because words are indications of the

mind, and signs either of the good or bad treasure of the heart. "When the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God," 1 Cor. 4:5.

LXVI. The foundation of the latter can be no other than the righteousness of Christ the Lord, communicated to them according to the free decree of election, which is succeeded by adoption, which gives them a right to take possession of the inheritance. The very sentence of the Judge himself leads us to this: "Come, ye blessed of my Father," whom, on my account, he freely loved (for in Christ all the nations of the earth are blessed, Gen. 22:18. Eph. 1:3), "inherit"—possess by hereditary right, as the adopted sons of God, who, because ye are sons, are also heirs, Rom. 8:17, "the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;"—ordained for you from eternity, whose palace was fitted up in the beginning for that purpose, by the hands of God the Creator.

LXVII. Meanwhile, in this respect, too, there will be room for mentioning good works, for they shall be produced, 1st, As proofs of faith, of the union of believers with Christ, of their adoption, of that holiness without which none can see God, and of friendship with God and brotherhood with Christ. 2nd, As signs of that sacred hunger and thirst, with which they desired happiness, and of that strenuous endeavour by which, not regarding the advantages of this life, and despising carnal pleasures, they had sought the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness: and it is inconsistent with the perfection of the infinitely holy God, to disappoint this hunger and thirst, and seeking after his kingdom. 3rd, As effects of divine grace, to which, the communication of divine glory will answer, in most wise proportion, when shall come to crown his own gifts. For the more abundant measure of sanctification any one has obtained in this life, and the

more he has gained by the talent intrusted to him, it is also credible that the portion of glory will be the more exuberant which the Divine bounty hath appointed for him. And in this sense, we imagine, it is so often said in Scripture, that every one shall be recompensed according to his works, not that these works are, on any account, the cause of any right they will have to claim the reward; but as they are evidences of our adoption and of our seeking the chief good, and as they show that proportion of grace according to which the proportion of future glory will be dispensed.

LXVIII. In this judgment, therefore, there will also be grace mixed with justice. Justice will appear, because none will be admitted to the possession of the kingdom of heaven but he who can show, by undoubted evidences, that he is a partaker of Christ and his righteousness. Grace also will appear, because eternal happiness will be adjudged to him who has done nothing to acquire a right to it; because works, stained with so many infirmities, as justly make believers themselves blush, will then be celebrated with so great an encomium by the Judge. And, indeed, the apostle does in express words make mention of the mercy that will be shown on that day, 2 Tim. 1:18, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." It is certainly true, that by mercy is there understood the reward of that mercy which Onesiphorus had shown to Paul; but the reward of our mercy is not reckoned of "debt, but of grace," Rom. 4:4. And as it is not merited on the part of him who receives it, so neither is it due from him who bestows it. For what doth God owe to man, but that of which he hath made himself a debtor to man by his gracious promises; or rather was willing to owe to his own goodness and truth, that man might expect from him a retribution for his holiness? Which debt is not opposed to, but supposes grace; it is to be derived from the "alone gracious will and truth of God the Father, who hath promised an unmerited reward to

the labour of obedience which is the duty of all, and will have this to be only due on account of his promise." As becomes a reformed teacher to speak, who returns to his sound mind.

LXIX. Whence it appears, that they do not speak rightly who affirm, that in the "last justification mere justice will take place, without any mixture of grace." It is said, indeed, Heb. 4:10, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work," &c. But that the reward of our works is of mere justice, without any mixture of grace, is language that sounds harsh in reformed ears, and is diametrically repugnant to our catechism, Quest. 63\*. Ludovicus de Dieu, on Luke 1:2, 57, and on Luke 16:19, and on Rom. 3:4, has proved at large, that in the Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic languages, justice and truth denote one and the same notion, and generally are put one for the other. Thus צדקה, justice, or righteousness, when affirmed of God, in many places denotes his truth. But also אמת truth, is translated by the Septuagint, δικαιοσύνη, justice, or righteousness, Gen. 24:49; Isa. 38:19. And Grævius has proved, that the same phraseology obtained among the ancient Greeks, in his *Lectiones Hesiod.* And what is more suitable than by "the mammon of unrighteousness," Luke 16:9, to understand the riches not true, such as the spiritual and heavenly are, for, ver. 11, the unrighteous mammon is opposed to the true riches. Is not that signification of the word clear from 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins;" that is, faithful and true? For who will say that God owes the pardon of sins in justice, without any mixture of grace, to him that confesseth them? So also in the place just quoted: "God is not unrighteous," that is, deceives not in his gracious promises, by which he has adjudged a reward of grace to our labours of love. The celebrated Iac. Altingius gives us an excellent commentary on this place, as follows: "the obligation to the reward depends on the truth of the promiser, who is a debtor to himself, that what he was once pleased, in the promise, to

determine the consequence of the work and reward, might always please him in the performance; thus the just and righteous God forgives the sins of the penitent (1 John 1:9), is the justifier of him that believeth," Rom. 3:26. And a little after, "Every consideration of merit, therefore, is at an end; but a debt remains, which justice will have discharged in respect of what God has promised; who, on account of his truth, which is without repentance, or unchangeable, is debtor to himself to perform his promises (Rom. 3:3, 4; Deut. 7:9). This is the justice meant in this place, and God is denied to be unrighteous to forget good works, though he has decreed and promised, out of mere grace and mercy, that recompence." All this is judicious, solid, and orthodox.

LXX. This manifestation of mere justice is not more strongly concluded from that day being called "the day of the righteous judgment," Rom. 2:5. For, 1st, It is there called "the day of wrath." And yet wrath will not be exercised only, without a manifestation of mercy. 2ndly, Even in the justification of a sinner, in this world, there is "a declaration of the righteousness of God," Rom. 3:25; where, notwithstanding, as Paul expressly affirms, ver. 24, and all own, grace has the principal place; so also here, "Grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life," Rom. 5:21. 3dly, As God will justly inflict punishments on the impenitent, so in like manner, agreeably to his justice, he will distribute rewards, and show grace to the godly, as we explained, sect. LXVIII. Justice and grace are here not to be opposed, but joined together.

LXXI. What is asserted, Rom. 2:11, viz. that with God there is no "respect of persons," is still less sufficient to confirm this opinion. For because God does all things without respect of persons, does it follow that he exercises no grace? When Peter took notice of the piety and faith of Cornelius, and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respector of persons," Acts 10:34, did he ever intend, by these words, to deny that grace was shown to Cornelius? A non-respect of persons, excludes, indeed, injustice, and the consideration of these things, which ought to have no place in judgment; but it no ways excludes grace and mercy. These things have been so often confuted, that there is no occasion to consider them again.

LXXII. It is a new opinion and an extraordinary postulatam, to say that the works of those who are to be justified, and according to which they shall be judged, will be "perfect, yea, most perfect, that nothing may derogate from the righteousness of the judgment of that day." It is a certain truth, that the persons then to be justified, will be perfect: 1st, In Christ, on account of his most perfect righteousness imputed to them, Col. 2:10. 2ndly, In themselves, being then perfectly sanctified; for they who had died before that time are called "just men made perfect," Heb. 12:23; and they who shall, at that day, be alive, "shall be changed," 1 Cor. 15:51, 52, and doubtless, obtain perfect holiness by that change, which the others obtained at death. But that the works which they performed in this life can then be said to be most perfect, is neither consonant with Scripture nor reason.

LXXIII. The scripture declares, that the works which were done by believers in this life, were not without blemish, because they who performed them had the old man still remaining, who mixed and tainted them with some corruption of his own, Rom. 7:22, 23, 24; Gal. 5:15. This is without dispute. But the Scripture nowhere says that these works shall appear otherwise at the last judgment than they did in this life; nay, it asserts the contrary, when it testifies that every one shall be judged "according to that he hath done in his body," 2 Cor. 5:10; but it is certain that the things done in the body were imperfect. It is also contrary to reason, to say that actions, which were imperfect while they were performing and actually

existing, should be declared to be perfect when they were no more; and perfect not only in the estimation of God the judge, but also by, I know not what sanctification really perfecting them, when they had no further existence. No doubt habits, which are holy when first infused, are perfected by a further sanctification; but that actions, which were imperfect while they existed, should become perfect, after they have ceased to be, is inconceivable.

LXXIV. Seeing what we are taught in Scripture concerning the perfection of believers by a progressive sanctification, and the death of the body, regards their persons, about the perfection of which there is no dispute, it is erroneous to apply it to their antecedent works. That God refines those works like gold, purging away all their tin and dross, so as to be altogether pure in his eyes, is an unscriptural fancy. The passages, Is. 1:25, Zech. 13:9, Mal. 3:3, do not treat of works but of persons, nor speak of their absolute perfection, nor have a reference to the day of the last judgment, but relate to the condition of the present life, as will plainly appear to any one who will peruse them; and can, therefore, with no probability be wrested to this sense.

LXXV. Indeed, the good works of those who die (in the Lord) are said to follow them, Rev. 14:13; but they are such as they were performed here, and they follow, not in themselves, but in their fruits and effects; in so far as God, in regard of their good works, does good to the pious even after death. For this end it is not requisite that they be perfect; it is sufficient that they be performed in faith, and by the spirit of Christ. I do not remember that the Scripture says that good works shall rise with them. They who speak thus mean no more, at least they ought to mean no more by that phrase, but that, in the resurrection of the just, the pious shall rejoice in the gratuitous reward of their holiness. It is said, indeed, that he who "hath begun a

good work in believers, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. 1:6. But by a good work is there meant the communication of the grace of Christ, revealed in the Gospel, as appears from ver. 5, which God perfects in certain degrees, till the finishing hand is put to it at the last day. There is nothing in that passage relating to the perfection of our actions, which are already over and gone.

LXXVI. In the last place, if good works are there to appear perfect, there can be no reason why they should not be meritorious. For that is certainly meritorious which satisfies every demand of the law; if merit is to be ascribed to such a work, which when a man does, he is to live therein, according to the law of the covenant of works. It is not required to meritorious works in the sense now in debate, that they are not due and properly our own, that is, that they are done in our own strength without the grace of God. For the papists themselves readily acknowledged that there are no such meritorious works. But by those meritorious works which are the present subject of dispute, are understood such actions, on performing which one has a right to life. But the only, or at least the principal reason why our works are not meritorious, is what the catechism assigns, because they are imperfect and stained with sin.\*

LXXVII. Nor will the righteousness of the judgment of that day be in the least diminished, though the works of believers, by which they shall be judged, are imperfect. For they will not be mentioned as the causes of their right to claim the reward, to which perfection is requisite; but as effects and signs of grace, and of union with Christ, and of a living faith, and of justification by faith, and of a right to life, for which their unfeigned sincerity is sufficient. We, therefore, conclude, that the justification in the next world is not to be so very much distinguished from the justification in this world.



LXXVIII. As this doctrine of free justification, on account of the righteousness of Christ, apprehended by faith alone, is founded on clear testimonies of Scripture, so it proves itself to every pious conscience, by its most excellent uses and fruits.

LXXIX. 1st, It tends much to display the glory of God, whose most exalted perfections shine forth with an eminent lustre in this matter. It sets forth the infinite goodness of God, by which he was inclined to procure salvation freely for lost and miserable man, "To the praise of the glory of his grace," Eph. 1:6. It displays also the strictest justice, by which he would not forgive even the smallest offence, but on condition of the sufficient engagement or full satisfaction of the mediator, "That he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus," Rom. 3:26. It shows further the unsearchable wisdom of the Deity, which found out a way for the exercise of the most gracious act of mercy, without injury to his strictest justice and infallible truth, which threatened death to the sinner: justice demanded that the soul that sinned should die, Rom. 1:32. Truth had pronounced, "Cursed is he that continueth not in all things," Deut. 27:26. Goodness, in the mean time, was inclined to adjudge life to some sinners, but by no other way than what became the majesty of the most holy God. Here wisdom interposed, saying, "I will fully satisfy my goodness, and say to mine elect, 'I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake,' Isa. 43:25. Nor shall you, my justice and my truth, have any cause of complaint, because full satisfaction shall be made to you by a mediator." Hence the incredible philanthropy of the Lord Jesus shineth forth, who, though Lord of all, "was made subject to the law, not to the obedience of it only, but also to the curse; made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5:21.

LXXX. Ought not the pious soul who is deeply engaged in the devout meditation of these things, to break out into the praises of a justifying God, and sing with the church, Mic. 7:17, " 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by transgression?' O the purity of that holiness, which chose rather to punish the sins of the elect in his only begotten Son, than suffer them to go unpunished! O the abyss of his love to the world, for which he spared not his dearest Son, in order to spare sinners! O the depth of the riches of unsearchable wisdom, by which he exercises mercy towards the penitent guilty, without any stain to the honour of the most impartial Judge! O the treasures of love in Christ, whereby he became a curse for us, in order to deliver us therefrom." How becoming the justified soul, who is ready to dissolve in the sense of this love, with full exultation to sing a new song, a song of mutual return of love to a justifying God!

LXXXI. 2dly, This doctrine is likewise calculated for the humility of the sinner; from whom it cuts off all boasting, that the glory may remain unstained to God alone. "What hast thou, O man, to boast of? What wherewith thou canst stand before the tribunal of God? Good works? 'But all thy righteousnesses are as filthy rags,' Isa. 64:6. If thou leanest on them, they are, Pope Adrian VI. himself being judge, like the staff of a reed, which shall break, and pierce thy leaning hand. Perhaps thou wilt boast of thy faith, as if by the excellency of that thou canst please God. But even that is like a shaken and shattered reed, to which thou canst not safely trust; and whatever it be, it is the gift of God. Phil. 1:29: 'Thou hast received: why dost thou glory, as if thou hast not received?' 1 Cor. 4:7. Thou hast nothing of thine own to present to God. Indeed thou east a great deal of thine own: but it is either sin, or at east what is stained with sin; for which, if thou hast deserved any thing, it is only hell, or that which is worse

than hell, if any such thing can be. And canst thou, O most wretched creature, boast of any such vanity? Rom. 3:27."

LXXXII. 3dly, It conduces above all to the consolation of the afflicted soul, bewailing his sins with godly sorrow; whom we may address in this manner, from the very genius or nature of this doctrine: "Indeed, thy sins are both more numerous and greater than thou canst either conceive or express; but 'behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' Every thing in thee is infected with much sin; but thanks be to God, the cause of thy justification is not to be sought for in thee: 'We are justified freely by his grace.' Thou hast to do with a most righteous Judge, who will not clear the guilty: but behold Jesus, the surety, who, by a full expiation, has brought it to pass, that he can justify the ungodly, without any violation of his justice. Having such a leader and guardian, approach without fear to this Judge, being assured, that Jesus, thy patron or powerful friend, will so plead thy cause, that thou shalt not be cast. Canst thou not yet venture? What should hinder? Do thy sins, thy nakedness, and thy pollution, affright thee? But take shelter behind Christ; hide thyself in his wounds; wrap thyself in his death and blood; receive, with the hand of faith, the offered fine linen, the righteousness of the saints. Is thy faith itself so weak that thou art ashamed and grieved? But again, thanks be to God, that thou art not to be justified for thy faith, or for any worthiness that is in it; but if it is true and sincere, however weak, it is the band of thy union and communion with Christ. And being united to him, present thyself to God without fear; undauntedly also before the devil, and all who take pleasure to accuse thee. Humbly confess whatever sin may be objected against thee; but add, that they shall no doubt triumph in the judgment, when they shall make it appear that the merits and satisfaction of Christ are not sufficient to atone for and remove them, or thou not suffered to plead those merits of Christ in judgment. I challenge the

devil and all his accomplices: 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth,' &c. Dost thou believe these things? Thou dost, but with faltering and hesitation. Fight manfully against all the temptations of unbelief, and even now thou shalt receive that white stone and new name written thereon which none knoweth but he who received it; and the hidden manna, which having tasted, thou wilt enjoy thy life in patience, and death in desire." This is comfort indeed: they, who build not on these foundations, are certainly, like Job's friends, miserable comforters. It is memorable, what the reverend Voetius, Disput. ii. p. 754, relates of John Frederick, duke of Saxony, who acquainted Luther that George duke of Saxony comforted his son John in the agonies of death, with the righteousness of faith, desiring him to look to Christ alone, and disclaim his own merits and the invocation of saints. And when the wife of the aforesaid John (who was sister to Philip Landgrave of Hesse) asked duke George why these things were not thus publicly taught, he made answer, "O daughter, such things are to be said to the dying only." O the force of truth, breaking forth even from the breasts of those who are set against it.

LXXXIII. 4thly, This doctrine is exceedingly powerful to promote godliness. 1. Because it lays, as a foundation, a submissive humility of soul, presuming nothing of itself, without which there is no holiness that deserves the name. 2. Because we teach that no faith justifies but what is the fruitful parent of good works. And can any one really believe, that he who is himself a most unworthy sinner, who is, without any merit of his own, received into the favour of God, delivered from the expectation of hell, and favoured with the hope of a blessed eternity, shall not be in every respect, and by all means, be obedient to so benevolent a Lord? Can he believe that God the Father spared not his own Son, that he might spare this slave: that God the Son bore so many things grievous to mention, and hard to suffer,

that he might procure pardon for the guilty, and a right to life: that God, the Holy Ghost, should enter his heart, as the messenger and earnest of so great a happiness, and love those so ardently who had no love for him? Can he then provoke the Father by disobedience? Trample on the Son by his wickedness, and profane his blood? Can he grieve the Spirit, the comforter? Indeed, such a one knows not what faith is, who imagines that it consists in a strong persuasion, destitute of good works. 3dly, Because it teacheth a sublime pitch of holiness, by which a person, laying aside every mercenary affection, can love God and virtue for itself, direct every thing to the glory of God alone, and securely trust him with the free reward of his works. Here now we appeal to the conscience of our adversaries, which is the safer way, whether that which we point out to our people, or what they would have theirs to walk in? We both agree, that without good works none shall be saved. Now whether is it safer to say, do good works with a presumption of merit, or do them with all diligence and energy of soul, because you cannot be saved without them; yet, having done all, own thyself to be an unprofitable servant, and look for heaven as a free gift? If works merit nothing, doubtless he offends God who boasts of his merits. But if they deserve any thing, yet I, though performing them diligently, dare not arrogate any thing to myself from merit: of what detriment, pray, will that humility be? We conclude that a doctrine, whose advantages are so many and so considerable, cannot but be true.

## **Chapter VI: Of Spiritual Peace**

I. RECONCILIATION stands in close connexion with justification, the consummation of which is a spiritual, holy, and blessed peace: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. 5:1.

II. This peace is "a mutual concord between God and the sinner, who is justified by faith; so that the heart of God is carried out towards man, and, in like manner, the heart of man towards God, by a delightful inclination of friendship. God thus addresses the church, when reconciled to him: "Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land be any more termed desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi bah (my delight), and thy land, Beulah (married): for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married," Isa. 62:4. And the church, in her turn, replies, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength," Ps. 18:1.

III. This blessed peace pre-supposes that unhappy and destructive war, which the inconsiderate sinner had raised between God and himself; concerning which the prophet says, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you," Isa. 59:2. By sin man lost the favour and friendship of God, and incurred his righteous hatred and displeasure, which "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," Rom. 1:18; and is threatened by the curse of the law, Deut. 27:26; felt in the conscience, which trembles at every voice of God, Gen. 3:8, and is the bitter source of all that anguish which is the forerunner of eternal destruction. And on the other hand, man is carried out to a dreadful hatred of God, Rom. 1:30. After sin became his delight, he became an enemy to all holiness, and consequently a most bitter enemy to God, because He is the most unspotted holiness. Whatever wisdom he has, it is enmity against God, Rom. 8:7. He hath joined himself to the devil, under whose banner he fights against God. "He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty: he runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers," Job 15:25, 26. If any thing is propounded to him out of the law of God, he the more boldly acts contrary to it, Rom. 7:8. Whenever he feels the

effects of divine indignation, he, with the most reproachful words, reviles the most holy justice of God, Is. 8:21. And almost goes so far as to wish, that either there was no God, or that he did not punish sin. The first of these tends to destroy the existence of God; the other his holiness, without which (horrid to think!) he would be a wicked spirit. But seeing "God is greater than man," Job 33:12, this war cannot but prove fatal to man. "God is wise in heart and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?" Job 9:4.

IV. In this very grievous war, all hopes of an uniting peace seem to be entirely cut off. For it cannot be devised in what manner, either God can be reconciled to man, or man to God. The holiness of God does not suffer him to allow the sinner communion with himself, lest he should seem to be like him, Ps. 50:21. The justice of God demands punishment, Rom. 1:32. The truth of God threatens death, Gen. 3:3. And it is on no account to be expected, that God would make a peace in favour of man, who despises him, to the prejudice of any of his own perfections: for "he cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. 2:13. And man, on his part, is no less averse to peace; for though he will find nothing but ruin in this war, and all manner of good in this peace, yet he is so infatuated, so much an enemy to himself, that he madly hardens himself to his own destruction. Being subjected to the power of sin and Satan, he freely and fully serveth them. These blind the eyes of his understanding, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto him, 2 Cor. 4:4; and so lead him captive at their will, that he neither can nor dare think in what manner he may recover himself out of the snare of the devil, and be reconciled to God, 2 Tim. 2:26.

V. But God, whose understanding there is no searching out, Isa. 40:28, was able to find out a method and way whereby all these

difficulties could be surmounted. For he hath a Son, who, being given to be the mediator and surety, made satisfaction to his holiness, justice, and veracity, and thus on his part God is reconciled, 2 Cor. 5:19. Moreover, that Son has a Spirit, far more powerful than the infernal spirit, who, by his turning and inclining efficacy, can expel the hatred of God out of our hearts, and shed abroad the love of God there; to whose guidance and influence if man gives himself up, that blessed peace will be soon procured of which we are now to treat.

VI. Hence it appears, that the rise and beginning of this peace is from God: accordingly it is called "the peace of God;" and God himself, "the God of peace," Phil. 4:7, 9. The Father hath established "the counsel of peace," Zech. 6:13. And therefore it is ascribed to him, as the original of it, that having made peace, he reconciled all things unto himself, Col. 1:20. The Son hath executed that counsel of peace; and, by shedding his precious blood, removed all obstructions, and actually obtained for the elect the grace and favour of his Father, which was long before designed for them. He therefore calls this his own peace; and declares that he gives it, John 14:27; nay, he is called "the Prince of peace", Isa. 9:5, and "King of peace," prefigured by Melchizedek, Heb. 7:2; and "the peace," Mich. 5:5; and "our peace," Eph. 2:14. The Holy Spirit, the messenger of so great a happiness, like Noah's dove with an olive-branch, flies, at the appointed moment of grace, to the elect, and effectually offers and brings home to them the peace decreed by the Father, and purchased by Christ: hence peace is said to be by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14:17.

VII. The fountain of this peace, and the first cause of it, can be nothing but the infinite mercy and philanthropy of God: and this is the reason, why the apostles, in their Epistles, wishing peace to believers, usually set grace before it, as the spring of that peace. Which is the more evident, because as there was nothing in man that



could invite God to make peace with him ("for, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," Rom. 5:10), so in like manner, God, who is all-sufficient to himself for all happiness, could gain nothing by this peace. The whole advantage thereof redounds to man: the glory of so great a work is due to God alone.

VIII. Man ought surely not to hear the least report of this peace, without being directly carried with the greatest vigour of soul, to obtain it for himself. And though he should be obliged to go to the utmost end of the earth, for instruction in the manner how to procure it, he should undertake the journey with the utmost diligence and readiness. But behold the incredible benevolence of the Deity, who not only in his word sufficiently instructs men in the excellency of so great a blessing, but also fully informs them in what manner they may enjoy it, by putting the word of reconciliation in the mouth of his servants, 2 Cor. 5:19. "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord," Isa. 57:19. But this is not all, for he also is the first who sends ambassadors to men to offer peace. Would it not have been inestimable grace, if, after many and solicitous entreaties, he had suffered himself to be at length prevailed upon by us, as Herod, who with difficulty granted peace to the Tyrians after their most earnest requests? See Acts 12:20. But he not only freely offers, but also solicits and affectionately entreats and beseeches men by his ambassadors, that they would not refuse to be reconciled to him, 2 Cor. 5:20. And though his tremendous majesty has been often scornfully despised, and though he has for a long time addressed himself to their ears by his most alluring invitations, and all to no purpose; yet he does not desist, but again and again presses, over and over urges that affair of peace, and compels with so much

gentleness the most obstinate to partake of his friendship and love, Luke 14:23. Such is the infinite goodness of the Supreme Being.

IX. But he does not stop here; for as the word of grace, though preached in the most pathetic manner, actually draws none without the secret operation of the Spirit of God, so he graciously bestows that Spirit on man; who at length opens the eyes of the understanding, that wretched men may see how bad their case is while they continue in that dreadful hostility, and on the other hand what superabundant happiness the peace so often tendered will bring along with it. He tames the wild and savage hearts, and subdues them to the obedience of God and of Christ. First he strikes them to the heart with a view of their sins, and with some sense of divine indignation; upon this, he presents them with some distant hope of obtaining peace; after this, he declares with greater earnestness the loving-kindness of God to the trembling soul; and then excites the greatest longings after the enjoyment of it, and thus, by little and little, he disposes the inmost powers of the soul, to hate whatever is contrary to God, to declare war against his enemies, submissively to entreat his favour, cheerfully to accept of it when actually offered, and give themselves up, without reserve, to be governed by the Spirit, who procures so great a happiness for them. Thus at length the man is translated into such a state, that, all enmity being on both sides blotted out, God lays aside the remembrance of past offences, appears no more as an enemy to him, but, being reconciled, deals with him as a friend: the man, likewise, being grieved for having formerly offended God, now endeavours with all care to please him. And these are the beginnings of the spiritual peace with God.

X. But these are beginnings only; for, no sooner is the man in covenant with God, but he becomes the confederate and the friend of

that great King, James. 2:23, John 15:14, 15. The gates of the heavenly palace are set open to him; and free access in the Spirit is granted him at all times, by night or by day. He may behold the King of glory nigh at hand, pour out all the oppressing grievances of his soul into his bosom, confidently make known his stammering requests for a fuller measure of grace; while God, instead of forbidding him, does even, by his condescending goodness, give him encouragement to attempt it. Cant. 1:14. He may often be earnest for the same things, and with a friendly and agreeable importunity wrestle with God (with reverence of his majesty be it spoken!), who condescends, as it were, to solace himself with us, till we have in a manner forced the blessings we stand in need of out of his hands. Moses is an example of this, Exod. 33:12, and following verses.

XI. God also himself sometimes descends from heaven by his grace, and graciously visits the soul whom he loves, and who is filled with love for him, John 14:23; speaks to his heart, Hos. 2:14; displays the riches of his supereminent goodness, and "what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Eph. 1:18. He comforts him when dejected, and wipes away his tears with his own hand, Rev. 7:17, and puts them as a precious liquor into his bottle, Ps. 57:8. He gives "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Isa. 61:3. "Kisses" the soul "with the kisses of his mouth," Cant. 1:2; and if, at any time, she is sick of love, "his left hand is under her head, and his right hand doth embrace her," Cant. 2:6. In fine, whatever good he is possessed of (and what is there he is not?), he liberally communicates all in that time, order, and degree which his wisdom knows to be most expedient. And what will he not give, who gives himself, as "an exceeding great reward?" Gen. 15:1.

XII. Who can doubt, but they who taste this incredible sweetness of divine love do infinitely prefer the friendship of God to all other things? Hence when they gratefully acknowledge the things they have been so graciously favoured with, beyond what they deserve, they carefully avoid every thing unworthy of such friendship, and which may mar such a propense favour of the Deity by any coldness. Whereas they most readily perform what they know to be acceptable to God; and then at length it is they seem to themselves to live, when in the whole tenour of their lives they approve themselves to God. And seeing they know that love deserves love; and that true friendship consists in this, that friends choose and refuse the same things; they stir up all their powers to make returns of love, and submit their will to that of God, and give it up to be swallowed up, as it were, in the divine will, and thus at length, with the King of angels, they bear the sweet yoke of love. "The love of God begets the love of the soul, and attracts it to himself. God loves, in order to be loved. When he loves, he desires nothing more than to be loved again, knowing those to be happy in love who love him. The soul that loves, renounces all its affections, and minds nothing but love, that it may give love for love. And when it has poured out itself wholly in love, what is that to the constant flow of the fountain?" So Augustine piously speaks, Manual c. 20.

XIII. During these transactions in the soul, and while the daily contest of mutual friendship between it and God is renewed, it cannot but enjoy the most delightful peace of conscience. When the conscience discovers the favourable sentence of God concerning man, and intimates the same to itself, and at the same time bears testimony to his unfeigned piety towards God, it spreads a surprising serenity and calm over the whole soul. Consequently, the peace of God necessarily brings with it peace of conscience, and much confidence in God, Rom. 14:7; Eph. 3:12. The soul nowhere reposes

itself more comfortably, than in that bed of tranquillity, and in the bosom of Jesus, its loveing, lovely spouse, singing at that time to its adversaries; "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." Ps. 4:3, 8. "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." Ps. 3:5.

XIV. There is also a friendship with all the other friends of God; not only with holy men, who mutually help and comfort one another by communion of prayers and other duties of brotherly love, Ps. 16:3, and who, without envy, mutually congratulate each other on the gifts conferred on every one in particular, by their common Friend; but also with the blessed angels, who were formerly enemies to man when he was the enemy of God, and kept our first parents from all access to paradise, Gen. 3:24, but now minister to man with the greatest complacency and readiness, Heb. 1:14—"encamp round about him," Ps. 34:7—"keep him in all his ways, bear him up in their hands, lest he dash his foot against a stone," Ps. 91:11, 12, till at the command of God they convey the reconciled soul to the blessed choir of the inhabitants of heaven. And though at present they do not usually appear in a visible form, yet they familiarly surround and guard the friends of God, avert very many evils, procure good, and acknowledge them for their fellow-servants, Rev. 19:10. On this account the apostle testifies, that believers, even in this world, are come to myriads [an innumerable company] of angels, Heb. 12:22. And can mortals have any thing more glorious, than, next to God, to be admitted into the bonds of fellowship and friendship with these most noble spirits whom the apostle, Col. 1:16, calls thrones, dominions, principalities and powers.

XV. I add, that, peace being made with God, none of the creatures can exercise any acts of hostility against believers, to the prejudice of

their salvation. According to the promise, Job 5:23, 24: "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace." Which is repeated, Hos. 2:18: "And 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." The plain meaning of these passages seems to be this: rocks and stones shall be soft to the friends of God, they shall not hurt their feet; they shall not be molested by any rocky dismal places, where either robbers usually lie in wait, or in which the beasts of the field are harboured. For God so restrains them that they are not able to hurt them, but are compelled to submit and be subservient to hurt them; the ravenous fowls themselves and poisonous reptiles, and they who are emblematically represented by these, as well men as malignant spirits, shall have no power to do them harm, Ps. 91:13, Mark 16:18. It is true, they cannot have any amicable peace with the enemies of God, the world and the devil; and it is certain that they are then most grievously harassed by their persecutions when they cultivate peace with God; nevertheless, all the attempts of hell and the world against them are in vain: "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: thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee; they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought." Isa. 41:11, 12: add Isa. 54:14-17.

XVI. And the efforts of their enemies are not only in vain, but without their knowledge and against their will they promote their salvation, and the devils are constrained to bring the friends of God nearer to heaven, from which they themselves shall be for ever banished. Thus the chief master of pride became by his buffetings a

teacher of humility to Paul, 2 Cor. 12:7. So true it is, "that all things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. 8:28.

XVII. Abundance of all salutary good things flows from this peace, which the Psalmist, Ps. 144:13, describes to the life. And though it often happens, that the friends of God, as to the outward man, drag a life, which scarce deserves that name, amidst poverty, contempt and diseases; yet since the least good thing they enjoy in all these calamities, is bestowed upon them by the special love of God, is the most noble fruit of the cross of Christ, and gives them to taste the infinite goodness of the Deity, therefore, "that little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked," Ps. 37:16. For he has it from, and with the favour of God, who is the inexhausted fountain of all desirable things. Nay, the very evils with which they are overwhelmed turn to their advantage, for they serve to humble them, to build them up in faith, patience, and self-denial, and wean them from the vanities of the world and carry them towards heaven. Hence in their very adversities they find matter of joy and glorying, Rom. 5:3, John. 1:2.

XVIII. From what we have said the excellency of this peace is easily concluded, which the apostle, Phil. 4:7, describes "as passing all understanding;" it is therefore worthy to be sought after with the utmost diligence, kept when obtained, and renewed when interrupted.

XIX. God indeed graciously tenders it in the word of the gospel; but not as if the sinner is to do nothing before he enjoys the inward sense of it. For this purpose it is necessary, 1st. That he confess that, on account of his very many and very heinous offences, he is altogether unworthy of the peace and friendship of God, and seriously grieve for them, Luke 15:21, Ps. 32:5, 6, Prov. 28:13. 2dly, With sorrow observe

and declare that he can do nothing that is able to appease the justly provoked Deity, Mic. 6:6, 7; but put all his hopes in the blood of Christ alone, the application of which depends on the good pleasure of the Lord himself. 3dly, Give himself up humbly to God, thus thinking with himself: "Since without peace with God there is nothing but ruin, I will approach to the throne of grace, humbly begging for pardon and mercy; if he is pleased to reach out his golden sceptre of grace to me, I will eternally praise him; but if in anger he turns away his face, I will confess his justice, and proclaim it worthy of all praise though it should be rigid to my destruction, and say, I will die at his feet without repining." See Esth. 4:16. This absolute resignation and surrender, cannot but be acceptable to God, and salutary to man. 4thly, That he add to his devout prayers, reformation of life; sincerely keep his heart and actions from what he knows to be contrary to God; declare war against God's enemies; will love and do what becomes the friends of God. In this way let him "draw nigh to God, and God will draw nigh to him," James. 4:8.

XX. No less diligent care is necessary to preserve the peace thus obtained, and daily to increase in intimacy with the divine favour and friendship. For this there is required: 1st. A daily exciting of his love to God by devout meditation, both on the divine perfections, on account of which he is most highly amiable in himself, and on his infinite love, wherewith he first loved us, and the inestimable benefits flowing from that infinite love. For God cannot possibly suffer himself to be exceeded in love by man. John 14:21: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." 2dly. Frequent intercourse with God; so that worldly cares being for a little laid aside, and a pleasant retirement sought out, you may, by frequent and repeated exercises of reading, meditation, and prayer, with a modest boldness, obtain familiarity with God, Job 22:21: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and



be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." It was a fine advice of Jerome to Eustachius, de Custodia Virginitatis: "Let the privacy of thy chamber always keep thee; let thy bridegroom always delight himself within thee; when thou prayest, thou speakest to thy bridegroom; when thou readest, he speaketh to thee: let foolish virgins wander abroad, be thou within with thy bridegroom; because, if thou shuttest thy door, and according to the precept of the gospel, prayest to thy Father in secret, he will come and knock, and say: Behold, I stand at the door and knock." 3dly, The practice of inoffensive and strict godliness, with an attentive watchfulness against the sins that so easily beset us. These things flow from the love of God, and without them none can have familiar converse with him. John 14:23: "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." The exercise of Christian virtues or graces, is that chain of the spouse with which the heart of the Lord is ravished, Cant. 4:9. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever," Isa. 32:7, compare Isa. 64:5. 4thly, Because in this imperfect state of our sanctification it cannot altogether be avoided, but at times the godly may fall, and turn a little either to the right hand or to the left; they are, in that case, presently to rise from their fall and return to their God, unless they would greatly impair their familiarity with him. When he calls us, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings;" we are directly to answer: "Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God," Jer. 3:22. 5thly. It also contributes very much to preserve the sense of the divine friendship, if in all things you commit yourself to the conduct of his Providence, always approving his will towards thee, to be just, holy, wise, and good; and saying with Job 34:12, "Yea, surely God will not do wickedly." In whatever befalls thee give him thanks; and, denying all thy own desires, give up thy will to be swallowed up in his. "Be careful for

nothing—and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:6, 7.

XXI. Although it is not possible that any who is admitted into peace and friendship with God should altogether fall from it (for the covenant of divine peace, which stands firmer than the mountains and hills, shall never be removed, Isa. 54:10), yet the sense and relish thereof are often interrupted. For, 1st, God doth not always show his pleasant countenance to his friends; sometimes he hides himself, Isa. 8:17; standeth afar off, Ps. 10:1; admits them not into familiarity with him, nor fills them with the abundance of his consolations; he hears not when they call, Ps. 22:2, 3; as if he regarded them not. 2dly, Nay, he thrusts them from him with a kind of contempt, as if a father had disdainfully spit in the face of his daughter, Numbers. 12:14; and "is angry against their prayer," Psalm. 80:4. 3dly. He terrifies them with many sorrows; not only by hiding his face, without which there is no joy, Ps. 30:7, but by his fierce anger going over them, Ps. 88:16–17, Isa. 57:17. 4thly. He seems to deal with them as an adversary, and holdeth them for his enemies, and pursues them, though become like the dry stubble, writes bitter things against them, putteth their feet in the stocks, and setteth a print upon the heels of their feet, Job 13:24–27, 5thly. Gives them up sometimes to be vexed and buffeted by the devil, Job 2:6. After that the light of the divine countenance is set, immediately the beasts of the forest come forth against the soul, the young lions roaring after their prey. Ps. 104:20, 21.

XXII. The reasons of this conduct of God towards his friends are various: some respect God; others, the friends of God. God thus deals with his people: 1st. In order to show, that he is the sovereign Lord, and most free dispenser of his own grace, Matt. 20:15. Thus himself owns that he afflicted chap. Job 2:3, without cause. Not that Job had done nothing to deserve these, or even greater afflictions, but that

God had found nothing in him for which to treat him with greater severity than his other friends. This was an act of mere sovereignty, that the works of God should be made manifest in him, as is said in a similar case, John 9:3. 2ndly. Likewise to show the difference between heaven and earth. For here he will have all things subject to various vicissitudes, and accustom his people to the alternate changes of a rough winter and an agreeable spring; because in heaven they are to exult in a constant uninterrupted joy in his friendship and love, Rev. 7:17. 3rdly. That he may the more endear unto them the sweetness of his grace, which, when tasted at intervals, especially after a draught of a cup of bitterness, must be most delicious to the pious soul. 4thly. That he may give a demonstration of the exceeding greatness of his power and goodness, when he preserves the soul in its spiritual life, though oppressed with so many sorrows, restores him to his former vigour, makes him triumph over Satan, and gives it the more abundant comfort, the more distant it was from all the sense of his favour. This is "to show wonders to the dead," Ps. 88:10; and to revive the wounded spirit, which Solomon, Prov. 18:14, declares exceeds any created power.

XXIII. The reasons with respect to the friends of God are two-fold; for either they regard the time past, or the time future. As to the time past, God usually restrains the beams of his favour, 1st, When his friends have been guilty of some grievous sin; for in that case his holiness is concerned, that they feel the rod of his paternal displeasure, and not be suffered then to have familiarity with him, Ps. 51:9, 11, 12. "If they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction, then he showeth them their work," Job 36:8, 9; and really, as it were, calls out to them: "Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God," Jer. 2:19. "But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy," Is. 63:10. 2ndly, When, abusing the

goodness of God, they worship his majesty with less reverence, and begin to flag in the exercise of devotion. 3rdly, When carnal confidence and vain glorying have seized upon them. Ps. 30:6, 7. "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved—thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." 4thly, When the offer of divine grace is unworthily entertained through a kind of indolence and drowsiness, Cant. 5:3–5.

XXIV. The following reasons refer to the time to come, 1st, That God may try and exercise their faith, 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; which ought to be in exercise, even when nothing is to be seen; and their love, by which they are bound to love God for himself, though they are not sensible, that they themselves are loved; and the sincerity of their worship, which is not to proceed from a mere relish of the reward, but from an acknowledgment of the divine dignity or authority; and the constancy of their religion, by which they must keep close to God, even when he appears as a stranger to them. 2dly, That he may stir them up to the practice of prayer, in which Heman was fervent at such a time, Ps. 88:1, "O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night, before thee;" see also ver. 9 and 13. 3dly, That he may instruct and bring his people to true wisdom; for this distress gives excellent understanding: "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience," Rom. 5:3, 4. Heman was early introduced into this school, and such hard exercises were put upon him, that he was almost distracted; yet at length he made so great a proficiency, as to be reckoned among the wisest in his day, 1 Kings 4:31. 4thly, That they may, for the future, more carefully preserve the divine favour, when they have once recovered it. When the spouse at last found her beloved, who had withdrawn himself, "she held him," kept him fast, "and would not let him go, until she had brought him into her mother's house, into the chamber of her that conceived her," Cant. 3:4.

XXV. But what course is the soul now to take, in order to renew the interrupted friendship of God? For we are not to think that God will be angry with his people for ever, "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made," says the Lord, Isa. 57:16; see Isa. 54:8. And, 1st, We are, in order to this, carefully to inquire into the cause of this estrangement, that it may be removed; for generally we have provoked God to deal thus with us, either by some sin, or by our carelessness. Lament. 3:40: "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." And should it be, that a person cannot find out the cause of that estrangement (which is rarely the case with the serious and careful inquirer), he is then to consult the word of God: and by repeated prayer say, "Do not condemn me; show me wherefore thou contendest with me," Job 10:2. 2dly, He is to renew his faith and repentance; promise God, as by a solemn oath, that he will, for the future, improve his grace to better purpose, and keep it with greater care, if he may again enjoy it. Nay, he is to protest, and that sincerely, that he will serve God, because God is worthy to be served, and because it is his glory to serve him, though he should never again, which God forbid, taste the sweetness of divine favour. Nothing can be done by man more acceptable to God. 3dly, He is to be instant in continual prayer, pleading, with the greatest earnestness possible, that he may not be cast away from his presence, but that God would have mercy upon him, according to his loving-kindness, and restore again the joy of his salvation, Ps. 51:1, 11, 12. The Holy Spirit himself has dictated forms of prayer, Ps. 88, 102. 4thly, He is patiently to wait for the hour in which God may be pleased to receive him into favour, not omitting his duty to God in the meantime. Lam. 3:26: "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

XXVI. To him who acts in this manner will come, at length will come, the blessed day, when God will change the bitter water of tears into the most delightful wine of consolation; receive and entertain his friend with the greater familiarity, the longer and the more mournfully he had been deprived of the delightful sense of his love, and abundantly repay all with interest. Believers have generally experienced this; whose triumphant songs we remember to have read and heard, no less than their mournful complaints. And it scarce ever happens otherwise: but should there be no appearance of being restored on earth to the sweet sense of divine love, all however is reserved to be fully bestowed upon them in heaven. The abundance of which will render the former dry and parched state extremely sweet and delightful, beyond what can be either expressed or conceived.

XXVII. From what has been said, it is evident, this spiritual peace differs very much from carnal security. For, 1st, The latter arises from a man's mere ignorance of his state, into which he never made any serious inquiry, or, in forming a judgment about it, he deceived himself by false reasoning. But the former rests upon a sure foundation, and is preceded by sorrow for sin, a sense of misery, a hunger and thirst after grace, diligent self-examination, and a sense of his union with Christ. 2dly, The latter makes a man well pleased with, and to have an inward joy on account of, that imaginary good, though in other respects he neglects God; whereas the former ravishes the soul with admiration of the divine goodness, and makes him confess himself unworthy of so great an honour and favour. 3dly, By the latter men are swallowed up in pleasure, are dull and heavy in that which is good, and unhappily give themselves up to an irregular life, thinking "they shall have peace, though they walk in the imagination of their heart," Deut. 29:19. But the former keeps the heart in safety, Phil. 4:7, that they may be in the fear of God

continually; and this is what neither can be obtained, nor preserved, without a strict exercise of godliness. 4thly, Though the latter falsely imagines that it is the object of God's love, yet it is destitute of all true love to God. But the former consists in mutual friendship. The same Abraham who, James. 2:23, is called the friend, is, Isa. 41:8, called אהבי, the lover, of God.

XXVIII. As spiritual peace is the consequence of justification, in was a blessing of the Old, as well as it is of the New Testament, as we shall show in its proper place; and consequently the ancient fathers were also partakers of it, who, by an unfeigned faith, believed that they were reconciled to God, on account of the surety, the Messiah; that the enmity caused by sin was removed: they had a most delightful and experimental sense of this, and often gloried in the Lord. We, indeed, cannot deny that peace was eminently promised to the New Testament church, Ps. 72:3; Isa. 9:5, 6; Hag. 2:10; Zech. 9:10. But we are not to understand this of peace and friendship with God absolutely, which is a benefit of the covenant of grace, and not of the New Testament alone: but, 1st, Of the more abundant sense of the divine favour, with respect to believers in general. 2dly, Of the agreement between the believing Israelites with the Gentiles, "having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," Eph. 2:15. 3rdly, Of the peace of God granted likewise to the Gentiles. This is expressly mentioned, Zech. 9:10.

## **Chapter VII: Of Adoption**

I. WHOM God has admitted into a state of peace and friendship with himself, he has also adopted for his sons; that they may enjoy the benefits both of grace and glory, not only by the favour of friendship, but also by a right of inheritance. There is no friendship more familiar than that between a father and his children; or rather, that natural affection between these exceeds, in familiarity and sweetness, every thing that can be signified by the name of friendship. There is not any one word, any one similitude borrowed from human affairs, that can sufficiently express or represent this most happy band of love; which can hardly be explained by a great number of metaphors heaped together. To express tranquillity of conscience, the Scripture calls it peace; to show us the pleasantness of familiarity, it calls it friendship; and, when it illustrates a right to the inheritance, it speaks of adoption; which is to be the subject of this Chapter.

II. We assert, that believers are the sons of God. The apostle John proclaims it, saying: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Beloved, now are we the sons of God," 1 Epist. 3:1, 2. This is God's covenant with them: "And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," 2 Cor. 6:18.

III. But they are not so only on this account, that God, as Creator, gave them being and life, Mal. 2:10; and, as Preserver, supports and provides them with all necessaries, Acts 17:25, 28.

IV. Neither are they called the sons of God on account of any external prerogative only; whether political, as magistrates are called "the children of the Most High," Ps. 82:6; or ecclesiastical, in respect of an external foederal communion; according to which some are called "the sons of God," Gen. 6:2, and "the children of the kingdom," Matt.



8:12; in this sense also the Lord commanded Pharaoh to be told concerning Israel, "Israel is my son, even my first-born," Exod. 4:22. For this regarded that national covenant which God entered into with the children of Israel, according to which he preserved them above all other nations, and heaped many blessings upon them, both of a corporeal and spiritual kind, which he did not vouchsafe to other people, Deut. 7:6. He called them his sons, because he managed their concerns with as much solicitous care as any father could possibly do those of his own children. Deut. 32:10, 11. Nay, he called them his first-born, not only because he loved them far better than other people, beyond the measure of common providence, "showing his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel," Ps. 147:19, as the first-born had a double portion in the paternal inheritance, Deut. 21:17; but also because he had appointed them to have a kind of dominion over other people: "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren," &c. Gen. 27:29. Though these words were, indeed, spoken to Jacob, yet they were to be chiefly verified in his posterity: of which we have illustrious evidences in David's time, 2 Sam. 8.

V. But however excellent these things were, yet they are very far below that dignity for which believers are called the sons of God; for most of those who were called by the name of Israel and the first-born, were such, with whom "God was not well pleased," and never were promoted to the inheritance of the land of Canaan, much less the heavenly inheritance, but "were overthrown in the wilderness," 1 Cor. 10:5. That very people, to whom Moses said, "Is not Jehovah thy father? hath he not magnified [established] thee?" are in the same breath called "a foolish people and unwise," Deut. 32:6. Nay, there are of "the children of the kingdom," who "shall be cast out into utter darkness," Matt. 8:12: for that national covenant, without any thing

else, did not bestow saving grace, nor a right to possess the heavenly inheritance.

VI. The elect and believers are therefore in a far more eminent sense the sons of God: wherein John observed a love, never enough to be commended, 1 John 3:1. Angels, indeed, have the glorious appellation of sons of God, Job 38:7; with which the Lord honours them, not only because he formed them, but also because he imprinted upon them the image and resemblance of his own holiness, Job 4:18, and because, as children of the family, they familiarly converse with God in his house, which is heaven, Job 1:6: in fine, because something of the dignity and authority of God is vouchsafed unto them, as we have just said, that magistrates are also called "the children of the Most High." These are "thrones, dominions, principalities, powers," Col. 1:16: nay, they are also called אלהים, Gods, Ps. 97:7, compared with Heb. 1:6.

VII. In almost the same sense, Adam seems also to be called "the son of God," Luke 3:38: for seeing that name, which has the article του set before it, denotes father in all the foregoing verses, as the Syriac, in place of του, always puts בר; no reason can be assigned, why here, altering the phrase, we should translate, with Beza, "who was of God," in which he has followed the Syriac, who translated דמן אלהא, "who is of God." For no doubt can be made, that Adam may be fitly called the son of God, the reasons of which Philo elegantly explains in the passage adduced by the illustrious Grotius on Luke 3:38; in the manner Josephus has also written, that men "were born of God himself:" namely, 1. God created Adam. 2. In his own image. 3. Eminently loved him. 4. Gave him dominion over the creatures. For these reasons he is deservedly called the son of God, though God had not yet declared him heir of his peculiar blessings. Nor does he seem without reason to mention Adam as the son of God. For this tends, as

Grotius has learnedly observed, to raise our mind, by this scale, to the belief of the birth of Christ. For he who from the earth, without a father, could produce man, was able in like manner to make Christ to be born of a virgin without a father.

VIII. But Adam did not long maintain that dignity, on account of which he was called the son of God; for neglecting holiness, and, losing that excellency in which he was created, and suffering himself to be overcome by the devil, he became the servant of Satan, by whom he was foiled, 2 Pet. 2:19; and, at the same time, "a child of wrath," Eph. 2:3, together with all his posterity. But what the elect have lost in Adam, they recover in Christ; namely, the same, nay, a far more excellent degree of rank among the children. For let the disparity between Christ and believers be ever so great, yet "he is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. 2:11.

IX. But the elect obtain this degree of children of God several ways. First, they become the sons of God by a new and spiritual generation, descending from above. John speaks of this, chap. 1:12, 13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This illustrious passage, which is variously explained by interpreters, requires some particular consideration.

X. The apostle describes this generation, or birth, whereby the elect become the sons of God, both negatively and positively. He denies it to be "of blood," that is, natural or ordinary, like that whereby the children come to be partakers of flesh and blood, Heb. 2:14, and which is judged to be of blood. Neither is it "of the will of the flesh," that is, from any carnal desire of having children by any means; hence it is, that one, by giving too much indulgence to the corrupt

reasoning of the flesh, makes use of means for that end which God never prescribed: something like this we may observe in Sarah, when, from a desire of having children, she gave Hagar to Abraham. Nor in fine, is it "of the will of man," who, for certain reasons of his own, loves one above others, and so appoints him to the principal part of the inheritance: just as this was the will of Isaac with respect to Esau. Nothing human can give being to this spiritual generation, which is only "of God," who decreed it from eternity, and actually regenerates at the appointed time.

XI. To those who are thus born of God, he "gave power to become the sons of God." Εξουσία here denotes right and power. Rev. 22:14, "That they may have εξουσία, right, to the tree of life." But it may seem strange, how they who are born of God may have a right to become the sons of God, seeing, by their very nativity from God, they are already become his children. To remove this difficulty, three things chiefly have been observed by very learned men. 1st, As γενεσθαι, to become, is the second aorist, it may fitly be taken for the preterperfect; to this effect: He gave them that power, that right, that dignity, that they might become the sons of God, and enjoy the privileges which are suitable to that condition. 2dly, Γενεσθαι τοιοῦτον denotes, in Scripture phrase, "to be such a one," or "to behave as becomes such a one." Thus it is used, Matt. 5:45: "Ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν, that ye may be the children of your father," that you may behave yourselves as becomes the children of God. See 1 Thess. 2:7, 10. 3dly, It might also be referred to that perfect filial state, which shall be conjoined with "the redemption of our body," and which the apostle, Rom. 8:23, enjoins us to "wait for:" and so the meaning may be, that God has granted those who are born of him a right to the heavenly inheritance, and that unparalleled honour by which, both in soul and body, they shall rejoice, as children of the family, in the palace of their Father; in such a

manner, that it shall not be in the power of any creature to strip, diminish, or cut them off from that dignity. The reader may adopt which exposition he prefers. We are not a little pleased with the last; but wherein this new birth consists, we have explained at large, Chap. VI., of this Book.

XII. And this is the first foundation of that glorious state. Secondly, We become the children of God by marriage with the Lord Jesus; for when we become his spouse, then we pass with him into his father's family, and the Father calls us by the endearing name of "daughter," Ps. 45:10: and the Lord Jesus calls her also his sister, whom he names his "spouse," Cant. 5:1, 2. God had provided by his law, that if "a man betroth his maid-servant unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters," Exod. 21:9: in the same manner he is pleased to deal with elect souls. By nature, they were as maid-servants to sin and Satan; lay exposed in the open field, and were a loathing to all. However, he graciously offers them a marriage with his only-begotten Son; they, by faith, accept the proposal, almost in the same manner that Abigail did, when she was invited to marry David, 1 Sam. 25:41: and thus, by the same act by which they become the spouse of Christ, they also become "the daughters of the living God," 2 Cor. 6:18.

XIII. Thirdly, by adoption, which is an economical act of God, whereby they, who are regenerated after his image, and betrothed by faith to his only-begotten Son, are received into his family, and obtain the right and privileges of children, and the inheritance itself, by an immutable testament. They are "of the household of God," Eph. 2:19; and "if children, then heirs," Rom. 8:17; for the communication of the image of God alone does not give a right to the heavenly inheritance. This appears with respect to Adam in this state of innocence, who, indeed, was in the way of acquiring a right, but

had not yet obtained it. The alone foundation of that right is the perfect and constant obedience, either of man himself, or of his surety. Christ, therefore, having appeared for us, fulfilled all righteousness, and "was appointed heir of all things," Heb. 1:2. The elect, being regenerated, receive and claim to themselves, by faith, Christ and all his benefits, even his perfect righteousness; and, being thus adopted by the Father, and become the brethren of Christ, they are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," Rom. 8:17. And in this sense principally we think John speaks: "To them which are born of God, he gave power to become the sons of God," as explained above, sect. xi.

XIV. For the better understanding of what has been said, we are now to observe, that the Spirit of God, in order to explain these mysteries, uses metaphors borrowed from human things. But these metaphors are to be so adjusted, as one may not destroy, but rather supply the defects of, the other. It would seem in other respects absurd, that the soul which is born of God, should be adopted for a daughter, and joined in marriage to the only-begotten Son of God. Yet the Scripture has wisely ordered matters, when it declares all these things concerning believers. In order to express the original of spiritual life, and of the image of God in man, it says that he was born of God; to set forth our most delightful union with Christ, which is full of mutual affection, it calls it marriage; and to show the ground and firmness of our inheritance, it declares that we are adopted in Christ. And it is on account of each of these things, that we may be called the children of God.

XV. And this adoption is a most precious blessing of the covenant of grace. But it was very different, according to the different economies or dispensations of that covenant. It is, however, not to be doubted, that believers, at all times, were the children of God. Elihu, who was

not of the people of Israel, called God "his father," Job 34:36\*. To understand this in that diminutive sense in which the heathen called Jupiter the Father of gods and men, is not suitable to the illustrious faith and piety of a man who was commended by God himself. A celebrated expositor has said well on this place: "God is called Father, as Mal. 1:6, 'A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour?' And Isa. 64:8. 'But now, O Lord, thou art our Father.' By this appellation he sets forth the affection of God in this respect, namely, his paternal care; his own affection in requesting his brotherly love; the end of the trial, and a filial reverence and confidence."

XVI. All we have thus far said of the grounds of this glorious state, is even applicable to the Old Testament believers. They had likewise a new life by regeneration, and were created again after the image of God. They were, in like manner, betrothed to Christ, Hos. 2:19, 20: "Their Maker was their husband," Isa. 54:5. And ver. 1, the church of the Old Testament is expressly said to be married: nor were they without their adoption; "who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption," Rom. 9:4. And to conclude, "were heirs of all," Gal. 4:1: heirs of the grace of God in this life, Ps. 16:5; and of the glory of God in the life eternal, Ps. 17:15.

XVII. Though the condition of believers under the Old Testament was very illustrious, if compared with that of unbelievers, who continue children of wrath, and heirs of the treasures of divine indignation; yet all that splendour comparatively speaking was eclipsed to an almost incredible degree, before the august majesty of believers under the New Testament, as the light of the stars before that of the sun: as will appear by comparing them together.

XVIII. Believers under the Old Testament were, indeed, sons; but sons who were subject to their father, and to the severity and discipline of tutors, "who bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and laid them on their shoulders;" nevertheless, their father said with respect to these tutors: "All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do," Matt. 23:3, 4; namely, as long as they commanded nothing that was contrary to, or inconsistent with, the will of the father. They were obliged to be subject to the weak and beggarly elements of the world, and, like children, to be engaged all the day in the trifling ceremonies of the Mosaic institution, which were, in a manner, the playthings of the church. They were taught like infants, without being left to their own choice, not knowing how to conduct themselves, or what was fit for them; "touch not, taste not," Col. 2:21.

XIX. Besides, they were not admitted to that familiarity with their father, as to penetrate into the mysteries of his will. "The mighty God did then hide himself," Isa. 45:15. Their tutors, indeed, at times, acquainted them with some things relating to God's purpose of grace, but that only rarely, and in mysterious expressions, and under enigmatical or parabolical representations. And though many prophets and righteous men desired to see and hear many things, yet they were not gratified, Matt. 13:17.

XX. None of them was allowed to approach the holy of holies, which was, as it were, the secret place of their father: nay, they had not access to the temple itself, which was the father's house, but by means of the altar, sacrifices, and priests, without which, if they took upon them to approach to God, instead of a blessing, which they sought after, they incurred their father's displeasure. Neither was it lawful for them to omit the constant morning and evening sacrifice, Exod. 26:28, 42.



XXI. Their inheritance was the land of Canaan, a pledge, indeed, of the heavenly inheritance, but somewhat obscure, and such as they were commanded to be in some measure subjected to, and which the godly themselves were sometimes obliged to be destitute of, when forced into banishment. However they were to have such a tender regard to this land, that, when banished from their dear country, they were, in their prayers, to turn their faces thitherward, nor were they to pay their vows to heaven, without directing their eyes to that country, 1 Kings 8:48. Dan. 6:11, In all this, there was a notable subjection to this pledge.

XXII. The case of believers under the New Testament, is quite different. For after our elder brother, having taken upon him human nature, had visited this lower world, and freely undergone a state of various servitude for us, he brought us into true liberty, John 8:36, removed the tutors, blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, which was contrary to us, declared us to be dead with himself, set free from the elements of the world, so as they never after should have any dominion over us, Col. 2:16, 20. He would no longer have us subject to these minute observances, but called us to a reasonable service, Rom. 12:1, and, having broken and removed that troublesome yoke which was laid on the jaws of the ancients, Hos. 11:4, laid his own upon us, which is easy and light, Matt. 11:30.

XXIII. He introduced us into the father's secret counsels, and, sucking the breasts of our mother, taught us the things he so much desired the spouse should be taught, Cant. 8:2: declared to us what he had seen in the bosom of the Father, nay, and even the Father himself, John 1:18, and in himself presented the Father to our view, so that we have no longer any occasion to say, "Show us the Father," John 16:9. He brought along with him those times, of which Jeremiah prophesied, chap. 31:34. He abundantly poured out upon

us "the unction from the holy one, which teacheth all things," 1 John 2:20, 27. In a word, he does not now account us as servants; "for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but he hath called us friends: for all things that he hath heard of his Father, he hath made known unto us," John 15:15.

XXIV. He has also obtained for us a free access to the Father, having "consecrated for us a new and living way," in which we may walk "in full assurance of faith," Heb. 10:20, 22. By his death, the veil of the inmost sanctuary was rent, and all believers are made a royal priesthood, 1 Peter. 2:9; none is excluded the holy of holies; and though the Father still sits on a throne of majesty, yet it is at the same time a throne of grace, to which we are invited to approach with boldness, Heb. 4:6, without sacrifice, without priests, trusting only in the alone offering of Jesus our High Priest, "whereby he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified," Heb. 10:14: and this is "that better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God," Heb. 7:19.

XXV. Nor hath he burdened us with any subjection to a typical inheritance; but hath called us directly to an inheritance of spiritual and heavenly good things, and "appointed unto us a kingdom, as his Father hath appointed unto him," Luke 22:29. There is now no corner of the earth which we should desire, as more holy and more acceptable to God than another; for, "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," Ps. 24:1. Nor does he disdain an altar in the midst of Egypt, Isa. 19:19. And thus "he hath made us partakers of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises," Heb. 8:6.

XXVI. On account of those excellent prerogatives, believers under the New Testament are eminently and emphatically called "the sons of God," 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," namely, by a much better right and title than before. To this the apostle has

undoubtedly an eye, Gal. 4:4–7: "But when the fulness of the time was come;" namely, that appointed time, till which the children were to be under tutors, ver. 2, "God sent forth his Son, to redeem them that were under the law," setting them free from the infantile use of ceremonies; "and that we might receive the adoption," not only that adoption whereby we are distinguished from the children of the devil and of wrath, but also that whereby we excel infants, not much differing from servants: "wherefore thou art no more a servant," as formerly, "but a son." That this is Paul's meaning, the whole connexion of the discourse and the scope of the writer evince. For the whole tends to show, that believers under the New Testament are set free from, nor ought they any longer to be oppressed with, the yoke of the old servitude, which the false judaising teachers, with the utmost endeavours, struggled to lay on their necks.

XXVII. Certainly the condition of the sons of God is most excellent. If David put such a value on being called the son-in-law of such a king as Saul, 1 Sam. 18:23, how highly should we esteem it, to be called the sons of the living God! 1st, How unparalleled is that royalty, by which we derive the origin of our pedigree, not from any earthly prince or monarch, but from the King of heaven! 2. What can be more glorious than that divine nature we obtain by a new generation? 2 Pet. 1:4. God himself glories in his sons, as his peculiar property; nay, calls them "the first-fruits of his increase," Jer. 2:3, who may be to him "in praise, and in name, and in honour," Deut. 26:19. Almost as parents who glory before others in those of their children who are remarkable for their beauty. 3. What can be more desirable than that marriage-relation to the only-begotten Son of God, than which thought itself can conceive nothing more honourable, more advantageous, and, in a word, more glorious? "He is white and ruddy, the chiefest (standard-bearer) among ten thousand," Cant. 5:10. When David, though not yet come to the

crown, sent his men to Abigail, to procure her in marriage, that prudent widow "bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord," 1 Sam. 25:41. And what may our soul say, whenever it reflects that, having broke off the former marriage with Nabal, which was not a state of marriage, but of adultery, it is joined to the heavenly David in a marriage-covenant that cannot be broken? 4, and lastly, Nothing can be more excellent, than that inheritance, which, in right of adoption, the sons of God obtain, and which is bequeathed to them by an irrevocable testament.

XXVIII. It will not be unprofitable to insist a little on this point, and, having opened the testament of our Father, to inquire what, and how considerable the goods, and under what stipulations he has bequeathed them to us. By the testament we mean, the last and immutable will of God, recorded in the writings of the Holy Scripture, and ratified by the death and blood of Jesus, whereby he hath declared his chosen and believing people to be his heirs of the whole inheritance. I say the testament is the will of God, or that "counsel of his will," Eph. 1:11, by which he has appointed both the heirs and the inheritance, and of which our Saviour was speaking, Luke 12:32, εὐδοκησεν ὁ Πατήρ, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:" I add, it is the last and irrevocable will of the Father; for as this is required to a valid testament, Gal. 3:15, so it is not deficient in this respect: "wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation," Heb. 6:17, 18. By this his will, he appointed or settled both the inheritance as well of grace as of glory, of which we shall speak just now; and also the heirs, not indefinitely, whosoever believes; but by name, this and the other persons, "whose names are written in

heaven," Luke 10:20, and "graven upon the palms of God's hands," Isa. 49:16. This his will he has expressed in the sacred writings of both instruments, which for that reason are also called "testament," 2 Cor. 3:14. In fine, that nothing might be wanting, the whole is confirmed and sealed by the blood and death of the Lord Jesus, Heb. 9:16, 17. In order to understand this, we must observe, that God the Father did, by testament, give and bequeath that honour to his Son Jesus Christ, to be the head of the elect in glory, and have a right to bestow upon them all his goods; Ps. 2:8. Jesus again does, by the power made over to him by the Father, dispose by testament of his goods to be communicated to the elect: "and I διατιοεμαι, appoint by testament, unto you a kingdom, as may Father hath, διέθετό, appointed by testament, unto me," Luke 22:29. So that this making of the testament is, indeed, originally from the Father, yet immediately from Christ the mediator; who died, not to vacate or annul, by his death, the inheritance; for, "he is alive for ever more," Rev. 1:18; but to seal the promises, and acquire for his people a right to the inheritance. Hence the blood which he shed is called "the blood of the testament," Zach. 9:11, Matt. 26:28.

XXIX. The goods or blessings bequeathed by this testament, are of all others the most excellent: as became, 1st, The riches and liberal bounty of our heavenly Father, from whom we may expect so extraordinary goods or blessings, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive any like them, 1 Cor. 2:9. Concerning this the Psalmist deservedly sings, "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Ps. 31:19. 2dly, The glory of our elder brother, whose joint heirs we are, Rom. 8:17, and who glories in his heritage, Ps. 16:6. 3dly, As became that dignity to which God hath raised us, having adopted us for his sons! for to them he gives "great and

precious promises," 2 Pet. 1:4. Did we minutely prosecute these points, we should write a large volume: at present we will reduce the whole to three principal heads.

XXX. The first is the possession of the whole world: for, it was promised to Abraham, and his seed, that they should be "heirs of the world," Rom. 4:13. On which place let us hear the commentary of Ludovicus de Dieu: "As sin, by separating us from God, and subjecting us to his curse, banished and disinherited us, so that we have no spiritual right or dominion, as became sons of God, over the meanest creature; so, on the other hand, when God becomes our God, and we his blessed people, we are restored as sons, to the right and dominion of all our paternal inheritance: and seeing there is nothing besides God and the world, we are made heirs of the world, both the earthly, the heavenly; the present, and the world to come." When God introduced Adam into the habitable earth, he constituted him lord of the world, and gave him a right and claim to use the rest of the creatures for his own advantage, Gen. 1:28. But Adam, by his sin, lost that right; so that neither himself nor any of his posterity, while in a state of sin, have any true and spiritual right, which can stand in the court of heaven, to touch any creature. But Christ has made a new purchase of it, for himself and his brethren. Ps. 8:6. Whence, 1 Cor. 3:21, "all things are yours;" and among these all things, the world is mentioned, ver. 22, and whatever is in it, "things present and things to come. For," adds the apostle, ver. 23, "ye are Christ's."

XXXI. Now this possession of the world consists in these following things: 1st, That every son of God does possess so much of the good things of this world, as the wisdom of his heavenly Father has ordained, to be so sufficient for the support of his animal life, that his spiritual may suffer no detriment, and that he truly possess it in such

a manner, as, in the use and enjoyment thereof, he may taste the love of his Father bestowing that upon him as an earnest of a far better good, and of his elder brother who became poor that his people might be rich, 2 Cor. 8:9. This love of God the Father and of Christ, when added to the least crumb of bread or drop of cold water, makes these preferable in the highest degree to all the most exquisite dainties of the rich of this world: "a little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked," Ps. 37:16. 2dly, That all the creatures ought to serve them as steps, by which to ascend to the Creator. For in all of them they view, as in a bright mirror, his adorable perfections, Ps. 104:24, and in that meditation they exult, Ps. 92:4, 5. Above all, they perceive in them the love of God towards them. When they view the sun, the moon, the stars, they rejoice, that their Father has lighted up so many tapers for them, by the light of which they may perform what becomes the sons of God: nor do they less admire this, than if every one had his own sun, or his own moon, shining upon him. Neither do they exceed the bounds of decency, Ps. 8:3, 4, when they think, that the world remains in its present state on their account, and that the wicked are indebted to them for this: for the holy seed is the substance (support) of the world, Isa. 6:13. 3dly, That all the creatures, and the whole government of God about them, "may work together for their good," Rom. 8:28. This is so extensive, that both angels and devils are obliged to this service: as to angels, are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. 1:14. Ps. 34:7. and Ps. 91:11. And with respect to that infernal spirit, the teacher of arrogance, was he not constrained, by his buffetings, in spite of himself, and acting from a different view, to teach Paul humility? 2 Cor. 12:7. 4thly, If this world, which is subjected to vanity because of sin, shall not suffice them; from its ashes, when perished, God is to form another; to make "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Pet. 3:13. There is none of these things, which may

not be included in that general promise of the inheritance of the world.

XXXII. The second good thing in this testament is a spiritual kingdom: "I appoint unto you a kingdom," Luke 22:29. To which, even the most despicable of the children of God in other respects, even man-servants and maid-servants, are called; "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?" James. 2:5. To this belong, 1. The excellency of the sons of God, whereby they surpass all other men, Prov. 12:26. 2. Victory over sin, and the unruly lusts of the flesh, to which kings themselves and the most dreaded tyrants are subjects and enslaved, Rom. 6:14, 18. 3. The bruising of Satan under their feet, Rom. 16:20. 4. Triumph over a whole conquered world, for, notwithstanding its rage, they shall be for ever saved, 1 John 5:4, 5. 5. Inestimable riches of spiritual gifts, Ps. 45:9, even in the midst of poverty, Rev. 2:9. 6. Holy peace of soul and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14:17. All these begin here in grace, and shall be consummated hereafter in glory.

XXXIII. The third benefit is God himself, Rom. 8:17. "Heirs of God." Here is a mutual inheritance; believers are God's portion, and God is their portion, for these are made reciprocal, Jer. 10:16: "The portion of Jacob is the former of all things, and Israel is the rod (tribe) of his inheritance." In this possession of God, his children find, 1. Protection against every evil, Ps. 91:2: "I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress." Why? "He is my God, in whom I will trust." See Ps. 27:1, 2. Isa. 43:2, 3. 2. Communication of every good, Ps. 36:7. for, first, all that infinity of perfections which are in God himself, will appear glorious and admirable in the children of God, and be enjoyed by them to complete their consummate happiness. And what can the soul desire beyond that infinity? Ps. 73:25.



Secondly, What will not God give those, to whom he gives himself? 1 Cor. 3:22, 23.

XXXIV. There are no proper stipulations in this testament, if considered in its whole extent, together with all its promises; for it consists of absolute and mere promises, which depend on no condition, to be performed in our own strength. Yet Divine Providence hath so disposed every particular in it, as to have a certain and wise order among themselves, and the practice\* of the former benefits, which are promised, is to pave the way for the possession of further blessings. We have at large treated of this, chap. i., sect. x., seq. of this book. To which I now add the words of Ames, in his *Coronis ad Collectionem Hagicensem*, Art. v. c. 2: "The whole of the disposition hath the nature of a testament, as considered simply, either in the whole or its parts; but if the benefits bequeathed are compared together, then one bears to the other the relation, as it were, of a condition."

XXXV. In the same books, therefore, in which the testament is contained, God commanded, that whoever would take comfort from the promised inheritance, should, 1st, Love, search into, meditate upon, and keep in his heart the writings exhibiting the testament, as no contemptible part of his inheritance, Deut. 32:4; nay, esteem them beyond his necessary food, Job 23:12, Deut. 6:6. 2dly, Highly value, as it deserves, the promised inheritance, 1. That he hunger and thirst after it, and be satisfied with nothing short of it, Matt. 5:6. 2. Reckon all other things, in comparison thereof, as dross and dung, Phil. 3:8. Most readily part with every thing, in order to procure this pearl of inestimable value, Matt. 13:46. 3. Glorify God for the greatness of his love, Ps. 31:19. 4. Diligently keep what he has received, Rev. 2:25, 3:11. 3dly, So walk, as becometh his condition, and the expectation of so great an inheritance, 1 Thess. 2:12, 1 John

3:3. 4thly, Be ready to impart to his brethren what he has received from his Father, both in temporals and spirituals, Rom. 12:13 1 Thess. 2:8. And endeavour that others also may be brought to enter on the same inheritance with himself, Acts 26:29. For none suffers any loss for the numbers that partake with him: he has rather an additional pleasure, his joy being greatly heightened from the abundance of love.

## **CHAPTER VIII: Of the Spirit of Adoption**

I. HAVING thus explained the nature of adoption, as far as our design required, we are now carefully to inquire what the Spirit of adoption is: and this is the Holy Spirit, operating those things in the elect which are suitable to and becoming the sons of God, who love God, and are beloved by him.

II. This spirit differs from the spirit of bondage in this, that the spirit of bondage represents God as an austere master and a tremendous judge; hence it is that they, who are actuated by this spirit, in so far as they act thereby, perform the commands of their master from dread and terror. But the Spirit of adoption discovers God to the believing soul, as a kind and indulgent Father, and, by giving him assurance of the love of God, and sweetly cherishing the hope of the future inheritance, makes him, with alacrity and generous emotions of a filial reverence, willingly obey God, as an affectionate parent.

III. Moreover, seeing all believers were sons of God in every period of time; we may with propriety assert, that the Spirit of adoption was

granted to them all in their measure and degree. For certainly what Paul says, Gal. 4:6. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts," and Rom. 8:9, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," is true of all periods. All who are regenerated, are born of the Spirit, John 3:5, 6, 8. From the Spirit proceedeth faith, Gal. 5:22, by which they obtained ἐξουσία, a right, to become the sons of God. And if they had any degree of love, righteousness, peace, holiness, and the like, without which true faith cannot subsist, they could have them from no other but the Spirit. And as the Spirit they had was, doubtless, such as became their state; and they themselves were the adopted sons of God; why then should we not call it the Spirit of adoption?

IV. We more than once read in the Old Testament of that Spirit, as bestowed on believers at that time: such was that generous spirit in Caleb, which made him follow God fully, Numbers 14:24. Such that, concerning whom Nehemiah said, chap. 9:20, "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them;" which we are to understand of the elect among the Israelites, in that perverse generation. Such was that, which David prayed might be given him, Ps. 143:10, "Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness;" and Ps. 51:10–12, "Renew a right spirit within me; take not thy Holy Spirit from me; uphold me with thy free spirit." In short, as God said to Israel of old, "surely they are my people, children that will not lie:" so also, "he put his holy Spirit within them," Isa. 63:8, 11.

V. Moreover, the operations of this Spirit may be considered either absolutely in themselves, or in relation to the distinct economies of the several periods. What the Spirit of adoption operates indiscriminately in the sons of God, are principally these things. As God has, ever since the very first sin of our first parents, proposed his gracious covenant, the summary whereof was, in all ages, handed

down by the instruction of the patriarchs; it was a part of the office of the Spirit of adoption to stir up, and lead by the hand, the minds of believers to the knowledge, meditation, and apprehending of that saving grace; to intimate to the soul the things externally handed down by the tradition of the oracles, vouchsafed to the patriarchs and prophets, and thus impart some relish of divine love, first more sparingly, afterwards more abundantly. By this means, that horror or dread is banished, which the thunders of the law, a consciousness of guilt, and the just apprehension of divine vengeance had begot in the soul.

VI. While the Spirit does this, he by the same work inflames the hearts of the children of God, with returns of love; whereby they yield obedience to God, not any longer from a fear of punishment, but from a pure and sincere affection, and a generous reverence for their most beloved Father, and that with willingness, and alacrity, as becomes children of such an extraction; with a denial of their own will, and a diligent care to do nothing unworthy of that glorious condition.

VII. Besides this, the Spirit likewise presents to their view the promised inheritance, and confirms them in the expectation of it, by the word and sacraments, whose moral efficacy, as it is called, he accompanies with a supernatural, internal, and operative virtue; and gives them the enjoyment of it in hope: nay, sometimes he raises them on high, so that, by removing the veil, and drawing up the curtain, he in some measure, gives them a view of those good things, which are laid up for them in the heavenly country, whereby, with gladness and exultation, they "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," Rom. 5:2.

VIII. These three things are the natural consequences of adoption. 1st, a persuasion of the greatest love of the adopter. 2dly, An obedience of love, agreeably to the laws of the family, into which the adopted is received, and to the nature and will of the new parent. 3dly, An expectation of the inheritance. The Spirit, therefore, who produces these things in the elect, is justly called the Spirit of adoption.

IX. The ancient believers had all these things; though God, in his wisdom, appointed degrees and limits, as the times required. Their soul exulted in the Lord, Ps. 4:7: they delighted themselves in the faith, hope, sense, and relish of divine love, Ps. 31:7, Ps. 51:14, Ps. 36:7–9, Ps. 63:5, [אלוהים the familiar converse] the secret of God was in (or upon) their tabernacles." Job 29:4. They also loved God as their Father, Ps. 18:1, Ps. 116:1, and from love yielded obedience to him, Ps. 119:10, with readiness and delight in his commandments, Ps. 119:9, 11, 14, 16. They comforted themselves in adversity with the unfailing expectation of a blessed inheritance, Ps. 17:15. Which, though at a distance, yet God presented to their view, and gave them initial prelibations of, Ps. 31:19. As all these things follow upon adoption, and ought to be ascribed to the Spirit, they make it evident that the Spirit of adoption is, by no means, to be reckoned a peculiar benefit of the New Testament, as if the Old Testament believers were destitute of it; Paul himself expressly asserts, that "the same Spirit of faith," by which we speak (which, certainly, is the Spirit of adoption) "was also in the fathers," 2 Cor. 4:13.

X. However, it is not to be denied, that those operations of this free and noble Spirit, were of old, more rare and sparing than afterwards, and mixed with much terror. The legal economy was then in its vigour: as the covenant of grace was revealed more obscurely, and in much enigmatical darkness, so likewise it was not intimated to the

conscience with such evidence of demonstration: a hand-writing, in the meantime, was also required to be renewed by the blood of daily sacrifices, as by so many subscriptions; a thirst after better promises was raised, though not yet to be quenched: by these means, those noble operations of the Spirit were so clouded in most, that, in comparison of the joyful abundance under the New Testament, the Spirit is said, John 7:39, not to have been under the Old. This is not to be understood in such a restricted sense, as to make us imagine, that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, poured out on the day of Pentecost, are here only intended. For something is promised which is common to all believers in Christ, and which is said not to have been, before Christ was glorified. But what is that? It is the full and illustrious exhibition of the Spirit, which Christ deferred, till he took solemn possession of his kingdom, and which appeared in those visible gifts, as in so many mirrors, which is also to be extended to the gracious fruits of adoption: as Calvin has well observed on this place.

XI. And indeed, we often find in Scripture, that the Holy Spirit is so promised to the New Testament, as if there was no such thing under the Old, Isa. 35:6, 7, and 44:3, Ezek. 34:26, 27, Joel 2:28, Zech. 14:8, compared with Ezek. 47:1. All which things belong to the times of the Messiah's kingdom, now manifested in the world. To this also we are to refer what John the Baptist said of Christ, Matt. 3:11, that he would baptize the children of Abraham with the Holy Ghost and with fire. For seeing the Baptist speaks this not to the apostles, but to the Jews that flocked to hear him; that miraculous effusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, which our Lord himself calls "a baptism," seems not to be exclusively denoted, but also that sanctifying grace of the Spirit, which had, and exerted a fiery efficacy on the hearts of believers, by penetrating, illuminating, setting on fire, purging, separating the dross from the pure gold, or the precious

from the vile, and by elevating and transforming the object inflamed into its own nature: and with this passage it seems we should by all means compare what is said, 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." Moreover, that extraordinary work which was wrought in the apostles contained the first-fruits and earnest of the fulfilment of the general promises concerning the Spirit, as appears from the application of the prophecy of Joel, and Peter's explication of it, Acts 2:28, 39. Chrysostom therefore observes well, Homil. 11, that John, by this expression, signified the abundance, the vehemence, and the irresistibility of grace.

XII. As these things were promised, so they were also fulfilled under the New Testament. For the Spirit of God then produced a clearer manifestation of the covenant of grace, a higher sense of divine love, a more delightful freedom of the kingdom of God, a more confident boldness, more abundant consolations, a stronger assurance, more spiritual holiness, and who can pretend to recite all? This will appear, if we make a just comparison of heroes with heroes, and of more ordinary believers with others of the same kind; according to the prophecy of Zech. 12:8. See Tit. 3:5, 6.

XIII. Meanwhile, we are to observe, that, in the beginning of the New Testament, God distributed much more plentifully to believers, than afterwards. Certainly, nothing can be spoken with greater pomp of language, than what Paul often declared concerning himself and other believers in his day. For, as to consolation, and tranquillity of soul, what can be more excellent, than what he assured the Philippians, even peace which passeth all understanding, Phil. 4:7. Agreeable to this is what Peter writes: that they who love Christ and

believe in him, rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious, full of glory. 1 Pet. 1:8. And what John also says, that perfect love, such as is produced by the gospel, casteth out all fear, 1 John 4:18. And really it seems evident, that in a peace so noble and serene, in a joy almost so incredible, there can be no room for any unruly passion, fear, or trembling.

XIV. And then, the apostle gives such excellent encomiums of their holiness, as may be judged very far to transcend the measure of our days: when he thus declares concerning himself, that he was crucified with Christ, that he did no longer live, but Christ lived in him; as if his spirit and life, like that of an inferior order, were swallowed up in the more illustrious spirit and life of Christ, as the sun in the heavens extinguishes the light of the stars; and all the life he lived flowed from no other principle, but the faith and love of the Son of God. Gal. 2:20. Nay, he openly declares his contempt of all the things which other men so highly value, and that he prizes Christ alone; and that, forgetting the things which are behind, he presses forwards with a large pace and a most speedy course to perfection, Phil. 3:7, 8, 14. Who of us will deny that he does not come far short of these high attainments?

XV. The apostle every where openly professed an incredible hope and assurance of the future inheritance: and he undoubtedly describes his assurance, towards the close of the eighth chapter to the Romans, in such magnificent language, that nothing more emphatically strong can be conceived. Let that animated exultation in the Lord be attentively read, and we shall see, that it sets forth, in an extraordinary pomp of words, the immense abundance of the Spirit inhabiting his noble breast, and the sparkling flames of the love of God kindling in his heart. He also clearly displays his hope, 2 Cor. 5:1, 2. 2 Tim. 4:8. Phil. 1:23, whereby he was so far from fearing



death, at the mention of which most people are ready to tremble for fear, that, on the contrary, he embraced it with open arms, and longed to be dissolved, that he might have the more full enjoyment of Christ.

XVI. Indeed, if any one shall compare these magnificent expressions, with what is observed among believers at this day, he will be obliged to own, that they come far short of that eminence and excellence; they are so mean, poor, and fading in comparison of these unparalleled expressions, which with astonishment we admire in the apostle. But doubtless the Spirit bloweth when, how, and where he listeth: it does not become us to set bounds to him. In the beginning of the gospel God showed what he can do, and what on the other hand he will do when he shall restore life, as it were, from the dead, Rom. 11:15. 'Εξεχ' ἔξεχ Σώ φίλ ἥλιε· "arise, arise, thou charming friendly sun."

XVII. To this Spirit the apostle principally ascribes two effects, Rom. 8:15, 16; the former of which is, the making us cry, "Abba, Father;" the latter, that, "together with our Spirit, itself beareth witness, that we are the children of God:" and as these two things contain the highest consolation, it will not be improper to explain them with all the accuracy we are able.

XVIII. The Holy Spirit is never idle, where he is; there the heart "רחש טוב דבר טוב brings forth a good speech," Ps. 45:1. The Spirit is that mystical new wine, which "makes the virgins cheerful (eloquent)," Zech. 9:17; "and causeth the lips of those that are asleep to speak," Cant. 7:9. They who have the Spirit of faith, "as they believe, so they speak," 2 Cor. 4:13.

XIX. Nor do they only speak, muttering like the ventriloquists, who speak from the belly, or like those who scarce speak out what they

have conceived in their mind, fear having restrained their faltering tongue; but they confidently cry out with a loud voice. Nor is it in vain that the apostle, both here and Gal. 4:6, uses the term crying. It denotes that boldness, freedom, and courage with which we are commanded to approach the throne of grace, Heb. 4:16, and present our requests there.

XX. But what does he principally teach us to cry? "Abba, Father!" Servants and hand-maids of old were not suffered to call their masters by the name of Father, as the very learned Selden, de Successionibus, c. 4 has shown from the law of the Hebrews. But the servants and hand-maids of God, both under the Old and New Testament, are allowed this privilege; as was shown above from Isa. 63:16, Job 34:36. To which I now add Isa. 64:1, and Jer. 3:4. When Christ commanded his disciples to pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven," he used an expression well known to, and very common among, the Jews. Thus Maimonides in Tephilloth: "אבינו שבשמים, our Father, who art in heaven, so deal with us as thou hast promised by the prophets."

XXI. And the doubling of words, "Abba, Father!" both here and in the Epistle to the Galatians, is very emphatical. The former being of Hebrew, and the latter of a Greek original. Did not the apostle, by this, intend to teach us, that, under the influence of the Spirit, God was now to be called Father by believers of whatever nation, or in whatever language? For the reason of this repetition seems here to be different from that in Mark 14:36; where we have a summary of Christ's prayers, and the latter may be imagined to be added by Mark, as an explanation of the former. For Christ spoke not in Greek, as Paul wrote in that language. The observation of the celebrated Lightfoot, on Mark 14:36, is worth mentioning: that though אבי Abbi may, indeed, denote, not only a natural, but also a civil father, as an

elder, a lord, or master, a teacher, a magistrate; yet אבא Abba, only a natural or adopting father. For the proof of this he gives us a great number of examples. Thus, therefore, Christ calls God Abba in the strongest sense; and believers also, according to their condition.

XXII. Unless we rather say, that this repetition of the word is an evidence that the appellation was pleasant and familiar. For ἄπα Appa, which differs not much from Abba, was not in that sense unknown even to the Greeks. Thus Callimachus, in his hymn to Diana, brings her in as a little girl playing in the bosom and arms of her father Jupiter, and calling him in a familiar and enticing manner Appa. Hence also Abare, which in Ausonius stands for ἀδελφιζειν, and signifies to address one in a kind manner, as one brother does another. See what Ludov. Capellus has learnedly collected to this purpose, in his Spicilegium on Mark 14:36.

XXIII. Nor does this appellation consist in bare words, as if we flattered God only with our lips: but if we are really partakers of adoption, it shows that there is faith, and the full assurance of it, in the heart. And, by making a profession of it, we honour God, and celebrate the glory of his grace, whereby he hath raised us, the most unworthy of mortals, to such a high degree of honour. We also profess, that we pray in faith, and expect from him, what children ought to expect from a most indulgent father. And at the same time, by calling him father we bind ourselves to an obedience, a reverence, and a love becoming such a father. And therefore, when the apostle says, that by the Spirit, we cry Abba, Father! he thereby teacheth us, that this Spirit is the author of faith, boldness, confession, piety, and sincere obedience.

XXIV. But let us now consider the other effect of the Spirit, which, according to the apostle, consists in this that he "beareth witness

with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Here we have two witnesses, agreeing in one testimony: the one of a lower rank, our spirit; the other of the highest, the Spirit of adoption, who is the Spirit of the Son of God, Gal. 4:6. Both may be well qualified for this, but each in his own measure, degree, and order.

XXV. By our spirit is understood, the mind and conscience of every believer, whereby he may be conscious of what passes in his own heart. In this sense the apostle said, "what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" 1 Cor. 2:11. It is otherwise called "the heart of man, condemning or acquitting him." 1 John 3:20, 21; or "συνειδησις συμμαρτυροῦσα, conscience joining to bear witness, and thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another," Rom. 2:15.

XXVI. The testimony of our spirit consists in an exact representation of our state by certain marks, and a full assurance of faith, which is followed by a most quiet tranquillity of soul, and a joy unspeakable. For as the spirit which beareth witness, and the man to whom he does so, are in effect all one, no other testimony needs here be thought of, than the composure of the soul which, by infallible marks, is conscious of its own happiness. Accordingly our apostle, when he would tell us he was fully persuaded that he spoke in sincerity, affirms that his "conscience bears him witness," Rom. 9:1: whose witness can be no other than a representation of the truth plainly perceived by it.

XXVII. It is, indeed, very requisite, that this testimony, which is given of an affair of the greatest moment, be solid and well-grounded. We are therefore above all to attend to two things. First, it is necessary, that our spirit be very exactly instructed from the word of God, about the marks, by which a child of God may be known and

distinguished. The word of God alone is the silver, seven times purified and refined. By this rule we are both to think and speak of the things that relate to salvation: all the dictates of our spirit are to be tried by it, neither must we admit any thing as worthy of credit in the matters of salvation, which does not, in the exactest manner, agree therewith. Then, a most careful self-examination should be added, whether we have the marks which God has given of his children in the Scripture.

XXVIII. The marks of the children of God are of two kinds. First, a certain good habit or disposition of soul, with the consistent tenour of a pious life: then, peculiar acts of God towards his beloved people, which he vouchsafes only to those whom he loves as a father.

XXIX. The marks of the former kind are such as these: 1st. The impression and expression of the divine image, with a holy conformity to our father and elder brother. For what is more natural, than for a son to resemble his father, and one brother be like another? As, therefore, the natural Son of God is "the brightness of the Father's glory," Heb. 1:3; it is fit that we, in our order and measure, be so too. As corrupt Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image," Gen. 5:3; so likewise when God begets children, he forms them in his own likeness, "in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. 4:24. And, indeed, this likeness of God is gradually perfected by familiar intercourse with him; till, having obtained that adoption, of which the apostle speaks Rom. 8:23, we are become perfectly like him, 1 John 3:2.

XXX. 2dly, A new life, that is worthy of God, and the effect of the Spirit of adoption, who is "the Spirit of life," Rom. 8:2. As is the spirit of the creatures, so is their life. The natural man has not a more noble spirit, nor a more excellent principle of life than his soul:

consequently he only lives an animal or soul-like life. But as the children of God are endowed with that free spirit, Ps. 51:12, who is the Spirit of Christ, Gal. 4:6, so in their measure they live, as Christ formerly lived, imitating his example and pattern to the utmost of their power; that what Christ declared in the highest degree of himself, may in some measure be applied to them, "the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doth the Son likewise," John 5:19. Paul's exhortation is excellent, Eph. 5:1, "Be ye followers of God as dear children."

XXXI. 3dly, A true and sincere love of God. Even nature teacheth this. For what genuine son doth not love his father? This law is not only written, but born with us. And this love arises, partly from the consideration of the most amiable perfections of God, which his children are admitted to contemplate in a familiar way, seeing the king in his beauty, Isa. 33:17, Ps. 63:2. Partly, from the rays of the divine love reflected upon them, whereby they cannot but be inflamed, 1 John 4:19. They never attentively reflect on this love, but they look upon the whole capacity of their soul, as insufficient to make due returns of love.

XXXII. 4thly. A filial fear and obedience, Mal. 1:6, 1 Peter 1:17, flowing from the before-mentioned love, which forbids them to do any thing that may displease God, and cannot bear to see his honour impaired by any other, Ps. 42:3, 10. On the contrary, it makes the person cheerful and ready in all the duties of religion, John 14:21, does not suffer him to be at rest, if haply by any ill-advised conduct he should provoke God, and be deprived of the sight of his blessed and gracious face as formerly. In fine, this constrains him to fall down in profound reverence at the feet of his father, and, with

sorrow and tears plead for the pardon of his offences, and promise a more careful observance for the future, Luke 7:38.

XXXIII. 5thly, Unfeigned brotherly love, which he entertains for all those in whom he observes the image of God, and a participation of the same grace with himself. As that natural affection of Joseph for his brother Benjamin discovered itself by the most evident tokens, Gen. 45:14, 15, so likewise, while other marks are often indiscernable, this brotherly love gives to the doubting soul an evidence of its state, 1 John 3:14: for the love of the brethren cannot be separated from the love of God. Whoever loves the original will also love the copy: whoever loves God, will also love him who belongs to God, and in whom he observes the virtues of God, and whom he believes to be loved by God, 1 John 4:20. Our spirit ought to be well assured of these things before it can testify any thing about our state; and likewise to know, that all these things are to be found with the sons of God, and with them only, as the effects of the regenerating Spirit.

XXXIV. But besides, there are some special acts of divine love, which God vouchsafes only to his own children. "The Lord, indeed, is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works," Ps. 145:9. But he reserves a certain peculiar and unparalleled goodness for his elect, of which the Psalmist says, Ps. 73:1, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart". Hence it is, that while they are sometimes ravished on high by his Spirit, he surrounds them with the beams of his super-celestial light, gives them a view of his face, shining with the brightest love, kisses them with the kisses of his mouth, admits them to the most endearing, mutual intercourse of mystical love with himself, and, while he plentifully sheds abroad his love in their hearts, he gives them to drink of rivers of honey and butter, and that often in the greatest drought of the parched soul,

when expecting no such thing. There are many more mysteries in this secret intercourse with our heavenly Father, which believers sometimes see, taste, and feel, and which no pen of the learned can represent as they deserve. And it is not fit that the spirit of man should be unacquainted with these things, since it is admitted as a witness of his state: for though this is not the lot of all the children of God, nor the case at all times, nor indeed frequently, yet they, whose lot it has at any time been, are certainly the children of God.

XXXV. After our spirit is well instructed about all these things, it is further necessary it make a strict scrutiny concerning itself, and, as under the eye of an omniscient God, diligently search every particular without dissimulation or disguise, to see whether these things which we said were the marks or characteristics of the children of God, are to be found in us: as also whether, at any time, we have experienced, in prayer or other exercises of devotion, the peculiar favour of the most gracious God, exciting, inflaming, comforting, and carrying heavenwards our otherwise dull and drowsy hearts. For when our spirit discovers these things by evident indications, then it confidently testifies that we are the children of God, represents that truth to our minds, and gives us to know it, and enable us to say, "this I know, for God is for me," Ps. 56:9.

XXXVI. These things, indeed, tend greatly to the consolation of God's children; but when, both by Scripture and experience, they know that our heart is deceitful, and that they are assured by the wisest of kings, that "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," Prov. 28:26; and as there is nothing in which they would less wish to be deceived than in this, which of all others is of the greatest moment: then at length they entirely acquiesce, when to the testimony of their own spirit is superadded that of the Spirit of God. This is what David



wrestled for by earnest prayer with God. Ps. 35:3, "Say unto my soul thou art my salvation".

XXXVII. That testimony is given principally in this manner: First, the Spirit of God makes those holy habits, which, we said, were the distinguishing marks of the children of God, and which at times are often involved in much darkness, and covered with much rubbish and filth, to shine with clearness in their soul, and, as it were, readily present themselves to the contemplation of the mind, when examining itself; and then excites our spirit, otherwise ready to faint, to the diligent observation of the things in our mind, both transacted in and by it; enlightens the eyes of the understanding with supernatural light, to prevent our being deceived by what is specious rather than solid, or our overlooking those things, on the observation of which our consolation depends. There is, moreover, a certain internal impulse, which no human language can explain, immediately assuring God's beloved people of their adoption, no less than if they were carried up to the third heavens, and had heard it audibly from God's own mouth, as the apostles formerly heard in the holy mount, "a voice from the excellent glory," 2 Pet. 1:17. Lastly, Seeing no testimony is stronger than that which is proved by facts, the Spirit of God does not leave himself without witness in that respect; for he excites generous motions and the sweetest raptures in believers, and delights them with consolations so ravishing and ecstasical, and even exceeding all thought, that they cannot consider them in any other light than as so many testimonies of their adoption.

XXXVIII. Nor is there any reason to apprehend the children of God will, in this case, suffer themselves to be imposed upon, or admit, for a testimony of the Holy Spirit, what is a lie and mere illusion of the deceiving spirit. For in this voice of the Spirit of God, there is so

much clearness, majesty, and efficacy, whereby it penetrates, with an irresistible power, into the bottom and inmost recess of the heart, that they who have been accustomed to that voice, can easily distinguish it from all others. The world, certainly, cannot receive this Spirit, "seeth him not, neither knoweth him," John 14:17: but Christ's sheep know the voice of their shepherd, John 10:4. And when it sounds, not so much in their ears as in their hearts, they joyfully exclaim, "This is the voice of my beloved, behold! he cometh," Cant. 2:8. As formerly, in extraordinary appearances, God gave such clear indications of his majesty to the prophets, as to leave no room for doubt; so, in like manner, the Spirit, the comforter, irradiates the minds of the elect with such beams of light, that they can easily distinguish him from the spirit of darkness. But, as the proper sound of any voice cannot be distinguished but by the hearing of it, so these things are only to be learned by experience.

XXXIX. But the spirit of God does not usually comfort the elect with such glad tidings, unless their hearts are first broken by a long-continued acknowledgment of their sins, and a deep sense of their misery, Isa. 61:1, 3, and 57:15, 18. Generally a boisterous wind goes before the rending of mountains, and breaking in pieces the rocks before the Lord, and an earthquake and a fire before the still small voice is heard, 1 Kings 19:12. This balm is poured only into the broken heart, Ps. 51:8.

XL. And the souls of the elect are never refreshed with the sweet consolation of the Spirit, but they are, at the same time, inflamed with the love of God, and excited to the vigorous exercise of strict religion. The same Spirit, who is the comforter, is also, by the same act, the sanctifier, Ps. 51:12, 13. Nor can it be otherwise. When the soul is assured, by the Spirit himself, of the infinite love of God towards him, he bursts out into a flame of mutual love, breaking out

into the warmest thanksgivings, saying, "Lord, hast thou honoured me in a manner so extraordinary and undeserved, that thou takest me for thy son? Hast thou thyself declared this so familiarly unto me, by shedding abroad thy love in my heart by the Holy Spirit, which thou hast given me? and shall I not love, worship, honour, and obey thee to the utmost of my power? O! that I was emptied of every thing else, that I might be filled only with thy love!" And this is an undoubted token of the Holy Spirit, when the man, who rejoices in soul, is, at the same time, become more ardent in love to God, and more cheerful in his worship. The spirit of the flesh and of hell, with its deceitful allurements, has ends exceedingly different from this.

XLI. We have, indeed, in a very imperfect manner, delivered these things on this mystical subject, which is the marrow of internal Christianity; which that the Holy Spirit himself may inwardly teach those who are consecrated to God, and exhibit to their eyes, ears, and taste, we ardently pray. So be it Lord Jesus! AMEN.

## CHAPTER IX: Of Sanctification

I. THE apostle Peter, 1 Epist. 2:9, has, in very high terms, declared, that the chosen, the regenerate, and the adopted sons of God, are A HOLY NATION. And this holiness, being really the most excellent ornament of the house of God, Ps. 113:5, is a subject which ought not to be passed over in silence, especially as it is none of the least of the promises in the covenant of grace, that God will be the sanctifier of his people Israel.

II. In order profitably to explain the nature of sanctification, we must consider, not so much the etymology and import of the Latin word, as of the Hebrew שֵׁטֶף, ἀγιότης, ἀγισύνη, ἀγιάσμος, and ὁσιότης, with words of the like original, as most frequently made use of by the sacred penmen. It will be proper, therefore, to enquire more distinctly, first, what is meant by holiness, and then, what by sanctification.

III. The word holy, in Scripture, is asserted, first, of whatever is separated from a promiscuous and civil, but especially from a profane use: in this sense even the elect are called holy, as being separated from the profane world. Lev. 20:26, "And ye shall be holy unto me, because I have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine. 2 Cor. 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." It is no less true of the mystical, than of the literal Israel, that they are a peculiar people, "whose laws are diverse from all people," Eph. 3:8.

IV. Balaam has beautifully prophesied of them. Numb. 23:9, "Lo! the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the

nations." Israel is called the people: 1st, On account of their prodigious numbers; ver. 10, "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?" 2. On account of those sacred ties, by which this vast congregation was united together. They were not a promiscuous assembly, but a multitude, under a proper polity or form of government, united together by covenant, governed by salutary laws, with rights and an inheritance, and having God himself for their head. Thus the apostle, 1 Pet. 2:10: "Οἱ ποτὲ οὐ λαὸς, νῦν δὲ λαὸς Θεοῦ.", which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God." This is the meaning of **עַם**, λαος, the people, when used in the emphatical sense, and distinguished from **גוֹי**, Gentiles. And "**עַם אֲלֵם**, not a people," is a multitude that has no such privileges. Balaam testifies of the former, that they dwell alone, or are separate, "not reckoned among the nations:" they are severed and distinguished from the rest of the world by peculiar laws, customs, and institutions. Tacitus, in his history, book 5, says, "Moses, the better to attach the people afterwards to himself, appointed them new rites, contrary to those of the rest of the world. There all things are accounted profane, which we look upon as sacred; and those things are allowed by them which we hold to be incestuous."

V. This separation of the Jewish people, in as far as it was the effect of ceremonial institutions, constituted a ceremonial holiness; but if we consider it as the effect of the excellency of those laws, which prescribed moral duties; in that respect they much surpassed other nations, yet that constituted a holiness common to the godly in all ages. Hence the church of the New Testament is called, "The flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily." Mic. 7:14. And Christ says of his people, "They are in the world, but not of the world, for he has chosen them out of the world," John 15:19. "Delivering them from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our father,"

Gal. 1:4. To this purpose is the admonition of Paul, Rom. 12:2: "Μὴ συσχηναδίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, be not conformed to this world."

VI. And this is that singularity of piety so recommended by some: which does not consist in external niceties of an over-strained will-worship, and an austerity of discipline, as was generally the practice of the Pharisees among the Jews, and of the ascetics formerly among the ancient Christians; concerning whom Casaubon may be seen in his Exerc. ad Baron. Exerc. I. No. 9. A manner of life significantly called by Epiphanius, εθελόακροτητα δικαιοσύνης, "the utmost pitch of self-righteousness:" but in shunning the vices of the age, pride, drunkenness, lust, and vanities of every kind. 1 Pet. 4:3, "For 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, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." Eph. 5:7, "Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them:" and ver. 11, "and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Tertullian, in his Apologia, advises us, that "in what we say, see, and hear, we correspond in nothing with the madness of the Circus, the lewdness of the theatre, the shocking cruelty of the amphitheatre, and the vanity of the Xystus; we are not to attend on such shows and representations as these." 2. That in opinions and sentiments we keep at a distance from those of the vulgar: that is what Paul hints in what follows: "But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the will of God." By the vulgar, I mean not only the lowest class of people, of whom Tacitus says, "they have neither judgment nor truth:" but even such as seem to themselves and others extremely wise in this world; from whom God generally conceals those mysteries of his, which he reveals to babes, Matt. 11:25. 3. In will and affections. 1 Pet. 1:14. "Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." 4. In the exercise of such a generous and noble virtue or holiness, as is infinitely beyond

the reach of other people. Phil. 2:15, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

VII. Secondly, the word holy, denotes whatever is dedicated to, or set apart for God and his service. Thus the altar, and what belonged to it, are called "most holy," Exod. 30:29: also Aaron with his sons, 1 Chron. 23:13. So, in like manner, the truly godly are "a peculiar treasure to God above all people," Exod. 19:5. In the Hebrew it runs: והייתם לי סגולה. To segullah, the last of these, the Latin word sigillum has an affinity: so that סגולה, segullah, denotes a thing which a person declares to be his own property, by impressing it with his seal; nay, indeed, it denotes such a thing, on account of which persons and kings themselves are accounted rich, and by which they display their grandeur. Eccles. 2:8: "I gathered me also silver and gold, וסגולת מלכים, and segulloth (peculiar treasures), of Kings." Thus "God hath chosen Israel לסגולתו, for his segullah or peculiar treasure," Ps. 135:4. Concerning this word, see Waserus de Nummis, lib. I. c. 1. The Septuagint express it by περιουσία μου ἐαυτώ, Deut. 7:6, אגלה עמ, a special people, which Paul, in imitation of the LXX. calls λαὸς περιούσιος, a peculiar people, Tit. 2:14. And Jerome affirms, he could not learn the meaning of that Greek word from any one that was conversant in profane literature, but gathered it from the above place in Deuteronomy, and the like. Yet I think Grotius has not improperly observed, that περιούσιος is derived from περιεῖναι, which signifies, to excel; and hence περιούσιος denotes the same as ἐξάρετος, excellent; and περιύσια, superabundance; in which sense Clemens Alexandrius uses it in Admon. ad Gentes, p. 5. "Μιστον ἡμῖν της μαθήσεως, ἐκ περιούσιας, βασιλεαν ούρανων ἐπαγγελλεται, promises to us, superabundantly, or over and above the kingdom of heaven, as the reward of our doctrine." And again, p. 69. "Φερε ὑμῖν, εκ περιουσίας, την περι του λογου παραθησομαι πειθω. I shall

abundantly bring a convincing proof concerning the word." In the same manner, as Demosthenes says, "Οὐτος, εκ περιουσιας, μου κατηγορεῖ, he superabundantly accuses me." Polybius, book iv. c. 38, opposes περιουσια to the αἱ αναγκαιαι του βιου χρειαι, the necessaries of life. The godly, therefore, are God's excellent possession, which he claims and preserves, and in which he boasts as his "crown of glory and royal diadem," Isa. 62:3. Which he esteems as his riches, and suffers not to become the property of another; and in this sense also may holiness be ascribed to them: "Ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαος εις περιποιησίν, a holy nation, a peculiar people," are joined together, 1 Pet. 2:9.

VIII. God also truly seals his servants as his property, which he would keep from being lost; and in this sense he likewise accounts them sacred or inviolable. Rev. 7:2, 3: John saw an angel "ascending from the east," distinct from the four ministering angels, and giving orders unto them: now Christ himself is ἀνατολη εξ ὕψους, "the day-spring from on high," Luke 1:78; and the Gospel was published chiefly from Jerusalem to the west; namely, to the isles of the sea, or to Europe. This angel had the seal of the living God, viz. the Spirit of God, who is also "the Spirit of the Son," Gal. 4:6, and by whom the elect are sealed, Eph. 1:13; because he imprints upon them the character of holiness declared in the Gospel, whereby they are known to be the property of God. This angel gave his orders to the others, not to hurt any one, "till," says he, "we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads;" from which words we are not to imagine that God has any fellow-labourers in this sealing-work; but Christ says this concerning himself and his Spirit: who may well call God the Father their God, as both are sent from him. Isa. 48:16: "The Lord God hath sent me and his Spirit;" as thus the Hebrew may very properly be rendered. Moreover, this seal was in the foreheads of God's servants; because, as the forehead is the most conspicuous part



of man, so the truth of the Gospel, and the efficacy of true piety, which is impressed upon their hearts by the Holy Spirit, discover themselves in the public profession and open practice of holiness, which strike the eyes and ears of all. Nor is it improbable there is here an allusion to a received custom in the East, by which the names of masters were stamped on the foreheads of their servants, as Grotius has observed from Hesychius and Aristophanes. The godly, then, are God's peculiar property; for they bear his name on their foreheads, Rev. 14:1. They also profess themselves to be set apart for his service.

IX. And as God sets his seal upon them, so in like manner, they "subscribe with their hand," to be only the Lord's, Isa. 44:5. The Roman soldiers of old, according to Vegetius de re Milit., lib. ii. c. 5, being marked with indelible characters in the skin, were wont to be sworn when they were enlisted; and hence in the law of Mauritius, "Signati in manu," they who are marked in the hand, is a circumlocution for soldiers: for στιγματὰ ἐστὶ τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν, "the marks of soldiers are in their hands," says Æliah. This is what Chrysostom, on Rom. 4:11, calls σφραγίδα τοῦ στρατιώτου, "the seal of the soldier:" see Grotius on Rev. 13:16. In much the same manner, believers, being sealed by God with the efficacy of the flaming Spirit,\* and a truly indelible and never fading character, do, at the same time, bind themselves by an oath, to be faithful to God, as soldiers to their general. For while they profess themselves to be God's, they also give themselves up to his service alone. Acts 27:23: "Whose I am, and whom I serve." In a word, the chosen and called are all saints, because, separated from the rest of the world, they are declared to be God's on several accounts. But we have not yet mentioned the principal thing.

X. Thirdly, Holiness denotes that purity of a man, in his nature, inclinations, and actions, which consists in an imitation and expression of the divine purity or holiness. God is the great pattern of his rational creatures. His will is expressed in the law, which was the pattern shown to Moses in the mount, according to which the sanctuary of our soul ought to be framed. But his divine virtues or perfections are a pattern, which we are to contemplate with so much diligence, attention, and devotion, as to be ourselves transformed according to that, 1 Pet. 1:15, 16: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." Virtue or holiness may be considered in different respects. As it agrees with the prescription of the law, it is called righteousness; but as it is a conformity to God, and an expression of his purity, it is termed holiness. And it is chiefly in this sense that we shall now speak concerning holiness.

XI. Having thus previously explained these things, it will not be hard to infer what we mean by sanctification; namely, that real work of God, by which they, who are chosen, regenerated and justified, are continually more and more transformed from the turpitude of sin to the purity of the divine image.

XII. We distinguish this work of God from the first regeneration and first effectual calling to Christ. For the immediate term or effect of regeneration is a principle of spiritual life, which, in a moment, is put into the soul, by the immediate energy of the Holy Spirit. The term or effect of effectual calling is the mystical union and communion with Christ. But the term or effect of sanctification are the habits of spiritual virtues or graces, and their lively exercise; and thus sanctification follows upon regeneration and effectual calling, at least in the order of nature, and supposes those actions of God as going before it.

XIII. There is still a further difference between sanctification and justification: for justification is a judiciary act, terminating in a relative change of state; namely, a freedom from punishment and a right to life: sanctification a real work, which is performed by a supernatural influence, and which terminates in a change of state as to the quality both of habits and actions.

XIV. Yet we are to take notice, that the term sanctification is not always taken, by divines, in this strict sense; sometimes they comprehend under it regeneration and the first infusion of a new life, and take sanctification, renovation of the Spirit, regeneration, the new creature, the first resurrection for synonymous terms, as the Leyden professors, Synops. Disput. 33, §. 2. Sometimes also they include justification under the same term. "It is well known," says the abridger of Chamierus, p. 860, "that the terms justification and sanctification are put one for the other." Gomarus, in like manner, on 1 Pet. 1:2. Sanctification, taken in a general sense, comprises regeneration and justification. Nay sometimes the word sanctification is taken so largely, as to include the whole of man's salvation. Polanus in Syntagm., lib. vi. c. 37: "Sometimes both appellations, viz. regeneration and sanctification are taken in a larger sense, for the whole of our salvation or beatification, if I may so speak," as Heb. 10:10. But yet the accuracy of those is more commendable, who distinguish those terms in the manner I have explained: especially as the Scripture often distinctly mentions those benefits, and describes sanctification as a continued work of God, leading the elect gradually on to perfection, and as I do not remember to have observed it speak so of regeneration.

XV. Nor are we to omit, that sanctification is sometimes held forth as a blessing from God to man, 1 Thess. 5:23, "and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Sometimes as man's duty towards God, 1

Thess. 4:3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." The former God powerfully works in us, according to the purpose of his gracious decree. The latter he justly requires of us by the will of his holy command. When sanctification denotes the first implantation of spiritual habits, it is a mere blessing from God, in procuring which we do not co-operate with him, but receive it from him. As it signifies the activity, or lively exercise of infused habits, and their corroboration and progress, so far we are active; but then it is as we are acted upon under God, and dependently on him; for these things can never be separated.

XVI. The term from which, in sanctification, is the pollution of sin. Adam, in departing from the prescribed rule, forfeited the ornament of the image of God, in which he was formed, for himself and all his posterity; and whilst he wickedly affected a forbidden equality with God, came most to resemble the devil, and like that evil spirit, deformed himself by his own crime, than which we can imagine nothing more hideous or base. The soul of the sinner is a horrid monster, misshapen, huge, and devoid of light: mere darkness, mere confusion, every thing being disjointed and out of order there; nothing properly placed; the things we should despise are esteemed, and what we should value most are neglected. Were a man to take a clear view of his inward disposition in a faithful mirror, he would certainly, with the utmost horror, fly from himself as from a most terrible spectacle. And indeed, if holiness is the most beautiful ornament of the divine perfections, that thing must needs be the most deformed which is not only the most unlike, but diametrically opposite to, that ornamental beauty. This is that *ῥυπαρία και περισσεια κακιας* mentioned, James 1:21, "Filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness." To this it is owing, that man is become abominable in the sight of God, who cannot but turn away the radiant eyes of his unspotted holiness, Hab. 1:13.

XVII. Moreover, Adam propagated this vile resemblance of the devil to his posterity, not excepting those whom grace has sanctified. For he also "begat Seth in his own likeness, after his image," Gen. 5:3. I do not chiefly apply this to the likeness of the human nature, much less to the likeness of that holiness, which God graciously restored to Adam, as Chrysostom, Lyranus, and Clarius contend for. For, 1st, Holiness and righteousness are not the image of any man, but of God. 2dly, Adam is never proposed in Scripture as the pattern or author of holiness, but as the person by whom sin entered into the world, Rom. 5:12. 3dly, The image of holiness, restored in the parent by grace, is never propagated to the son by natural generation. Things natural are propagated, but things supernatural are "alone of God that showeth mercy," Rom. 9:16. But by this likeness of Adam, I understand the vicious corruption of his nature. 1st, Because the image of Adam, after Seth was begotten, is set in opposition to the image of God, after which Adam was created. 2dly, Because the apostle, in like manner, opposes 1 Cor. 15:49, the image of the earthly Adam, as consisting of sin and pollution, to the image of the heavenly Adam, which consists in holiness and glory. 3dly, Because the whole analogy of Scripture evinces, that "a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean," and that "what is born of the flesh is flesh," Job 14:4, John 3:6.

XVIII. This turpitude of sin is, by Paul, called the old man, Eph. 4:22, Col. 3:9. Man, because it overspreads the whole man, and defiles both soul and body; in the soul, it has possession of the understanding, will, and affections.

XIX. It has involved the understanding in horrid darkness, whereby it is grossly ignorant of divine things, Eph. 4:18. So that the ἄνθρωπος ψυχικός, the natural or animal man, or he that has no other spirit but his soul, and destitute of the Spirit of God, Jude 20,

"receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them," 1 Cor. 2:14. And as he discerns no wisdom in divine things, worthy of God, so, with intolerable presumption, he represents them under those disagreeable notions, which his own foolish and self-conceited wisdom hath devised; and while he attempts to correct the wisdom of God which he cannot understand, he transfigures it, as much as he can, to downright folly. And this is that which is said, Rom. 1:22, 23: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools: and changed the glory of the incorruptible God," &c.

XX. But the sinner is not only under blindness, but is in love with his blindness. He glories, that he really sees, even when he is most blind, John 9:40, 41. And when, to the utmost of his power, he resists the true light, though discovering itself in a most pleasing manner by the works of divine providence, by the word of God, and by some sparkling rays of the Spirit; "he loves darkness rather than light; hateth the light, neither cometh to the light," John 3:19, 20. Of such Job witnesseth, "that they are of those that rebel against the light," Job 24:13. They have an aversion to all light, both that which is natural, which hinders them from perpetrating their crimes in the sight of the world; and that which is moral, which convinces them of the duty they ought certainly to perform, but which they wickedly neglect. They endeavour to stifle it, by disputing both against the word of God and their own conscience. Hence those impious expressions of some, who wish that this or the other truth, that opposes their lusts, was not to be found in the word of God.

XXI. And yet, those very persons that are so foolish in that which is good, are most subtle and crafty in that which is evil, Jer. 4:22. They commit evil by that art, which is exactly conformable to the pattern of the infernal spirits. Emphatical is that of Micah, on this head, chap. 7:3: "על הרע כפים להיטיב", both hands are upon evil, that they

may do it well."\* They are not slothful in evil, but apply both hands, exert all their strength. And they take care to do it well, according to the rules of that satanical art, carefully observing all the contrivances of wickedness: nay, they have learned to frame and contrive it with so much art as to impose it on the incautious, under the appearance of good.

XXII. Nor is the will less corrupt; for, 1st, it is averse to all that is truly good. Job 21:14: "Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. And when the great things of the law are written to them, they are counted as a strange thing;" as of no very great moment, and what they have no concern with, Hos. 8:12. And how can it be otherwise? For since, by reason of their blindness, they do not discern the excellency of true virtue, but on the contrary find many things in the practice of it which are opposite to their unruly lusts, their mind is averse to it; "they hate the good," Micah. 3:2.

XXIII. Secondly, it is driven on to evil, with great impetuosity: "they love the evil," Micah 3:2, to a degree indeed, that not some, but "every imagination of the heart of man;" not at some, but "at all times;" not in some, but in every measure, "is only evil," Gen. 6:5. Now this is to be understood, not only of the giants in the first ages, as appears by comparing this place with chap. 8:21, where almost the same words are used concerning men in future periods of time. "I will not again," says God, "curse the ground any more, because (or though) the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Whereby it is intimated that evil imagination is the common blemish of all mankind. To this also may be referred what Paul writes, Rom. 8:7: "το φρόνημα της σαρκος, the carnal mind (the wisdom of the flesh)" that which it willingly imagines, lusts after as wisdom, or that

action which the carnal mind contrives, "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

XXIV. Nay, 3dly, the desire of evil is so great, that it is irritated by that very law of God which forbids it; and is more impetuously hurried on to things forbidden, only because they are prohibited. Without the driving or impelling force of the law, sin lies dormant and lifeless; but when the commandment comes, it revives, and is put in motion, and taking occasion by the commandment, works all manner of concupiscence; to a pitch, that, every check being hurtful, "by the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful," Rom. 7:8, 9, 11, 13. Chrysostom beautifully says, "Όταν τινός ἐπιθυμῶμεν, εἶτα κωλυόμεθα, αἶρετα· μᾶλλον της ἐπιθυμίας ἢ φλόξ. When we lust after any thing, and are afterwards restrained; this only blows up the flame of lust to a higher degree."

XXV. Surprising and lamentable is the depravity in the affections. For, 1st, When the understanding does not lead them on to things holy, spiritual, heavenly, and eternal, they are basely and madly bent upon things corporeal, carnal, fading, and sinful; and mis-spend all their vigour on things beneath and unworthy a man. 2dly, In all their emotions they are furiously tossed, and not waiting for the direction of the understanding, but throwing off the reins of reason, and having no restraint, they rush headlong with a blind and wicked violence, and basely rack and wound the soul; never allowing her any rest, nor that calmness which would otherwise be her peculiar happiness, but continually crying, "like the daughters of the horse-leach, Give, Give," Prov. 30:16. Hence God elegantly compares the wicked to "the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," Isa. 57:20. 3dly, They are obstinately bold and lustful, both against the will of God's decree and of his command; ever lusting after what is contrary to it, with that eagerness, that they can



scarcely bear that God and nature should not be subservient to their desire, and all rules of religion not be framed and modelled to their liking. These are those "πᾶθη ἀτιμίας, vile affections," mentioned Rom. 1:26. Which, though they do not rage with equal fury in all, yet they reside in the soul as in a stable, and being restrained to no purpose, burst out at times with the greater fierceness.

XXVI. Nor indeed, is the body itself free from the tyrannical dominion of sin: the members are agitated by such an inordinate flow of blood and spirits, that they easily carry away the mind, while it is forgetful of her own dignity. And indeed, that pleasure which the members have in sin, or which they seek for by sinning, is the cause of most sins, even spiritual sins not excepted, and of their reasoning against the law of God. This perverseness and corruption is by the apostle called "the law in the members," that is, that power and efficacy of sin dwelling in the body, which had frequently forced it to a criminal compliance, and had "warred against the law of his mind;" that is, against the law of God, inscribed on the mind by nature and grace, and in which the mind delights, "and had brought him into captivity;" and having once taken hold of him, does not let him go, Rom. 7:23. Certainly, the members seduce and prove offensive, which Job, being afraid of, "made a covenant with his eyes, that they should not look upon a maid," Job 31:1. And David prayed, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," Ps. 119:37. And Wisdom advises, to "put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite," Prov. 23:2. All these plainly declare the danger arising to religion from the members.

XXVII. As therefore this corruption wholly overspreads all the parts and faculties of man, it is therefore called man. But it goes by the name of the old man: 1st, Because it sprung up in paradise itself, at the beginning, by the infection of the tempting serpent, and owes its

original to that old dragon, mentioned Rev. 12:9. 2dly, Because it is cotemporary with every man in particular, Ps. 51:7, and, if not always in order of time, yet of nature, precedes man's gracious regeneration. 3dly, Because we ought to abolish, reject, and abhor it, as a worthless and antiquated thing, which is worn out and disfigured by long use, just as old things pass away, that all things may become new, 2 Cor. 5:17.

XXVIII. This corruption is sometimes held forth under the emblem of an unseemly, filthy, and loathsome garment; and then it is said "to be put off" and laid aside by sanctification, Col. 3:9, and Eph. 4:22. Sometimes under the emblem of a monster, destroying by horrid violence every thing in man; and then it is said to be "mortified," Col. 3:5, and "crucified," Gal. 5:24. Now, this putting off and mortification of the old man, is nothing else but the destruction of the dominion of sin, and the purging of corruptions: so that, 1st, We be vexed at the heart and grieved because of them, for nothing dies without pain and anguish. 2dly, That we abhor them as we would a rotten carcase. 3dly, That we have them in execration as things which have put God and man to torment.\* 4thly, That we suppress all their motions, as far as possible, both in the soul and the body, and never suffer them to revive again, Rom. 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed;" not only some actions and parts of it, but that entire compound, made up of depraved habits, thoughts, lusts, words, and actions, as a body is made up of its members, "that henceforth we should not serve sin."

XXIX. By another phrase, the godly are said to be "dead to sin," Rom. 6:2. The meaning of which is, that as a dead body is not a fit habitation for the soul, seeing it has not those organs and that disposition of parts by which the soul operates; so believers, with

respect to sin and its motions, are dead bodies, useless and motionless organs, in which it can no longer lodge, live, and exert its efficacy.

XXX. Not much different is that expression of Paul, Gal. 6:14, in which he says the world was crucified to him and he to the world; intimating, that he was no more delighted with the vanities of the world, than a good man would be with the rotten carcase of a malefactor who was justly condemned to a shameful death; and, on the other hand, that the world was unable to act upon, or affect him, with any greater efficacy, than objects of sense affect a dead person.

XXXI. This putting off, and this mortification of the old man, is always accompanied with the putting on, or vivification of the new man, by which are denoted all those qualities wherein the excellency of the divine image is placed. These come under the appellation man, for the same reason we just gave of the depraved qualities, because they overspread the whole man; so that there is nothing in the sanctified person, no part, no faculty, that remains untouched or neglected by the sanctifying Spirit, and unadorned with new habits. And as the citadel and throne of virtue stands in the mind and inward parts, therefore Paul speaks of the "inward man," Rom. 7:22, and Peter, 1 Epist. 3:4, of the "hidden man of the heart."

XXXII. A new and gracious light shines upon the understanding: the eyes of the mind are enlightened, Eph. 1:18, by which it sees divine truths, not under false and confused ideas, but in their native form and beauty, "the truth as it is in Jesus," Eph. 4:21; so that the sanctified person really beholds in those truths, the manifold wisdom of God, the depths of his perfections, and the unsearchable riches of Christ; nor does he see them only, but in a manner not to be expressed, feels them, penetrating themselves into his inmost heart,

embraces them with a glowing affection of piety, exults in them, and desires that what is truth in Christ, may be also truth in him, and that he may be modelled to the likeness of those truths, and cast as it were into the very shape of them. In fine, that knowledge of God which flutters not in the brain only, but brings forth the fruit of every good work, from the day that he hath truly heard and known the grace of God, is a part of the new man, Col. 1:6, 9, 10. Whereas that other knowledge which puffs up and boasts itself, and charges the wisdom of God with folly, is vain; and the more boldly it counterfeits the new man, the more it appears to be "earthly, sensual, and devilish," James 3:15.

XXXIII. Among other things, the understanding of a sanctified person beholds so much purity in God, who is the pattern of the rational creature; so much equity in the law of God, which is the rule of every virtue; so much holiness in Christ Jesus, who exhibited himself to us as a living law; so much beauty in virtue, or holiness itself, which is as it were the native image of the Deity; that he reckons nothing more excellent than exactly to resemble that pattern, that rule, and that image. He sees nothing in any of these that he would correct, nothing he would have otherwise appointed, neither does he imagine that any thing can be better framed, and thus "he consenteth to the law, that it is good," Rom. 7:16. This is what Paul calls a "being filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," Col. 1:9.

XXXIV. And as the eyes are with difficulty diverted from a pleasing object, so to him whose mind is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, nothing can be more desirable, nothing more pleasant, nothing more charming, than to dwell on the contemplation of God and the meditation of divine things. He loves to join the night to the day, Ps. 1:2, and then he entertains himself, then he is delighted, then he

exults, and seems by his earnestness to enjoy heaven itself; while he is deeply engaged in this sacred meditation, and, at the same time forgetting himself, he is plunged as it were in the immense gulf of the divine perfections and mysteries.

XXXV. Nor is the enlightened mind satisfied to taste things alone by itself, nor enviously to conceal its treasure; but it discovers those sacred truths to the will, to which it frequently presents them as things most precious, which are far more valuable than gold and silver, or even than pearls, which are still more highly esteemed, that the will also may be united to them by the indissoluble band of love, and with the utmost readiness be in holy subjection to them. This is the activity of the sanctified understanding.

XXXVI. Now the will cannot possibly reject so great a good, which is constantly pointed out to it by the understanding as such. It is therefore ravished with the love of it, Ps. 119:97: "O! how love I thy law!" Rom. 7:22. It delights in the law of God, Ps. 40:8: "I delight to do thy will, O my God!" For what is truth in Christ, becomes also truth in its order and degree in those who are Christ's. The will is never easy, never satisfied, when it finds it has displeased God, and departed from his will.

XXXVII. Hence ariseth a steady and fixed purpose of heart, to be conformable in all things to God, Ps. 119:106. To whom the will wholly resigns itself up, to be swallowed as it were in his will; establishing this into an inviolable and sacred law for itself, to have the same inclinations, the same aversions with God. And God himself declares, that the true reverence or fear of the Deity lies in this, Prov. 8:13: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogancy and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate." He that truly fears

God, will hate what he knows to be hateful to God; and, on the contrary, love what God loves, Ps. 139:21, 22.

XXXVIII. And seeing the will commands the inferior faculties, as they are called, and, in its measure, even the understanding itself; hence, with the greatest alacrity, it makes all things to be ready at the will and pleasure of God and of Christ. So that the soul of one who is sanctified, is like a well marshalled army, in which every individual will, in his place and order, directly move upon the first word or sign of command. This is that "willing mind," by which we are acceptable to God, 2 Cor. 8:12.

XXXIX. The understanding and will being thus set in order, the tumult of the wild affections gradually comes to subside, which being forced into order, learn to wait the commands of reason before they take a single step, and in proportion to the object, act either more intensely, or more remissly; moreover, they exert themselves in a right and proper manner, with respect to spiritual and heavenly things, with which before they were wont to be scarcely, if at all affected: in short, they calmly resign themselves to be governed by the Holy Spirit, receiving from him, with full submission, the law of motion and of rest. When formerly furious lust held the reins, they were accustomed to run mad after wordly, carnal, and vicious objects, now they suffer themselves to be led, as circumstances require, and being sublimated to a higher pitch, and having obtained a more generous and noble guide, they strongly, by their native vehemence, excite or push forward the mind, otherwise slow in its motion, to objects that are holy, heavenly, and becoming a Christian.

XL. In the mean time, this admonition is continually inculcated upon them, that they must not consult with their affections, whenever they are called to comply with, or submit to, the will of God, whether that

of his decree or that of his precept. In that case, they are enjoined to a perfect silent submission. He who is sanctified does not presume so much as to wish, that God would regulate either his precepts or purposes from any regard to his desire, hope, or fear. That self-denial which is the first lesson in Christ's school, commands all the affections to be silent, and unlimited obedience obliges them to be resigned to God. It is not lawful for a Christian to wish, that any thing that God has done or spoken should be otherwise than it is; and whenever that foolish self-love which is not yet quite rooted out, begins, through its unmortified lusts and vain anxiety, to go away from God to other things, then the superior faculty of the soul, under the conduct and direction of the Spirit, repeats that pious ejaculation, "and thou, my soul, wait thou only upon [be silent unto] God," Psa. 62:5. This is to "compose the soul, and keep it in quiet;" Ps. 131:2, that it may look upon it as unlawful, either to wish or mutter any thing against the will of God.

XLI. Moreover, that holy disposition of soul communicates itself to the members of the body, which, being before "instruments of unrighteousness unto sin," are now "instruments of righteousness unto God," Rom. 6:13. In a sanctified person, the eyes, the tongue, the ears, the hands, and the feet, are not only restrained from giving the least occasion, to entice and disturb the mind, as Paul said of himself, that he "kept under his body, and brought it into subjection," 1 Cor. 9:27; but all of them are ready, and inclined to obey God, to whom they yield themselves, in order to the practice of righteousness, and even as weapons, by which the kingdom of sin and Satan may be strongly opposed. For, so long as the most eminent virtues lie concealed in the inward recess of the mind, they cannot edify our neighbour, and gain him over from sin to holiness; but when they are exercised by the members of the body, when the tongue lays itself out in the praises of God, and the commendation of

virtue or holiness; the hands and feet, in assisting his neighbour, and the other parts of the body, according to their several capacities, in the practice of religion: it is then he fights manfully, for extirpating vice, and promoting virtue. Nor can it be doubted, but the apostle's expression imports all this.

XLII. From all this it is now evident, that even the new man, no less than the old, possesses the whole man, both soul and body; according to the command of Paul, 1 Cor. 6:20: "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's;" and his prayer, 1 Thess. 5:23. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Interpreters differ with respect to the distinction between spirit and soul, and the signification of each term. We agree with those who, by spirit, understand the mind, the ἡγεμονικον, or leading faculty of man, called, by Philo, de Mundo, "ἐξαιρετον ἄνθρωπον γέρας, the select ornament of man," in which his principal excellence above the other creatures consists; and elsewhere called by the apostle "νοῦς, mind," Eph. 4:17: but by soul, the inferior faculties; not as if there were two souls, but that, in the manner commonly received among philosophers, Paul distinguishes the faculties of one and the same soul. And by body, it is plain, is denoted the receptacle of the soul. And the whole man will, at last, be sanctified, when the spirit shall think nothing, the soul desire nothing, the body execute nothing, but what is agreeable to the will of God.

XLIII. Now, these spiritual qualities of a man, are called, the new man. 1st. Because they succeed upon the departure of the old man, 2 Cor. 5:17: "Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new." 2dly. Because they are quite other than, and very different from, the former. In which sense Christ said of the apostles, Mark



16:17, "They shall speak with new tongues;" that is, other tongues, Acts 2:4, different from their mother-tongue, and from those they had learned before. And certainly these good qualities are not only different from the former, but also quite contrary to them. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" 2 Cor. 6:14. 3dly. Because rare, excellent, and unparalleled. For as new things usually attract, and are esteemed valuable, as being preferable to old things, which are worn out by long use; so that which is excellent and surpassing in its kind, is also called new. In this sense God promises a new name to the godly, Isa. 62:2, Rev. 2:17, and 3:12, that is, a condition far more excellent than what they ever yet had. And, indeed, nothing excels this new man, which Peter declares, 1 Pet. 3:4, "to be in the sight of God of great price."

XLIV. Sometimes sanctification is called the putting on of the new man, as Eph. 4:24, Col. 3:10. Sometimes vivification, or the quickening of the same. Thus these landable qualities may be considered, either as a precious ornament of the soul, 1 Peter 3:3, 4, Ps. 45:14, 15, and Ps. 93:5, and Ps. 110:3, Prov. 1:9, and then they are said to be put on; or, as a new creature made conformable to the example of Christ, which is all activity and life, and then he is said to live in us. These expressions denote the productions of those new qualities in us, and their continual increase and growth, and their being incentives to action: all which have here the nature of a term, to which they tend.

XLV. We may view the parts of our sanctification in this order: 1st. If we consider them in their whole compass or extent, they are cotemporary. For sin is expelled, virtue or holiness is introduced by the same work, just as he, who at the same time, by his motion and progress, leaves the term from which he set out, and draws near to

the term whither he at first intended. 2dly. If we consider its commencement, the vivification or quickening of the new man, is first in the order of nature. For all the virtue and efficacy against sin, proceeds from a principle of a new and spiritual life. Death is removed only by life, darkness by light, poverty by riches, nakedness by clothing, deformity by beauty, hatred of God by love. 3dly. If we consider each act a part, we find a manifold variety in the order. The illumination of the understanding, which is a part of the vivification of the new man, does undoubtedly go before our being displeased with ourselves, and our sorrow for sin, which properly belong to the mortification of the old man. And this sorrow again precedes that holy alacrity of the soul, whereby it rejoices in God: and so of the rest. 4thly. If we view its consummation, the final destruction of the old man, which is effected at the dissolution of the body of sin, that is, of the body by whose lusts we are polluted, and in which we sin, Rom. 6:6, is prior to the complete sanctification of the whole man.

XLVI. Hence it appears, that sanctification does not consist only in the amendment of the actions, according to the Socinians and the favourers of Pelagianism, who do not sincerely acknowledge the corruption of our nature; but in the conferring of new habits, which succeed to the old ones, which gradually give way. Thus Peter, among these precious promises which we obtain, mentions the communication of a divine nature, a large measure of those virtues, which if they be in us, they make us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 1:8. And Paul, Gal. 5:22, speaking of the fruits of the Spirit, says, that they are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering," &c. All which virtues or graces are habitual, inherent, and permanent in the soul, 1 Cor. 13:13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three." Nay, sometimes the apostle uses the very term, habit, Heb. 5:14, "Who διὰ τὴν ἔξιν, by reason of use (habit), have their senses exercised." The

increase indeed of this habit is acquired by repeated acts of a vigorous endeavour; though its beginning is infused by the Holy Spirit, who fills the elect with the knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," Col. 1:9.

XLVII. The author and efficient cause of sanctification is GOD. Uncreated, infinite holiness is the source of that which is created and finite, Ezek. 20:12, "that they might know that I am the Lord, that sanctify them." 1 Thess. 5:23. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Isa. 63:11. "Who put his Holy Spirit [the spirit of his holiness] within him." He is the author of sanctification.

XLVIII. For, by a special appropriation, according to the economy of the divine operations, this work is immediately ascribed to the Holy Spirit, 2 Thess. 2:13, "through sanctification of the Spirit." Tit. 3:5, "renewing of the Holy Ghost:" and so in many other places. This is not, however, done, as if the Holy Spirit alone was immediately concerned in the production of sanctification, and the Father and Son sanctified only mediately by the Spirit. For that power by which holiness is produced in the elect, is common to the undivided Trinity. Nor do the Father and Son operate less immediately therein than the Holy Spirit; and as the power of each divine person is the same, so also the action of all is one. That saying, "δι' οὗ τα πάντα, by whom are all things," equally belongs to the Father and the Son, as it does to the Holy Spirit. Nor does one person act by the other, as by a mean or instrument. But the reason of this appropriation seems to be thus: because the sanctification of a sinner follows upon the grace and merit of Christ; and seeing the Holy Spirit follows the Son, in the hypostatical order of subsisting and operating, and is therefore also called the Spirit of the Son, Gal. 4:6. To whom then can the application of the grace and merits of the Son be more properly ascribed, than to him who is next to the Son in order? Sanctification

is such a divine operation, as supposes the will of the Father, making a testament concerning the seed which was to be given to the Son; and the will of the Son, claiming, by right, that holy seed: who then can better claim that operation, than the Holy Spirit, who is of the Father and of the Son, and who takes of the things of the Son, all that he gives unto them? John 17:14.

XLIX. However, Christ, the mediator, acts here a special part both as to impetration and application. Christ impetrated, or purchased by his merit, the sanctification of the elect. For this cause he himself came "in the likeness of sinful flesh," Rom. 8:3. "appeared under the load of sin," Heb. 9:28; for this end also himself "was made sin," 2 Corinthians. 5:21, "that he might sanctify his church," Eph. 5:26. The image of God being defaced and lost, could not possibly be restored to sinful man, unless he, who is the personal image of God the Father, should first assume the image of man, and that of a sinner and a slave, and so expose himself to the unjust hatred of men, and the most righteous vengeance of God, as if he had been the greatest of all criminals: and thus he is made unto us, by his merit, "sanctification," 1 Cor. 1:30.

L. But that which he impetrated, he applies. He unites the elect to himself by his Spirit; and then the virtue of his death and resurrection flows from him to them: "so that being planted together in the likeness of his death, they shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; and their old man crucified with him, and they being dead with Christ, shall also live with him," Rom. 6:5, 8, and, "by the cross of Christ, the world is crucified to them, and they to the world," Gal. 6:14. This is the effect of meditating on the cross of Christ. And the power of his resurrection, Phil. 3:10, produces a new life in them. For, he himself being raised from the dead, has received not only for himself a new and a glorious life, but a fountain of a new and holy life

for all his people; from which by a continued influence, the most refreshing streams flow to all his members: hence, from his own life, by a most conclusive argument, he inferred the life of his people, John 14:19, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

LI. Moreover, that work of God which produces our sanctification, is performed by a real, supernatural and most powerful efficacy, reaching to the full effect, as we have already intimated, when treating on effectual calling and regeneration. "For, we are his ποίημα, workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works," Eph. 2:10. By the very same power, which was displayed and exerted in the work of the old creation, he forms his own people to good works, or, which is the same thing, he sanctifies them. "He gives an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear," Deut. 29:4. "He puts his Spirit within them, and causes them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments," Ezek. 36:27. "He gives them one heart, and one way, that they may fear him for ever," Jer. 32:39. And certainly none is fit to form again the image of God in man, but he who at first made man after his own image; the one being a work of no less power and excellence than the other.

LII. And hence, the gangrene of the Socinian divinity discovers itself, according to which if a man has got such a full discovery of the will of God, as is made in the Gospel, with a promise of eternal life, he will then have that, whence he may receive strength to perform that very will. They sometimes mention internal assistance for form' sake, but place it only in this, that the promises of God are inscribed and sealed on the mind: and they will have this to be the case of none, unless he has first made a right use of that external aid. They are truly ignorant of any supernatural influence and real efficiency of God. So much have a fond self-admiration, and their arrogant boasting of the powers of nature infatuated them.

LIII. But some among the heathen have really spoken far better concerning the divine assistance, though unacquainted with the excellency of Christian holiness. Plutarch, de stoic. contradict. "If God give not virtue to men, but men obtain it by their own power; and give them riches and health without virtue, he certainly gives to them what they will not use well, but ill." Plutarch adds: "If the gods can bestow virtue, but do it not, they are not good and gracious; for, if they cannot render men good, neither can they profit them, since without virtue nothing can be good or profitable." To the same purpose is the twenty-second dissertation of Maximus Tyrius, entitled, "Whether any one can be made good by God;" in which there are very many things worthy of attention, but too long to be transcribed. These things he borrowed from his master Plato, in whose Menon is extant this notable dissertation: "If in the whole of this present discourse, we we have inquired and disputed correctly, then virtue is neither obtained by nature, nor by teaching, but by divine appointment." See Clemens Alexandrinus, stromat lib. v. p. 588.

LIV. Nature itself and man's conscience teach him these two things: 1st, Our inability for virtue. 2dly, The all-sufficiency of God, whereby he is the fountain and author of all true good. Of the former, Epictetus, apud Arrianum, lib. ii. c. 11, says: "the beginning of philosophy to those who enter into it by the gate, as they ought, is a sense of their own impotence and inability." Of the latter, Maximus Tyrius Dissert. 22. "We are not to imagine, that any good can befall men, but what comes from God: as there is no good to men, which derives not its original from God.

LV. From those generals, the heathen themselves have proved these more particular propositions: 1st. That, to the acquisition and practice of virtue, men stand in need of divine assistance and grace.

Hierocles, a Pythagorean philosopher, has excellently taught this in these words: "We are not so much as to preconceive, that virtuous actions are so in our power, as to be performed without divine aid: we stand in need of the assistance of God, both for escaping evil and acquiring good." 2dly, That, from a sense of our own impotence, we are to ask it of God, Epictet. apud Arrianum, lib. ii. c. 18. "Noble is the struggle, and divine the enterprise, the subject a kingdom; liberty, happiness, calm of mind unruffled by passions, are all concerned; therefore remember God, call him in for thy assistant, thy associate." See also Seneca, Epist. 10, and 41, and Marc. Antonin. lib. ii. § 40. 3dly, That we are to thank God for it, Epictet. apud Arrian., lib. iv. c. 4. "Then I sinned, now I do not, thanks be to God."

LVI. But they did not imagine, that this divine assistance consisted only in moral suasion, or in presenting such objects, whereby a man may be excited to virtuous actions; but "in divine suggestions, aids, and inspirations," as the emperor Antonine speaks, lib. i. §. 17; who in the same place declares, that he had a good disposition of mind "from the gods," which he ascribes to their beneficence: lib. ix. §. 40, he mentions their co-operation; "for, if they can at all co-operate with men, they also can in this," namely, in the practice of virtue. But if any should except, that these relate to things in our own power, he answers: "Who has told thee, that the gods do not assist even in these? Set about asking these things of the gods by prayer, and you will see the consequence."

LVII. And they maintained, that the same divine aid was so necessary to virtue, that even the best disposed souls could not be without it. Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. 22, p. 228, says: "But they, who have acquired the very best natural dispositions of soul, halting between the highest virtue and the lowest vice, stand in need of the divine aid, to give the proper bias and direction to the better side. For their

natural weakness makes them easily take the worst path. This, by means of pleasures and lusts, flatters even well-disposed souls, and hurries them into the same paths of vice."

LVIII. It is, therefore, really a shame that heathen writers have entertained more humble sentiments of the infirmity and inability of our nature for good, and clearer conceptions of the divine assisting grace, and have said finer things about imploring it by prayer, than those professors of the excellency of the Christian religion, who ought to have put a due value on the holiness of true virtue. Thus they who are pagans will, in the day of judgment, rise up against those false Christians, the ungrateful enemies of the grace of God, no less to their condemnation, than the queen of the South, to that of the unbelieving Jews.

LIX. Moreover, seeing the Spirit of God, the author of holiness, is highly generous and noble, and therefore by David, Psa. 51:12, called "free (ingenuous) Spirit:" hence that holiness, with which he adorns the elect is also such as highly surpasses all the painted virtue of the Gentiles, in whatever manner it displays itself, and all the scrupulous diligence of the Scribes and Pharisees. And indeed, if it does not exceed these, it is not acknowledged to be genuine holiness by Christ our Lord, Mat. 5:20.

LX. When the children of God recollect their glorious and heavenly pedigree, they endeavour to excel others, both in a beautiful disposition of soul and manner of life, Psalm 45:13, "the king's daughter," that is, the daughter of the heavenly Father, who is also the bride of the king's son, every believing soul "is all glorious," adorned with a holiness, not only glorious to herself, but also to the Father and the bridegroom, and is the beginning of a heavenly glory: and that chiefly, "within," not only when she appears abroad, and



presents herself to the view of men; but also when she sits in the inner bed-chamber, in the secret exercises of religion, in which she in private pleases the Father and the bridegroom: who having a regard to the inward man, she above all endeavours to keep that pure and chaste. "Her clothing is of gold," in comparison of which, whatever excellency natural men were ever possessed of, is but a shining vanity: nay it was "wrought" gold, curiously beautified with various resemblances, which represents the perfections of God himself; and of different colours, on account of the different, yet harmoniously corresponding graces of the Holy Spirit: or, "of needlework" of the Phrygian embroiderers, or rather the work of "the cunning workman," mentioned Cant. 7:1. Nor is the spouse only beautiful within, but also without; "holding forth the word of life," Phil. 2:16, she practises charity, glorifies Christ, edifies her neighbour: and in this manner "she is brought unto the king, worthy to be presented to him." This is the only way by which we are to endeavour to obtain familiarity with him, and the sweetest intercourse of the chastest love, both on earth and in heaven.

LXI. That which we have in Ps. 110:3, is not very different from this encomium: "Thy people, O Jesus Christ, which were given thee by the Father, purchased and redeemed by thee, who acknowledge thee for their Lord, and are bound to thee by a military oath, extremely willing, being devoted to thy service with the greatest readiness of soul, alacrity, inclination, and voluntary obedience. Nor are they willing only, but willingness itself, in the abstract; nay, willingnesses in the plural number, the highest and most excellent willingness: all which add an emphasis. And such it is ביום חילך in the day of thy power" [valour], in which thy generous Spirit, laying hold on them, animates them to some grand and bold enterprise. Then they go forth 'in the beauties of holiness,' by which they are a terror to the

devil, a delight to God and angels, and a mutual edification to one another."

LXII. These brave soldiers of Christ are not without their ambition, which Paul describes, 2 Cor. 5:9, Διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, wherefore we labour [make it our ambition], to be accepted of him." God never beholds himself without the highest complacency; above all, he is delighted with his own perfections, and with holiness, which is the glory of them. When he sees any delineations of this in his creatures, there he in a manner stands still, and delights his eyes with so pleasing an object, and declares by words and actions, that nothing can be more acceptable to him. And this is the holy ambition of believers, so to behave in the whole course of their life, and to have their mind so disposed, as in both to please God. Of old, Satan inspired a wicked ambition into our first parents, to labour after the image of God in a false way, by attempting what was forbidden them. But the heavenly Spirit is the author of a more generous ambition, which stirs the man up to imitate God in the habits of his soul, and the actions of his life, that he may, upon earth, present something before God, in which he may take pleasure, as in a lively image of himself, Nothing can be more noble than this holy ambition.

LXIII. What is said, Cant. 1:9, is very remarkable. "I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharoah's chariot." For the understanding this passage, we are to explain. 1st, Why the church is compared to a horse. 2dly, Why to an Egyptian horse. 3dly, Why to a horse in the king's chariots. As to the first. 1. Al horse suffers itself to be easily managed and led, not only with spur and bridle, but also with the whip. Thus Strabo writes, lib. 17, that the Massylians and Lybians made use of horses so swift and manageable that they could be governed by the whip only: hence Martial says, lib.

9, Epigr. 23, "Et Massylæum virgo gubernet equum. And manage a Massylean horse with a rod." Wherefore the very learned Bochart, Hierozoic., lib. 2, c. 6, refers the Hebrew word מוֹס to a word used by the Arabs, which signifies to manage and govern. See what Lipsius has collected, Centur. 3, ad Belgas, Epist. 56, concerning the nature, fidelity, and natural affection of horses. Such also are the godly; for, as they have renounced their own will, so they are docile and manageable at the least command of God, saying, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." 2. A horse is a very strong creature, and hence it is, Jer. 8:16, and 47:3, called, אביר strong. Whence the very learned person ingeniously conjectures, that Epirus, a country famous for horses, had its name. In like manner, the godly "go in the strength of the Lord God," Ps. 76:6; "they can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth them," Phil. 4:13. And perform such things in overcoming the world and conquering sin, as far exceed the strength of other men. 3dly, A horse is a generous animal, to which God himself gives an illustrious encomium as an emblem of warlike prowess, Job 39:22, &c. Bochart, 1. c. chap. 8 has given us a very distinct explication of that passage. And certainly there is something heroical in the godly, which, whenever Christ, salvation, and piety, are concerned, discovers itself in a manner that may astonish those who behold it. For, the aged, the young, the helpless of both sexes, have been often seen to behave with such courage and bravery for Christ, and undergo with so much resolution the most cruel deaths in the cause of religion, that it was evident they were actuated by a spirit above that which is human. And they were "as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they did fight because the Lord was with them, and the riders on horse were confounded." Zech. 10:5.

LXIV. Moreover, Egypt was formerly famous for its horses, of which we frequently read in Scripture, 2 Kings 18:24, Isa. 31:1. Nay, the law

itself prohibited the kings of Judah too much to multiply their horses, least by that means they should bring the people back to Egypt, Deut. 17:16. However, Solomon had his horses from thence in very great numbers, 1 Kings 10:28, 29; 2 Chron. 9:28. We may then infer from this, that they were extraordinary beyond others. But to such Egyptian horses the church is compared, to show her excellent courage and boldness: for the Egyptian horse was the symbol of this, and in their ensigns they preferred it to the lion, as Clemens Alexandrinus Stromat. lib. 5, p. 567, informs us: "for, of strength and force, the lion is their symbol; but of courage and boldness, the horse."

LXV. Nor are they compared to this alone, but also to the horses in king Pharaoh's chariot, which doubtless were the most excellent, and selected from his whole kingdom. For, as the royal chariot excelled, so, who can doubt, that the king's horses excelled all others? All these comparisons are adapted to set off the nobleness of Christian piety.

LXVI. Nay, God does not stop here; but as if it was too mean, to compare his elect to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot, he promises to prepare them, כסוּם הוֹדוֹן, "as the horse of his majesty, his goodly horse in the battle," Zech. 10:3. Than which nothing could be spoken with greater magnificence. The holy person is really as a horse prepared for the battle of the Lord, and the horse of the Supreme Commander, of the Divine Majesty, which, on account of its strength and valour is worthy to be mounted by the king of heaven himself. Wherefore, even he who had his name written on his vesture and on his thigh, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords," was seen by John fitting on "a white horse," Rev. 19:11; by which is denoted the genuine professors of truth, and sincere followers of holiness, with whom Jesus fights, and in whom he rests and is glorified.

LXVII. But that this pre-eminence of Christian virtues may appear more evidently, three things are distinctly to be considered. 1st, Their original. 2dly, Their rule. 3dly, Their end; for in these things their super-excellence consists above all the virtues or graces of the unsanctified.

LXVIII. As to their original, the virtues of the heathen, and the actions proceeding from thence, have their rise from some remains of the divine image, still left in man since the fall; such as innate notions, some love of honesty, the incentives of a natural conscience; besides those, some have had a liberal education, applied themselves to the study of philosophy; and enjoyed some special benefits of the common providence of God, repressing, restraining, and curbing innate corruption, and, on the other hand, exciting them to the practice of a much more regular life than the common herd of mankind, so that these virtues had no higher nor better original than nature, excited by the assistance of common providence, Rom. 2:14, 15: "the Gentiles do, by nature, the things contained in the law, and show the work of the law written in their hearts."

LXIX. But the practice of Christian holiness has its rise, 1st, From the spirit of grace, which Christ has merited for, and bestows on his elect, "whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him," John 14:17, who, seeing he is the Spirit of Christ, excites, in the elect, even the very same motions and inclinations of soul which are in Christ, and moulds and forms the whole life of Christ in them: so that they act, not by their own virtue or strength, nor by any innate principle of natural life, but by supernatural grace, and the virtue of Christ. 1 Cor. 15:10: "Not I, but the grace of God, which is with me;" and Heb. 12:28: "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably."

LXX. 2dly, From faith, "without which it is impossible to please God," Heb. 11:6. For, εὐαρεστῆσαι, to please, signifies here to walk before God, as is evident from the foregoing verse, where the apostle says, that Enoch, before his translation, had this testimony, that he pleased God. By which words he undoubtedly has an eye to what we have, Gen. 5:24: "and Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." For to walk with God the Septuagint every where translate, εὐαρεστεῖν τῷ Θεῷ, to please God; they also, in some places, render שרת, to serve, by the same word. The apostle here imitates their way of speaking, in like manner as Tit. 2:9, where he enjoins servants, "ἐν παντί εὐαρεστοὺς εἶναι, in all things to please them," that is, so to behave as in every thing to do what is wellpleasing to their masters.

LXXI. But faith, without which nothing can be done that is acceptable to God, is that virtue or grace which is the beginning of the spiritual life, or the first work of the Holy Spirit uniting us to Christ. And there are various ways to prove that without this a man can do nothing that is good. 1st, Seeing faith apprehends and applies to itself all the efficacy of Christ's merits, it has a power "of purifying the heart," Acts 15:9. But so long as that fountain of the heart is impure, nothing pure can flow from it: for "unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure," not even their food; "but their mind and conscience is defiled," Tit. 1:15. On the contrary, "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. 1:5. 2dly, By faith we are justified and are restored to the favour of God. But it is necessary that the persons of sinners be acceptable to God in Christ before their works can be so. For how can the work of that man please God who is an abomination and execration to him? First, God had respect to Abel, then to his offering, Gen. 4:4. "Be it far," says Augustine, lib. 4, contra Julianum, c. 3, "that any one should be really virtuous who

is not righteous. But be it far that he should be truly righteous who does not live by faith; for the just shall live by faith. 3dly, It is not possible that any can truly love God, and endeavour, from a principle of love, to do what is acceptable to him, unless he know him to be such, as he manifests himself in Christ the Mediator? But it is the proper work of faith to behold God in Christ; and thus faith worketh by love, Gal. 5:6. 4thly, As faith first unites us to Christ, so it continually draws virtue, efficacy, and life from him, by a spiritual suction and attraction, whereby we may be enabled to act in a holy manner. "The life which I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. 2:20."

LXXII. But besides that common faith, which is the fountain of all spiritual life, another more special faith is requisite to the goodness of our actions, consisting in a certain persuasion of mind, that the work we undertake is good and holy, or at least lawful, and nowhere prohibited. For, whoever does any thing, about which he is not certain, that it is acceptable to God, does by that very action show that he is not affected with a due reverence for the Deity, nor endeavours, as is fit, to avoid the displeasure and indignation of God. And to this, I imagine, the apostle has an eye, Rom. 14:23: "He that doubteth;" that is, who is not persuaded in his conscience, that he may lawfully eat of any food; "is condemned, if he eat;" that is, is judged to have acted amiss: "because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." For here the apostle presses what he had enjoined, ver. 5, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

LXXIII. 3dly, The practice of Christian holiness flows from the love of God, and consists in that very ambition which we have recommended from 2 Cor. 5:9, of doing what is acceptable to God. And in this Christian holiness surpasses all the virtuous actions of

the heathen, who were very justly commended, if what they did proceeded from the love of that virtue they were acquainted with; but as that love did not ascend to God himself, but centred in a created, nay, and in a very defective thing, such as their virtue was, it was not a holy love, but a vicious affection, which indirectly and sinfully terminates in man himself.

LXXIV. Jansenius, lib. 4, de statu naturæ lapsæ. chap. 11, seq., has treated distinctly and at large on this subject, where he speaks to this purpose: "This therefore was the proper defect of philosophical virtue, even when purest, that being delighted with a certain ruinous height of virtue, they earnestly desired it for this end, that they might be great in their own esteem, delight and please themselves; whereas it became them to please God, or the truth, as Augustine speaks. This vice of self pleasing so closely adheres to those who seek not to please either God or men, that it is not possible such persons should not fall into it." To which he immediately subjoins: "Whoever lifts not up his eyes to God, in order to please him from the beauty of virtue, but admires it alone, as the end of good, the fairest and the most exalted; it is impossible that either desiring it he should not thence please himself, or not willing thence to please himself, he should desire it. Seeing it is altogether necessary, the soul of man should delight in something. With what other object, pray, can a soul alienated from God be delighted, and looking down, as we suppose, with contempt on the other meaner creatures, than with what he imagines to be most excellent among created things? but this is the mind itself, now adorned with virtue, which ornament it judges the most becoming of all. He therefore necessarily pleases himself from his virtue, who desires not by it to please either God or other men." All which is sound and solid.



LXXV. Christian virtue, therefore, has a deeper and better original, than any love of virtue whatsoever, or than any complacency in one's own actions. But faith, which represents God to the soul as infinitely good and perfectly holy, and the most bountiful rewarder of good actions; as also his laws, as full of equity and justice; inflames the soul with the love of a gracious God, and of his most equitable laws; and to deem nothing preferable to, nothing more valuable than, by a conformity to those laws, to resemble him, in his measure, in holiness, and, in that resemblance, to please him. That God, looking down as it were, out of himself and from heaven, may also find upon earth what to delight himself in, as his copy; which is the highest pleasure of a holy soul. So that it loves not virtue for itself alone, but for God, whose image it is, and whom, in the practice of virtue, it pleases. From this love to God springs the practice of true holiness.

LXXVI. I cannot but transcribe an excellent passage of Clemens Alexandrinus to this purpose, who *Stromat.*, lib. v. p. 532, thus gives us the picture of a holy person: "He who obeys the bare call, so far as he is called, labours after knowledge, neither from fear nor from pleasure. For he does not consider whether any profitable gain, or external pleasure, will ensue; but being constrained by the love of what is truly amiable, and thereby excited to his duty, he is a pious worshipper of God. Were we, therefore, to suppose him to have received from God a liberty to what was forbidden, without any apprehension of punishment; nay, moreover, had he a promise of receiving the reward of the blessed; and besides, was he persuaded that his actions should escape the notice of God (which by the way is impossible);—he could never be prevailed with to act contrary to right reason, after he had once chosen what is really lovely and eligible of itself, and on that account to be loved and desired." Than which nothing more sublime can be said.

LXXVII. He would have a holy or sanctified person do every thing from a principle of love. "It becomes him who is perfect to be in the exercise of love, and so endeavour after the divine favour and friendship, while he performs the commandments by love." But this love has not renown, nor any other advantage, but virtue itself, pure virtue for its object; so he frames his life after the image and resemblance of God, no longer for the sake of renown, or, as the philosophers speak, Εύκλειαν, of a splendid name; nor from the view of reward, either from God or men. Moreover, what renders virtue amiable to him, is not that philosophical agreement it has to right reason, but because he beholds in it a resemblance to God, than which nothing can be imagined more amiable; for thus he describes it, what is truly good, he calls truly desirable, saying, "it is good by an assimilation to God to become impassive and virtuous."

LXXVIII. Yet we are not so to understand these things, as if, in the practice of holiness, we were not allowed to pay any regard to our own advantage, and that all love of ourselves ought in this case quite to disappear. We are not only allowed, but commanded to love ourselves; nor are we bound to love our neighbour without a love for ourselves. And this is not written, but a natural law, which we have learned from no other quarter, but have received from nature herself. "No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it," Eph. 5:29. We may also be lawfully stirred up to the diligent practice of holiness, by this love of ourselves. God himself, by this enticing motive, invites his people, promising that "their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. 15:58. And to what, pray, tend all those promises, by which he has recommended his commandments to us, but that, being excited by a desire of them, we should more cheerfully obey him? Not to love the promised good, is to throw contempt on the goodness of a promising God. By the love of them not to be stirred up to piety, is to abuse them to some other purpose

than God ever intended. David himself confessed, that the commandments of God were even on that account, "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb; because in keeping of them there is a great reward," Ps. 19:10, 12. And the faith of Moses is, for the same reason, commended, because "he had a respect unto the recompense of the reward," Heb. 11:26. Nay, that faith is required as necessary for all who come to God, whereby they may believe that "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," ver. 6.

LXXIX. But then, here also the love of ourselves ought to spring from the love of God, be subordinate thereto, and rendered back to him. We must not love God on our own account, so as to consider ourselves as the end, and God as the means, by which we are made happy in the enjoyment of him; but because we are God's property, whom we ought to love above all, and therefore, for his sake, we are bound to love ourselves. We are further to seek our own good, that therein we may taste the sweetness of the Lord, and that thereby we may be so much the more improved and enriched as God's peculiar treasure. Thus the love of ourselves is at last swallowed up in that ocean of divine love. Of this we shall speak a little presently.

LXXX. Let us now consider the rule or standard of holiness. Philosophers made the nature of man, right reason and the examples of excellent men, the rule. A few of them spoke of the precepts of God, and of the example which he gives us; but that, indeed, in a very slender manner. Of the nature of man, the emperor Marcus Antoninus speaks thus, lib. viii. §. 11: "Wherein consists a happy life? In doing those things which human nature requires." They are for ever talking of right reason, and of the examples of illustrious men; see Seneca, Epist. vi. 11, 25.

LXXXI. Epictetus speaks things more sublime concerning the precepts of God than could well have been expected from a heathen. He protests in Arrian., lib. iii. c. 24, towards the end, that he would live and die before God; "As thou hast required," says he, "as free as thy servant, as knowing what thou commandest and what thou forbiddest." And a little after, "do not I wholly tend towards God, and his precepts and commands?" And lib. iv. c. 7, "I am set at liberty by God, I know his commandments." And in the same book, c. 3, "I am set free, and am the friend of God, that I may willingly obey him." And a little after: "Wherefore I cannot transgress any of his commands." And to conclude: "These are edicts I must be the interpreter of, I must obey them, before the precepts of Massurius and Cassius."

LXXXII. Sometimes also they have spoken of the imitation of God, and of conformity to him. Seneca de Benefic., lib. vii. c. 31, "let us imitate the gods." Marc Antonin., lib. v. §. 27, "we must live with the gods:" and lib. ii. § 5, "live a divine life." Clemens Storm., lib. ii. p. 403. Plato, the philosopher, defining happiness, says, "it is an assimilation to God, as far as may be." See above, chap. v. sect. 2.

LXXXIII. These things are spoken in a lofty strain: nevertheless, as they had not the knowledge of any other laws of God but what nature suggests and are inscribed on the conscience; which prescribe the duties of holiness only in general, and in a very confused and imperfect manner; and as they knew not the true God in his perfections, nor ever beheld him in his sanctuary, what they had for the rule of their virtues was very defective.

LXXXIV. But Christian holiness has a far more excellent rule to go by: whether we consider its precepts or examples. Its precepts are taken from the most perfect law of God; not only that of which the

rubbish, and as it were, the faint resemblance or shadows like a passing image, still remain in the conscience of a natural man; but also that which, with so much magnificence of heavenly glory, God formerly published before the full assembly of his people, wrote with his own finger on tables of stone, enlarged with the plainest expositions of the prophets and inspired penmen, and which, by the secret efficacy of his Spirit, he writes on the hearts of the elect; which is the most exact expression not only of his most holy will, but also of his nature and perfections, so far as they are imitable by man; nor does it only regulate and order the external actions and conversation; but also reaches to man's most inward parts, directs the inmost recesses of the heart, and roots out the deepest fibres of vice, even to the very first motions of rising concupiscence; which, in fine, raises man to a perfection worthy of God.

LXXXV. This is that law, which God gave in charge to Israel, Ps. 147:19: "By which יגדיל ויאדיר, he made them great and glorious," Isa. 42:21; so that, in an astonishing manner, they excelled other nations, Deut. 4:6, 7; in which are דבִּים, μεγαλεῖα, "the most ample instructions (great things written)," Hos. 8:12: the excellency of which, and not their excellency alone, but also their most exact perfection, the psalmist has nobly set forth, Ps. 19:8, &c.; and indeed, so great was the perfection, that he could find no end to it, as he found in other perfections, Ps. 119:96. And certainly, the more a man is engaged with an attentive mind in the profound meditation of this law, the more distinctly he will understand that he is far from forming in his mind a perfect notion of that holiness prescribed by it. The Lord Jesus has said all in a few words, and comprised the whole summary of the law, calling out to his disciples (but who can understand the full force of those words?) "Be ye perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect," Matt. 5:48.

LXXXVI. Besides those most holy laws, the believer has illustrious examples of virtues for his imitation; and those not of one kind or order. And the first that here occur are the "Saints that are in the earth, and the excellent, in whom is all his delight," Ps. 16:3. We have no occasion to present you with a Socrates, a Zeno, a Cato, or a Lælius, whom Seneca recommends for this purpose. We have men actuated by the most noble and generous Spirit of God, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and the like heroes of both sexes, whom God himself honoured with familiarity, with encomiums and commendations; whose manner of life he took care to have exactly described in the most sacred volumes of our religion, and whose number is so great, that Paul calls them "a cloud of witnesses," by whose example we may be animated to run, with constancy, the race of piety, Heb. 12:1. These are proposed to us for our imitation, 1 Cor. 4:16; and 11:2; Phil. 3:17; Jas. 4:10: Heb. 13:7.

LXXXVII. However, as the most excellent saints on earth have had their blemishes, prudence is necessary in this case, that we may propose, for our imitation, only those actions of theirs, which are the most consonant to the standard of the divine law; where they have departed from the rule, let us be admonished by their mistake, and learn to walk uprightly. For this end Nehemiah wisely proposes the example of Solomon\*, Neh. 13:26. And it is of singular use to us, that the backslidings of the holy men of God are recorded in Holy Writ. Spots appear nowhere more disagreeable than when seen in a most beautiful face, or on the cleanest garment. And it is expedient to have a perfect knowledge of the filthiness of sin. We also learn from them to think humbly of ourselves, to depend on the grace of God, to keep a stricter eye upon ourselves, least perhaps we fall into the same or more grievous sins, Gal. 6:1.

LXXXVIII. But our Lord would not have us without perfect examples, and therefore he raises the meditations of his people to the inhabitants of heaven, the choirs of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect, whose conversation he recommends even in our daily prayer, "as it is in heaven." These being filled with the clearest light, and flaming with the purest love, and continually beholding the face of God, and being altogether conformed to him, incessantly show forth the praises of their Creator, and execute his commands with incredible alacrity. Is. 6:2, 3. Ps. 103:20. Rev. 4:8–11. The sacred writings testify all this concerning them. And faith not only believes, but sees all this; for being endowed with the quickest sight, it penetrates within the veil of the heavenly sanctuary, and, as if mixed with the consort of the heavenly inhabitants, views those exercises of the most consummate holiness, with the love of which the believing soul cannot fail to be inflamed.

LXXXIX. But yet, as it is very desirable to have likewise an example of perfect holiness upon earth; so God has not suffered us to be without one; for he sent his own Son from heaven, who hath left us the brightest pattern of every virtue, without exception, "that we should follow his steps," 1 Pet. 2:21. It was a part of Christ's prophetic office, to teach not only by words, but by the example of his life, that both in his words and actions, he might say, "learn of me," Matt. 11:29. The imitation of him is often recommended by the apostles, 1 Cor. 11:1. 1 Thess. 1:6. 1 John 2:6.

XC. It has been very well observed by a learned person, that we are to distinguish between imitation, whereby we are said to be μιμηται, imitators of Christ, 1 Cor. 11:1; and between following, by which we are commanded to follow Christ; between "follow me," Matt. 16:24, and "follow after me," Matt. 10:38. For the former denotes a conformity to an example: the latter, the attendance of servants

going after their masters; which words are generally confounded by writers in their own language, though they ought by no means to be so.

XCI. As we have already often inculcated, that Christ is not to be considered in a threefold respect, as man, as Mediator, and as God; so we are to inquire, in what relation or respect he is given us as an example. And first, we are not to doubt that as he represented, in his human nature, the image of God, in which the first man was created, and possessed and practised all the virtues, due by a rational creature, without any defect; in so far he is, in the most perfect manner, proposed to our imitation. Certainly, this world was hitherto destitute of such a pattern, ever since the fatal apostasy of our first parents, viz. to have a man, who, being untainted with vice, "holy, harmless, undefiled," might as a living and breathing law, converse among his brethren: such a one, God hath exhibited to us in Christ. It is a pleasure to him who loves holiness, to behold a most exact delineation of it in the written law of God. But what is that delineation but only a picture? It is indeed exact, and painted in natural colours; but then it is a picture only, without flesh and blood, without life and motion. How much greater therefore the pleasure, to behold the same holiness which is portrayed in the law, living, as it were, and animated in Christ?

XCII. What was peculiar and proper to his mediatorial office, as the honour of his mediation, whereby we are reconciled to God, and that eminent dignity by which he has the peculiar honour of being prophet, priest, and king; in sum, whatever belongs to that more excellent name, which was bestowed on Christ above his fellows: all this we are neither to imitate, nor follow the example of those who pretend to be imitators; "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2:5.



XCIII. Nevertheless, believers, after the example of Christ, and from a participation of his unction, have the honour of being prophets, priests, and kings, Joel 2:28; 1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 1:6. And consequently, it is incumbent upon them to conform to the example of Christ, in the spiritual discharge of those offices; in which, however, there is so great a difference, that besides partaking of the name, and some small analogy, scarce any coincidence can be observed. The prophetic, sacerdotal, and regal offices of Christ are of a far different nature from ours.

XCIV. But those virtues which Christ discovered in the discharge of his offices are, by all means, proposed for our imitation; as the demonstration he gave of his humility, faithfulness, love, patience, zeal, and constancy, in the whole discharge of his offices; as also his not intruding into them without a call, Heb. 5:4, 5; his faithfulness to him who had appointed him, Heb. 3:2; his not seeking his own advantage or profit, Phil. 2:4, 5; his not sinking under the reproaches and contradiction of sinners, Heb. 12:2, 3; his zeal for God's house that had eaten him up, John 2:17; his not seeking his own, but the glory of his Father in all things, John 8:49, 50, and a great deal more to the same purpose.

XCV. In fine, even as God, he, together with the Father and Holy Spirit, is a pattern to us of the purest holiness, Levit. 11:44, and 19:2; Matt. 5:48; Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. The holiness of God is so great an ornament of his other perfections, that, without it, all the rest would be unworthy of God. Hence he is said to be "glorious in holiness," Exod 15:11: and we are particularly commanded to celebrate the memorial, "or give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness," Ps. 30:4, and 79:12, after the example of the seraphim, who, having repeated the threefold praise of the divine holiness, added, "the whole earth is full of his glory," Is. 6:3. God invites his people to

imitate this holiness, has set it before them in his word for their contemplation; that while they admire its beauty, they may be inflamed with the love of it, and gradually transformed to that image.

XCVI. In the third place, we proposed to speak of the end of Christian virtues, or graces; which must needs be of all others the most excellent. The true believer does not therefore apply himself to the practice of holiness, to gain praise and reputation with men, which was the crime of the heathen and the Pharisees, of whom our Lord testifies, Matt. 6:5, that "they have their reward." He does not aim only at his own advantage, either in this or in the life to come, from a mercenary self-love, which all those do, who, endeavouring to establish their own righteousness, profess that all motives to piety are destroyed, if the merits of good works are exploded. He does not only pursue after that tranquillity of soul, which is pleased with what it has done, and which virtue or holiness, when properly esteemed, usually bestows on those who love it. The intention of the godly is far more pure and sublime, whereby they are carried out both towards God, themselves, and their neighbour.

XCVII. Above all, they seek the glory of God. This they love, desire its enlargement, and promote it with all their might. "Let such as love thy salvation, say continually, the Lord be magnified." Ps. 40:16. Hither all their exercises tend, going on "without offence, until the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God." Phil. 1:10, 11. They who have the love of God for the source and principle, cannot but have the glory of the same God for their end. For whoever has an ardent love to God, will likewise, above all things, love what is most beloved by him. But such is the love that God has to his own glory, that whatever he does, is with a view to, and for the sake of that; wherefore all things are of him, in order to be again to him, and "to

him be the glory for ever!" Rom. 11:36. In this respect the saints are truly like to God, for in all their actions they have the glory of God before their eyes. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31.

XCVIII. Yet these things are not so to be understood, as if in all and every particular, even the most minute actions of life, it was necessary to have that explicit intention of glorifying God before them. For this is not practicable in the present state of things: however, it ought universally to be the firm and fixed disposition of the children of God, that they be so consecrated and dedicated to God, as, for the future, neither to think, speak, meditate, nor do any thing, in which some expression of the perfections of God and manifestations of his glory may not appear. For what is sacred or devoted, cannot, without a considerable injury to him, be applied to profane uses. They are not their own: therefore it is unlawful for them to propose to themselves this end; only to seek what they imagine will be profitable to the flesh. They are not their own: let them therefore, as far as may be, forget themselves and theirs. They are God's: let them therefore live and die to him. They are God's: let his wisdom therefore over-rule all their actions. They are God's: let therefore all the parts of their life tend to him, as their only lawful end. And in this sincere self-denial, and surrender of ourselves to God, that we may firmly propose to do all our works with a holy respect to him, consists this glorifying of God we now speak of.

XCIX. For instance, a person then eats and drinks to the glory of God, when, confessing himself unworthy to enjoy this life and the conveniencies of it, he praises that bountiful favour of God, which abundantly bestows all things upon him, and above all admires that immense love of the Lord Jesus, who willingly was destitute of all the dainties of life, and submitted to drink vinegar and gall, that his

people, through the favour of God, might eat the fat and drink the sweet: when also he does not delight so much in the creatures and the gifts of providence, as in the Creator himself and the giver; tasting to his unspeakable pleasure, how sweet the Lord is: when he sincerely proposes faithfully to employ his life, which is lengthened out by these means, and all his faculties, which are thus continually refreshed, to the service of God, who gave and preserves them: when, in fine, he rises in meditation, from the delights of this natural life, to the almost unspeakable pleasures of a future and heavenly life; and having a prelibation of them in thought and faith, with a grateful heart tunes up a song of love to God: "Lord, if thou doest such things in this dark dungeon, what wilt thou not do for us, when admitted into thy palace of light!"

C. Here I choose to transcribe some things from the Jewish catechism of Rabbi Abraham Ben Chanania Jagel, published first at Venice in 1595, under the title טו טקל, afterwards reprinted at Amsterdam 1658, and at last exhibited to the Christian reader, with a Latin version by John Benedict Carpzovius, entitled, *Introductio in Theologiam Judiacam*, c. ix. p. 74. Where the Hebrew Catechist instructs his disciple in this manner: "Let all thy works be done to the glory of the divine name, and to the honour of the blessed Creator. In all thy ways think of him; when thou walkest in the way, when thou risest up or liest down. For instance, when thou eatest, know that the blessed God has, by the power of his wisdom, created thy food, and given it virtue to be converted into the substance of him, who is to be nourished by it: when thou goest to sleep in thy bed, consider with thyself, that God ordained sleep for the benefit of man, that his body might rest and his strength be recruited, and himself rendered fit and sound for serving his Creator. And thus, in all thy other bodily actions, take care to give glory and praise to God: for, by this means,

all thy works shall be to the glory of the divine name, whose providence will keep close to thee and direct all thy actions."

CI. Next to this glory of the divine name, a holy person may also, in the exercise of his virtues or graces, have a regard to himself, and endeavour, 1st, To have the assurance of his own eternal election by God, his internal vocation, his faith and communion with Christ, 2 Pet. 1:10. 2dly. To rejoice in the testimony of a conscience void of offence, and in that composure of mind, which is the consequent thereof, 2 Cor. 1:12. 3dly. That, by proving the sincerity of his love towards God by holy actions, he may enjoy for himself that love and familiarity of God, which Jesus, John 14:21, 23, has graciously promised to those that love him. 4thly. That he may gradually become, in the habits and dispositions of his soul, and the actions flowing therefrom, more like the Supreme Being, and so more glorious and happy. 2 Cor. 3:18. 5thly. And that, by proceeding in this way of holiness to eternal glory, he may live at ease, and in assurance of his salvation, 1 Cor. 9:24–27.

CII. Nevertheless, Christian holiness teacheth us to desire all these things, but not to rest in them, as our ultimate end, but even to direct them to the glory of God. For, the more abundantly any one has attained to what we have just now only mentioned, the brighter will the splendour of the divine perfections shine forth in him: the goodness and bounty of God magnificently discover themselves in this reward of virtue: the beloved spouse of Christ, whom he will one day present without spot, and glorious to God the Father, shall be the more adorned: the high value of his satisfaction and merits will be duly esteemed, from the happiness bestowed on the saints. The saints themselves shall be enriched with those rewards of their virtues, and be better fitted for celebrating the praises of their God. And thus it is, that while they piously aim at the happiness promised

to them, and seek their own glory in the proper order and measure, they, at the same time, "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," Rom. 5:2. For then they are made happy, when God is glorified and admired in them, 2 Thess. 1:10.

CIII. In fine, the works of piety are also adapted to gain over our neighbour to God. The holy soul never satisfies itself in glorifying God; but designs to have many companions employed in the same work: to obtain which, he causeth his light to shine before men, that they may see his good works, and glorify his Father, which is in heaven, Matt. 5:16. And having a hearty desire for the salvation of his neighbour, he very willingly employs every means to bring him to the good old way. For this purpose, as nothing is more effectual than a holy life; so Peter calls upon Christian wives to apply thereto, "that if any obey not the word, they also may, without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives," 1 Pet. 3:1. And certainly, whoever are made partakers of that extraordinary grace of God, and translated out of darkness into his marvellous light, will labour, by the reflected rays of divine love, also to enlighten, inflame, and make others partake of the same happiness with themselves. And who can conceive any thing more holy, more praiseworthy than this?

CIV. This is that generous holiness which the Spirit of grace powerfully operates in the elect, and which he promotes by the use of various means. Though the use of these means is required of man, yet their efficacy depends on the blessing of God alone. Nor indeed, is it without the interposition of God, that man can and will savingly use those means. For daily experience teacheth us how dull and languid we usually are in those things, when the influence of the Spirit either ceases or is but small. Among those means of sanctification, the following deserve to be most recommended.

CV. We justly give the first place to the word of God, and the devout meditation of it. God sanctifieth us through his truth, his word is truth, John 17:17: for as it proceeds from the Holy Spirit, the characters of the divine holiness are imprinted upon it, and as, in every part, it sends forth the most fragrant odour of holiness, so it inspires the pious reader with it, though perhaps he may not understand all that he readeth: which Chrysostom has likewise observed in Orat. 3. in Lazar. "Even though thou dost not thoroughly understand the contents, yet even the reading begets a very great degree of sanctification."

CVI. And whatever is contained in the word of God is directed to this end. The precepts of the law, which exhibit the exactest delineation of holiness, are adapted to inflame the soul with love to it, Ps. 119:8–10. The threatenings annexed to the law, and the recorded instances of those judgments, by which God has punished sin, are so many powerful dehortations from it, 1 Cor. 10:6, 11. The very ample promises made to godliness and the blessings wherewith the liberal goodness of the Deity has enriched the godly, who love and worship him, are so many incentives to holiness, Isa. 52:2, 3. The examples of the saints both teach and allure at the same time. Heb. 12:1. Their very stumblings and falls remind us of our weakness, inculcate humility, teach us to take heed to ourselves, and point out what things we ought to avoid, Neh. 13:26. But nothing more effectually persuades to piety than the doctrine of grace revealed in the Gospel, Tit. 2:12; and whoever abuse it to lasciviousness, never knew the truth, as it is in Jesus: "for the word of the truth of the Gospel, in all the world bringeth forth fruit, since the day they heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth," Col. 1:5, 6.

CVII. But in order to obtain this fruit of holiness from the word of God, it is, 1st. To be diligently, daily, and carefully attended to, and

as Chrysostom speaks, it is to be read with a mystic silence, or profound attention, John 5:39. 2dly. Diligently heard: for the public preaching of the word has very excellent promises, Rom. 10:14, 15, 17. 3dly. When read and heard it is to be laid up in the inward treasure of the soul, there to be kept as the most valuable treasure, Job 23:12, Ps. 119:11, Luke 2:19. 4thly. But it is not to be kept in some remote corner of the memory, there to rot in mouldiness and dust, but at times it is to be brought forth, and made the object of holy meditation; whereby the soul, by ruminating and sucking as it were, attracts and turns into its own substance, that quickening and nourishing juice, that is to be found in the word of God, Ps. 1:2, Jos. 1:8. 5thly. It is expedient to have always at hand some powerful striking passages of Scripture, wherewith we may be armed against the attacks of sin, and excited to duty. This was what the Lord meant when he ordered Israel to bind his word as a sign upon their hand, and to be as frontlets between their eyes, Deut. 6:8. Why between their eyes? To be a rule of life continually before their mind. Why bound upon their hand? To put them in mind that knowledge was to be reduced to practice.

CVIII. Very wisely indeed, did the emperor Antonine address himself thus, Lib. iii. §. 13, "As surgeons have always their instruments ready for some unexpected operation, so have thou at hand thy philosophical principles, in order to distinguish between things divine and human." Similar to this is what Seneca has, de Benefic. Lib. vii. c. 1: "Demetrius, the Cynic, was wont to say very well: that it is more beneficial to have a few precepts of wisdom in readiness for practice, than to learn a great deal, and not have it at hand for use." And c. ii: "Our Demetrius orders the proficient to hold these things fast, and never let them go; nay, to imprint them on his mind, and make them a part of himself; and, by daily meditation, to bring himself to that pitch, that what is useful shall spontaneously occur,



and what is wanted shall, upon all occasions, directly present itself." What they spoke concerning the precepts of wisdom, which Epictetus called πρόχειρα βοηθηματα, ready aids, we may affirm concerning some striking passages of Scripture, which it is expedient to have in such readiness, that, on any occasion, they may spontaneously cast up to the mind.

CIX. Secondly, The attentive consideration of the Lord Jesus is a most powerful means of sanctification. The vileness and hideous nature of sin nowhere more clearly appears, than in the meanness, humiliation, and sufferings of Christ. For what was it that clothed the Lord of glory with the contemptible form of a servant? What overwhelmed the mighty lion of the tribe of Judah with horror and anguish, that he was almost ready to sink under them? What roused the cruel bands of hell to arms against him? What turned the flowing rivers of heavenly consolations into the most melancholy dryness? What mixed those bitterest of bitters in the cup of the divine fury, with which the Son of God's love was almost struck with astonishment and amaze? Sin, certainly was the cause of all, Isa. 53:5. Who can reflect on this, and not be inflamed with the most irreconcilable hatred to it? Will he not endeavour to avenge himself of that hideous monster, which so cruelly afflicted his most beloved Lord, and which, unless it be first slain, will, with the same fierceness, rage against all those who give it a favourable entertainment? Who can prevail on himself to be again enslaved by that tyrant, from whose chains, burning with hell-fire, he seriously believes and considers, he could not have been delivered but by the accursed death of the Son of God? And thus the meditation of the sufferings of Christ makes us, that "being dead to sin, we should live unto righteousness," 1 Peter. 2:24.

CX. Nor did the incredible love of God towards wretched mortals ever, on any occasion, more evidently present itself to view, than in Christ Jesus; which may melt down the most frozen hearts, and kindle them into the brightest flames of mutual returns of love; "for the love of Christ constraineth us," &c. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. Whoever is deeply engaged in the meditation of this, will he not cry out with admiration, "Wast thou, most loving Jesus, scorched no less in the flames of thy love for me, than in those of the divine wrath against my sins, and shall I be lukewarm in returns of love to thee? Didst thou die for my salvation, and shall I not live to thy glory? Didst thou descend to hell on my account, and shall not I at thy command, cheerfully walk in the way to heaven? Didst thou give thyself up for me to be tormented with hell-pains, and I not render myself to thee, to bear thy yoke, which is easy, and thy burden, which is light?" It cannot be expressed how much the pious soul, while intent on such meditations as these, will be displeased with his own lukewarmness; and wish he had a soul a hundred-fold more capacious, to be all filled with the love of Christ.

CXI. And never does virtue or holiness itself charm us with a more beautiful aspect than in Christ; it is indeed as we have also formerly intimated, seen painted in the law, but here alive and breathing: in such a manner, that the more frequently it is viewed by the eyes of the mind, it transforms the beholder into the same image, 2 Cor. 3:18. When Moses had been admitted into familiar converse with God in the holy mount, where he spent forty days, the skin of his face shone with such effulgence that the eyes of the Israelites could not bear it, Exod. 34:29, 30. Thus it is with those who view Jesus the King of glory in his beauty with open face. The rays of the heavenly spirit, plentifully issuing from him, pervade the inmost parts of the soul, and conciliate to them a new vigour of spiritual life. To which the fixed contemplation of the Lord Jesus greatly contributes. The

oftener a believer beholds him in spirit, the more clearly he knows his perfections, of which his holiness is the ornament. The more clearly he knows them the more ardently he loves them. The more ardently he loves them, the more like to them he desires to become. For love aspires after a likeness to the beloved; nay, in love itself there is already a great similitude: for, "God is love," 1 John 4:8. Moreover, the more ardently he loves God, he will both the more frequently, the more willingly and attentively behold him; and thus often running round that circle of beholding and loving, for ever returning into itself, he gains by every act a new feature of this most glorious image.

CXII. Thirdly. To this contemplation of the Lord Jesus, add the practice of devout prayer, by which we may draw from the most exuberant fulness of Christ, and which he is ever most ready to impart, and grace for grace. God has promised to give all things to those who ask according to his will, 1 John. 5:14. But we can ask nothing more agreeable to the will of God, and which he more willingly gives, than his Spirit, Luke 11:13. Who, as he is the principal cause of our sanctification, so is the author and finisher of it. Let this therefore be our daily prayer to God: "Teach me to do thy will; let thy good Spirit lead me into the land of uprightness," Ps. 143:10. "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer," Ps. 19:13, 14.

CXIII. Fourthly. Whoever seriously endeavours to be a proficient, must in all things give himself up to the government and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Whenever he begins to work internally by his suggestions, impulses, and emotions, we are with care and solicitude,

to observe them; and above all, beware that we do not despise and grieve the Spirit, or stifle his operations, Eph. 4:30, 1 Thess. 5:19. For the Spirit of God is a delicate thing; he deals by us, as we deal by him. If with care and alacrity we follow his conduct, he will manifest himself to us with a more cheerful and serene countenance, will carry us forward to higher attainments, bring us nearer to God and to heaven, and abundantly favouring us with his joys, make us cheerfully, and without weariness, run the race that is set before us. But if we indolently neglect his influences, he will not bear that affront, but will withdraw with those his sweetest suggestions, leave us to ourselves, justly expose us to be harassed by the devil and the flesh, and himself disquiet us with his terrors; till being brought to observe how ill we have regarded our own interest, by this indolent carelessness, and how we are nothing without him, we have again reconciled him to us by means of humble prayer and supplication. Let us therefore readily spread all our sails, while this heavenly breeze continues to blow, lest this prosperous gale should shortly die away, or the storm come on, and so our sailing to the fair haven of salvation be prevented.

CXIV. Fifthly. It is also expedient that we renew our covenant with God, and those promises by which we formerly bound ourselves to the sincere observance of his commandments; frequently saying, "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments," Ps. 119:106. It was an excellent advice of Epictetus, apud Arrianum, Lib. i. c. 14: "You ought to swear to God as soldiers to their general. And to what are you to swear? That you will always obey him, never accuse him, nor find fault with whatever he is pleased to bestow," &c. And certainly that oath being thus renewed, if no other advantage attend it, will be of use, 1st. To restrain the soul from sin, by being put in mind of its late promise. 2dly. To quicken its indolence into zeal. 3dly. To raise it when fallen, and teach it to

mourn for its sins with more than ordinary bitterness, especially as the guilt of treachery and perjury is added to all the rest.

CXV. Sixthly. Holiness is greatly promoted, if, by a careful and frequent examination of conscience, you recollect your deeds and words, nay, and your very thoughts, that with shame and sorrow, you may confess to God what you have done, either altogether wrong, or not sufficiently right, and endeavour to reform for the time to come; or if, by glorifying God for what you have done well, and rejoicing in the testimony of a quiet conscience, you are animated with cheerfulness to pursue that course of religion you have entered upon. David declares that he acted in this manner, to the great improvement of holiness. Ps. 119:59, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies."

CXVI. The heathens themselves have recommended this examination of conscience, and, if they made not a false profession, were not negligent in the practice of it. Antoninus, lib. v. §. 31: "Recollect with thyself, how thou hast hitherto behaved towards the gods, thy parents, brethren, wife, &c. Whether thou hast committed any thing towards any of them, either in deed or even word, which did not become you." Lib. viii. §. 2: "In every action ask thyself, how far is this proper for me, may I not have cause to repent of it?" Seneca, lib. iii., de Ira, c. 36: "The soul is to be called to a daily account. This Sextius did at the close of the day, when, before he went to sleep, he would ask his soul, What evil of thine hast thou cured to day? What vice hast thou resisted? In what respect art thou become better? What therefore can be more excellent than this practice of canvassing the whole day? What sleep is that which ensues on the review of oneself? How calm, how excellent and free, when the soul is either commended or admonished, and a secret spy and censor of herself takes cognizance of her manners?" As to what

Seneca adds concerning himself, the reader may see in the author. It is all excellent and divine. But the chosen people of God are to endeavour not to be put to the blush in this respect by the heathen.

CXVII. To conclude, (for should I expatiate on every particular, this chapter would swell to a large volume,) whoever would make progress in holiness, must willingly and thankfully suffer admonition and reproof. "It is peculiar to God, and above human nature, never to commit sin," said Gregory Nazianzen formerly, Orat. xv., in plagam grandinis. But to cure this evil no remedy is more salutary than prudent and friendly admonition. "As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear," Prov. 25:12. Hence faithful reproof is acceptable to the godly. "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities," Ps. 141:5. It was finely spoken by whoever he was, whether Gregory Nazianzen or Methodius (for the author is not agreed on, as Gataker has observed on M. Antoninus, lib. vi. §. 21): "I think it a greater happiness to be reproved, than to reprove; as it is much greater for oneself to be delivered from evil, than to deliver another."

CXVIII. There can be no doubt, but whoever carefully walks in this way, shall make very great progress in sanctification, and daily arrive more and more at a nearer conformity to the pattern set before him. However we are not to imagine, that ever any one in this life can attain to that perfection which the law of God requires, that, being without all sin, he should wholly employ himself in the service of God, with that purity, that intensesness of all his powers, that the divine holiness itself could find nothing in him but what was agreeable to it. The contrary is evident: 1st. From express testimonies of Scripture, in which it is asserted, that none liveth who sinneth not,

stumbleth and falls not, 1 Kings 8:46, Eccl. 7:20, Prov. 20:9, James 3:2, 1 John 1:8. 2dly. From the humble and sincere confession of the saints, who every where own their blemishes and failings, Ps. 19:12, Rom. 7:18, 19, Phil. 3:13, 14, Isa. 64:6. 3dly. From an induction of particular examples. For there are none, even of the most excellent among the saints, whose actions are more largely described, but who have also some blemishes recorded, which, in some measure throw a shade on the light of the most shining virtues. These things are more notorious than need to be repeated here; nor do we with pleasure mention them. So far are we from taking any delight in the infirmities of the most excellent men of God, or wishing to detract from their heroic virtues, when we sometimes speak of their faults; that, on the contrary, we have an inward horror at the remembrance of them, and deservedly tremble at the consideration of our own weakness, because the latchets of their shoes we are not worthy to loose.

CXIX. The principal and proper cause of this imperfection is to be found in ourselves. It is the still indwelling flesh; or corruption which, though really subdued by the efficacy of the Spirit, with respect to its reign, Rom. 6:14, yet vexes the godly: and, as that unhappy incumbrance retarded Atalanta,\* so also believers are retarded by this corruption in their Christian race; while the flesh continually lusts against the spirit, it hinders the elect from cheerfully performing what otherwise they would most earnestly desire to do, Gal. 5:17, Rom. 7:15, 16. By the Spirit the renewed man certainly tends upwards; but the flesh soon with great struggling pulls him down again, like a heavy stone tied to the feet of one of the fowls of heaven. With a courageous boldness believers enter upon all the exercises of every virtue or grace, Ps. 119:128, Acts 24:16, and while they go on in all the strength of the Lord their God, Ps. 71:16, they undertake what far surpasses the capacity and power of natural

men, and thus, at a great pace, they press forward to perfection, like those who hunt down some wild beast in hopes to possess it, Phil. 3:14. But inherent corruption, innate perverseness, heightened by so many vicious acts, the sin that easily besets us, Heb. 12:1, again spoils and taints all. And this abides in man till his death: "it dwells, but reigns not; abides, but neither rules nor prevails: in some measure it is rooted out, but not quite expelled; cast down, but not entirely cast out," as Bernard elegantly speaks, in Ps. 90, Sermon 10. According to the law of Moses, when an earthen vessel was once ceremoniously unclean, it remained impure till it was broken. Lev. 11:33. Such earthen vessels are we, 2 Cor. 4:7; for after we are defiled with sin we do not attain to perfect purity, till the earthen vessel of our body is broken by the stroke of death.

CXX. When the apostle speaks of the conflict between the spirit and the flesh, in a sanctified person, we are not to think that the conflict arises only from this, that the glandula pinealis can be impelled on one side by the soul, on the other by the animal spirits, and that these two impulsions are often contrary; so that the flesh may be then judged to prevail when the animal spirits prove the stronger; but the spirit to predominate when the soul, by a determinate judgment, proves more powerful in the impulsions of that pineal gland. For though it is a very great truth that the inordinate motions of the animal spirits excite very many vicious thoughts and appetites in the soul, yet the conflict of the spirit with the flesh does not consist in that of the soul with the body. As new habits are put into the soul by the sanctifying spirit, so there are likewise in the soul itself the remains of the old man; these are two distinct principles of action. But sometimes when the man is left to himself he may think, reason, desire, from that vicious principle; at other times he is excited by the Spirit of God, he acts from a new principle of grace, which has not yet expelled all the power of sin; from these opposite principles, and



their reciprocal actings, arises that warfare we are speaking of, which is principally carried on in the soul itself, according as it is either depressed to earth by inherent corruption, or raised to heaven by a principle of a more noble life, produced by the Spirit. And when the Scripture speaks of flesh, it does not mean the body of man, but all the remaining corruption, which in its measure doth really abide in part in the body and its members, while it still has its principal seat in the soul itself, which is the proper immediate subject both of virtue and vice. The enemies therefore in this combat are not soul and body, but the grace of the sanctifying Spirit, and the remains of natural corruption.

CXXI. But known to God are the reasons of his conduct, in dispensing the operations of the Spirit of grace in believers, so that the remains of the flesh are not entirely expelled in this life, for, 1st, He would by this show the difference between earth and heaven, the time of warfare and of triumph, the place of toil and of rest, that we may the more earnestly long for our translation out of this valley of sin and misery into the heavenly country, where every thing shall be made perfect; and may, with open arms, embrace death, which will bring us to that perfection, crying out with the apostle: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom 7:24.

CXXII. 2dly, He is willing to exercise and accustom his people to patience, humility, and sympathy or fellow-feeling. As in old time he suffered the Amorites and Philistines to remain in the land of Canaan for the exercise of the Israelites, to prevent their growing indolent through a slothful ease, and dissolved in too much prosperity and quiet; so, in like manner, he exercises his saints by the remains of the flesh. For nothing teaches them to think more lowly of themselves than a daily sense of so many infirmities; nothing is more effectual to

bring them to patience than the constant assaults of those most wicked enemies, from whom, to their considerable grief, they have often experienced blows and wounds. Nothing, in fine, is more adapted to render them more sympathizing, with respect to the failings of others, both in judging concerning their state, and their general conversation, than the consciousness of their own defects, Gal. 6:1.

CXXIII. 3dly, By this means he strongly convinces all that the salvation of his people is owing only to his most free grace. For who that is conscious of his own infirmities and daily failings but must be obliged to acknowledge that he obtains life from God, not as the judge of merit, but as the bestower of pardon? The rigour of the law excluded from the priesthood the blind, the lame, the disjointed in any member, or those who had any such blemish, Lev. 21:18. What then can we infer but that the grace of the gospel is unmerited, which admits to the heavenly priesthood and refuses not to admit to the holy of holies made without hands those who have far worse disorders of mind? If, notwithstanding such imperfection, it be scarce if at all possible to banish the arrogance of merits out of the church, what would it be should we teach the possibility of perfection?

CXXIV. 4thly and lastly, It becomes the wisdom of God to raise his people by degrees to the highest pitch of holiness. As in the creation of the first world he began with a rude chaos and indigested mass which, in six successive days, he fashioned into this beautiful frame, till, having given the finishing hand, he rested on the sabbath, Gen. 2:2; so, in the creation of the new world of grace, beginning with nothing, he gradually leads his people higher and higher, till, on the expiration of this earthly week, on the dawn of the heavenly sabbath, he crowns them at once with holiness and glory.

CXXV. It cannot, indeed, be denied that sometimes the scripture makes mention of some who are said to be perfect even in this life. But it is to be observed that the term perfection is not always used in the same sense. For, 1st, There is a perfection of sincerity consisting in this, that a man serves God with an unfeigned heart, without any reigning hypocrisy. In this sense it is said of Job that he was "תם וישר", perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil," Job 1:1. In the same sense Hezekiah protests that he had walked before God "in truth and with a perfect heart, and done what was good in his eyes," Isa. 38:3. 2dly, There is a perfection of parts, and that both subjective with respect to the whole man, in so far as he is "sanctified wholly, in spirit, soul, and body," 1 Thess. 5:23. And objective, with respect to the whole law, when all and every one of the duties prescribed by God are observed without exception. Of this David was speaking, Psa. 119:128. "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." And it is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, Luke 1:6, that they "walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." 3dly, There is a comparative perfection ascribed to those who are advanced in knowledge, faith, and sanctification, in comparison of those who are still infants and untaught; in this manner John distinguishes little children, young men, and fathers, 1 John 2:12, 13. In that sense Paul speaks of the perfect, 1 Cor. 2:6, and Phil. 3:15. 4thly, There is also an evangelical perfection, or with a veil or covering of grace, according to which these persons are looked upon as perfect, who sincerely endeavour after perfection, God, for the sake of Christ, graciously accepting the attempts of a ready mind, and accounting every thing to be done, because what is not done is forgiven. The Apostle speaks of this, 2 Cor. 8:12 "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." Thus "we are complete in Christ," Col. 2:10, his most perfect righteousness covering all our defects. However this is to be

understood in a proper manner; for the judgment of God is always according to truth: he so judges of us and our actions, as they are; and, seeing we ourselves and our actions are imperfect, he cannot but judge us to be so. This is what we should say agreeable to Scripture, that God, on account of the most perfect obedience of Christ, graciously accepts the sincerity of his people, nor less bountifully rewards them, than if their holiness was in every respect complete. 5thly, and lastly, There is also a perfection of degrees, by which a person performs all the commands of God, with the full exertion of all his powers, without the least defect, having rooted up every depraved lust. This is what the law of God requires. And this is that perfection which we deny the saints to have in this life, though we willingly allow them all the other kinds above mentioned.

CXXVI. It is certainly true that, when God enjoins us by his law to love him with our whole heart, soul, and strength, these expressions denote an absolute perfection, both of degrees and parts. Nor can he require any thing less than the most perfect obedience of man, even of sinful man, as we showed, book. i., chap. ix., sect. xii., &c. But when it is said of Josiah, 2 Kings 23:25, "And like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses," this is to be understood in a certain diminutive sense, so as to denote his sincerity, and the beginnings of, and endeavours after, a due perfection, and to signify God's gracious esteem of him in the Messiah. In the same sense the Jews, in the time of Asa, bound themselves by an oath to seek the God of their fathers "with all their heart, and with all their soul," 2 Chron. 15:12. All which are said to have been done, ver. 15. But yet none will say that the Jewish people completely fulfilled all the holiness that the law required, seeing the high places were not taken away out of Israel, ver. 17. And then who will imagine that the condition of an entirely perfect obedience was

exacted of the descendants of David before they could come to be partakers of the promises that were given them, yet this the words of God seem naturally to import, 1 Kings 2:4: "If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul." And that the commendation given Josiah cannot be taken in its full import appears from comparing it with 2 Kings 18:5, where it is said of Hezekiah, "after him was none like him, among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him." If these words be taken in both places, in their full import, and are not reconciled by a favourable interpretation, they involve a manifest contradiction. Wherefore it is evident that in both places there is a kind of hyperbole, or the commendation of both kings is not to be understood absolutely, but conditionally, in the order taken for the reformation of the public worship, in which the one may be said, in a different respect, to have done something more than the other.

CXXVII. We beg, indeed, in the Lord's prayer that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, in which consists the utmost perfection of piety; nor did the Lord Jesus prescribe to us that part of the prayer in vain: and John says, 1 John 5:14, "Whatever we ask according to his will, he heareth us;" but yet we cannot infer from hence the absolute perfection of holiness in this life. For the particle, as, does not, in this petition, denote an absolute equality in degrees, but a similitude in the thing, and the manner of it, in the sincerity, readiness, and alacrity of submission to the will of God, as well his commanding as his decreeing will; for it is used, both in the fourth petition and Matt. 5:48, in the same signification. The godly are indeed allowed, nay are commanded, to aspire to perfection, and to endeavour to come the nearest to it possible: it is also acceptable to God to express that love of perfection in their prayers; however, seeing God has expressly declared that he does not give his people absolute perfection in this life, it is the duty of all to acquiesce in this

disposition of the divine will, nor are they allowed to beg of God to grant them that perfection here, which they know he has not appointed for this, but for the other life.

CXXVIII. We very well know, that our Lord, Luke 15:7, speaks of one sinner that repenteth, and of ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. But neither does this favour the pretended perfection of this life; for there is a two-fold repentance. The first universal, whereby the human sinner, who is estranged from the knowledge and worship of God, and all true religion, betakes himself or turns to God and to the practice of virtue; the second renewed and particular, to which, as to a sacred anchor, the regenerate themselves are often obliged to have recourse. And of this again there is a three-fold difference. For, 1st, It is possible that they who are sanctified may fall into some grievous sin, which lays them under the necessity of the greatest sorrow, and a very extraordinary degree of repentance. 2dly, It is also possible, that such may, for a time, fall into a kind of spiritual faintness and listlessness, and, for some space, continue in that state, which may expose them to very many sins; from which they are to rise by a renewal of repentance. 3dly, Should not this be the case, yet, in the very best, there are sins of daily infirmity, cleaving to their actions, words, and thoughts, from which no one, who accurately examines himself, will dare to declare he is free. Now let us apply these distinctions to our present purpose. When our Lord speaks of a sinner causing joy in heaven by his repentance, it is evident, he treats either of that first and universal, or of the renewed repentance from some more grievous fall, and a state not so commendable. This, he says, the just need not, because they have already performed the first, and are solicitously careful that they be under no necessity of the latter; yet he does not say that they are free from all necessity of repentance; for though perhaps there may be some just persons, who, for a considerable time, are careful to be

kept from more gross sins, or from falling into that sluggish state we have just described, and so not to stand in need of those ways of repentance; yet there is none upon earth who, on account of his daily failings, is not bound daily to renew his repentance. In a word, what our Lord says comes to this: that there is greater joy in heaven, on account of great sinners, when they are first converted; or for the regenerate, when returning after a shameful backsliding, than for those in whom, on account of their constant practice of a more strict piety, there is no such remarkable and conspicuous change to be observed.

CXXIX. It might here not improperly be asked, why a greater joy is said to be in heaven for the conversion of one repenting sinner, than for the constancy of ninety and nine persons in holiness; seeing a greater good may justly cause a greater joy, as it is certainly better to have kept a steady course of piety, than to return to the right way, after great backsliding. I answer, 1st, That when our Lord made use of parables, and, according to his custom, suited himself to the capacity of his hearers, he spoke of divine things after the manner of men. But it is evident, that when any good comes of a sudden, it causes greater joy than any other greater good one has for some time been in quiet possession of; and that the recovery of things lost more strongly affects the mind than in the uninterrupted keeping of others. The same also in its measure is the case here. The angels doubtless rejoice that the just labour after and press on to happiness; but they have, for a long time, been rescued from the snares of the devil. But when a wicked person is newly delivered from the snares he was in, that conversion, and the salvation of the converted, which was the consequence of it, by how much the more it was unexpected, must also yield so much the greater pleasure. 2dly, Here our Lord speaks according to the old Jewish divinity. The Jews affirmed, "that when a Hebrew sins, the angels weep." Our Lord says, that, on the

conversion of any person, the angels rejoice. The Jews said, "the dignity of the penitent is greater than that of the perfectly just." And, "in the place where the penitent stand, there the perfectly just stand not." Which testimonies Drusius, Ludovicus Capellus, and Grotius, have long ago produced. The reason of which is this: because it is more difficult to break off a custom or habit of vice, than, after being brought to a commendable course of life, to go on without stumbling. It yields a greater pleasure when virtue is so very conspicuous. 3dly, The glory of the wisdom, power, and mercy of God, and the efficacy of the merits of Christ shine with greater glory in the conversion of a desperate sinner, than in the preservation of those who walk in the way of righteousness. As therefore the devil is more enraged when that prey is snatched from him, which he imagined he would have held fast for ever, so, in like manner, the angels justly rejoice more, when their and the enemy of their Lord is mortified to such a high degree. 4thly, And generally these are warmer in the practice of righteousness, who are instigated by the sorrow of a past life. An equable tenour of virtue is mostly more remiss: but they who are suddenly brought over from a very bad to a very good course, by the powerful arm of God, usually outstrip others by a quicker pace. They dread sin more, who were deeper plunged therein; have a more ardent love for religion, to whom its beauty has more unexpectedly appeared. And none prize the grace of God towards them more than those who know themselves to be most unworthy of it. And it is not possible but this sense of so great a love must kindle the most ardent flames of a reciprocal love. As is evident from the example of Paul, and the woman who was a sinner, Luke 7:40–48. All which yield matter of greater joy to the angels.

CXXX. Seeing we have now made a frequent mention of repentance *μετανοια*, we will subjoin something concerning the proper signification of this word. The very learned Beza, either was the first,



or among the first, who observed on Matt. 3:2, that the term μετανοεῖν is properly never put but to denote a good; and that σωφρονισμός is always joined with μετανοια: but that μεταμελεῖσθαι is expressive of a solicitude and anxiety after the doing of a thing: for which the Latins say pœnitere: and that it is also used to denote an evil, though simply signifying a kind of solicitude, and δυσαρρηστῆσις, a displicency, which makes us wish the thing that is done, whether good or bad, to be undone, even though it be out of our power to correct it. Hence he thinks, that μεταμελεῖσθαι is denoted by the Hebrew word מנח, as μετανοεῖν is rather denoted by the word נשׁוּב, whence comes נשׁוּבָה, conversion. Peter, therefore, having said, Acts 3:19, μετανοήσατε, repent, immediately subjoins, καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, and be converted, in order to explain the former. The same thing Paul does, Acts 26:20. In this the venerable Beza has been followed by very many commentators, especially when they treat of the μεταμελεία, repentance, of the traitor Judas.

CXXXI. But it may be doubted, whether there is any solid ground for this distinction. For it can neither be deduced from the etymology of either of these terms, nor confirmed by the authority of approved authors, nor proved from the constant style of Scripture, nor, in fine, concluded from the corresponding Hebrew terms: which we are now to show in order.

CXXXII. As to their etymology, μετανοέω is a word compounded of μετὰ, after and νοέω, I understand, and as Hen. Stephanus in his Thesaurus translates it, post intelligo, and thus it is opposed to the term προνοέω, ante intelligo. Very elegantly says Clemens Alexandrinus, Stromat. lib. 2: "Εἰ ἐφ' οἷς ἤμαρτεν μετενόησεν, εἰ σύνεσιν ἔλαβεν, ἐφ' οἷς ἐπταίσε, καὶ μετέγνω, ὅπερ ἐστι, μετα ταῦτα ἔγνω. Βραδεῖα γὰρ γνῶσις μετάνοια. If he has repented of his sins, recollected in what he has offended, and acknowledged it, that is,

afterwards known it; for μετάνοια is a slow kind of knowledge, that comes after something is done." But μεταμελεΐα, according to its etymology, signifies solicitude, after having committed or omitted any thing. And thus μετάνοια, which is properly an act of the understanding, reflecting on itself and its actions, in order of nature goes before μεταμελεΐα, which rather belongs to the will and affections.

CXXXIII. Both words are so used in the best authors, as indifferently to denote an after-sorrow of mind, whether in good or in evil. Hesychius explains μεταμελεΐα by μετάνοια. Suidas in like manner, μεταμελει, μετανοει. And in the Etymologicum Magnum, μεταμέλομαι, μετανοῶ, μεταγινῶσκω are used promiscuously. Gomarus, on Matt. 11:20, adduces a remarkable passage from Plutarch, περὶ εὐθυμίας, where he varies the terms, μεταμελεία and μετανοία, as words of the same signification, and describes μετανοια, as δακνομένη συν αἰσχύνῃ τῆς ψυχῆς, και κολαζομένη ὑφ' αὐτῆς• remorse and torture to itself with shame of soul: which the venerable Beza will have to be appropriated to μεταμελεία. Nay, I have observed instances where μετάνοια denotes a simple displicency: as in Marc Antonin., lib. viii. §. 2: "καθ' ἐκάστην πράξιν ἐρωτα σεαυτὸν, πῶς μοι αὐτὴ ἔλει; μὴ μετανοησω ἐπι αὐτῆ; In every action, ask thyself, How does it affects me? shall I have reason to repent it?" Ibid. §. 10: "ἡ μετάνοια ἐστὶν ἐπέληψις τῆς ἑαυτοῦ, ὡς χρήσιμόν τι παρεικονος• repentance is a kind of reprehension of ourselves, as having omitted something useful." On the contrary, μεταμέλεια is sometimes of the same signification with σωφρονισμος, amendment. In which sense Plutarch said, "πάνυ γὰρ ἡ μεταμέλεια σωτειρω δαίμων, amendment is altogether a salutary genius."

CXXXIV. Nor does the Scripture use of these words differ. For even there μεταμέλεια, sometimes denotes a sincere repentance: as Matt.

21:29, "Ὑστερον δε μεταμεληθεὶς ἀπῆλθε, but afterwards he repented and went:" and ver. 32, where our Lord upbraided the Jews for not having true repentance, says: "ὕμεῖς δὲ ἰδόντες οὐ μετεμέληθετε ὕστερνια τοῦ πιστεῦσαι αὐτῷ• and ye when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him." Where μεταμελεσθαι answers to John's invitations, expressed by μετανοεῖτε. And on the contrary, μετάνοια sometimes signifies mere sorrow. Thus Christ, Luke 17:3, treating of some degree of sorrow for offending a brother, says, "ἐὰν μετανοήσῃ, if he repent," and ver. 4, if he shall say, "μετανοῶ, I repent," I could wish it undone. And Matt. 13:41, μετανοεῖν is affirmed of the Ninevites, and their repentance was external only, not internal; civil, not spiritual; temporary, not persevering.

CXXXV. Besides, it is not universally true, that μεταμέλεια answers to the Hebrew דָּנָה; and μετανοια to נָשׁוּב. For though perhaps the Syriac interpreter of the New Testament renders μετανοεῖν constantly by נָשׁוּב: yet the Septuagint promiscuously translate דָּנָה by μεταμέλεια or μετανοεῖν. I shall single a few examples of each out of many; as 1 Sam. 15:35: "And the Lord repented (דָּנָה) that he made Saul king." The LXX., καὶ Κύριος μετεμεληθη. In verse 29. of the same chapter, דָּנָה אֱלֹהִים: the LXX., "οὐδὲ μετανοήσει, nor will he repent." Again, Ps. 110:4, דָּנָה אֱלֹהִים, the LXX., "καὶ οὐ μεταμελεθησεται, and will not repent." On the contrary, Joel 2:14, דָּנָה אֱלֹהִים: the LXX., "ἐκιστρέψει καὶ μετανοήσει, he will return and repent." In like manner, John 3:9, Jer. 4:28, and 8:6, and 31:19, and in very many other places, they have translated דָּנָה by μετανοεῖν. Whence it is evident, they thought these Greek words were synonymous.

CXXXVI. To conclude, it cannot be proved from Acts 3:19, or Acts 26:20, that μετάνοια constantly answers to נָשׁוּב, as the contrary

may be deduced from these passages. For ἐπιστρέψατε expresses the Hebrew שׁוּב, as we just shewed from Joel 2:14. As μετάνοια properly denotes the act of the soul recollecting its own actings, so, in order of nature, it goes before conversion, and is justly pre-supposed by Peter and Paul. Let these hints, therefore, suffice concerning these words. If any desire more, they may consult Grotius on Matt. 27:3, Schultetus, Exercitat. Evangelic. c. 19. Gataker advers. Miscel. c. 29, and Suiceri Thesaurus.

## **CHAPTER X: Of Conservation\***

I. THOSE to whom God has freely given faith and holiness, he likewise keeps with such solicitous care, that it is impossible for any true believer totally and finally to fall away from that holiness, when once it is begun, and thereby forfeit the salvation appointed for him. "The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil," 2 Thess. 3:3.

II. Conservation is a gracious work of God, whereby he so keeps the elect, the redeemed, the regenerated, the faithful, and the sanctified, though in themselves weak and apt to fall away, internally by the most powerful efficacy of his Spirit, externally by the means which he has wisely appointed for that purpose, that they shall never quite lose

the habits of those graces once infused into them, but be certainly brought by a stedfast perseverance to eternal salvation.

III. They whom God preserves and enables to persevere, are elected persons, or persons appointed by the immutable counsel of God, not only to some external communion of a national covenant, Deut. 8:6, but to an internal glory, Eph. 1:4, 5. They are redeemed by Christ, not only bought by that master of a family, who obtains very great though only common benefits for some, and takes them into his family in the capacity of servants, who, in that great house are at length found to be "vessels to dishonour," 2 Tim. 2:20, of whom Peter speaks, 2 Peter. 2:1, but also redeemed from the bondage of sin by the precious blood of Christ the Lord, 1 Peter 1:18, 19. They are regenerated, who have not only acquired a name to live, whereby they impose on themselves and others by some external actions which resemble the spiritual life, Rev. 3:1, but who have a principle of spiritual life implanted in them by the spirit of life, which is in Christ, Rom. 8:2. They are faithful, or believers, having not only that faith, which consists in a bare assent, nor that called temporary by our Lord and having no root, but that which is unfeigned, 1 Tim. 1:5, which influences the whole soul, and, being rooted in Christ, brings forth the fruits of holiness. They are sanctified, not only by a foederal holiness, which gives a right to the sacraments in the visible church, 1 Cor. 7:14; nor by that external holiness, whereby one has "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Peter 2:20, while yet they still retain their canine and swinish nature, ver. 22; but by a true and thorough holiness, whereby righteousness and true holiness are brought into the soul, Eph. 4:24.

IV. All these things are to be well observed lest any one should object to us, either the covenant-breaking Israelites, who were really chosen

to the communion of an external covenant, but distinguished from those who were "elected to glory," Rom. 11:7, or the false prophets, who deny the Master who bought them, and who are different from those, whom not the Master, but the Lord not only bought for any kind of benefits, but redeemed by his precious blood, 1 Peter 1:18; or those branches of Christ, who abide not in him, but are "cast forth and withered," John 15:6; for, though they may be said to have been in Christ, as to the knowledge and profession of him, and the external communion with the church, the mystical body of Christ, and in so far with Christ himself; yet they were always without the quickening communion of Christ and the nourishment of his vivifying Spirit, or those temporary believers, mentioned Matt. 12:21, whose faith, though it may be said in a sense to be true, because by a mask of a feigned profession, they do not counterfeit what they have not in their heart, but sincerely profess what they believe concerning Christ, yet this is not that true faith eminently so called, which "knoweth the grace of God in truth," Col. 1:6, and which alone constitutes the true disciples of Christ, John 8:31; or in fine, those who "trample under foot the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified," Heb. 10:29. For if that sanctification is to be referred to those profane men (which yet is not necessary, as we have elsewhere shown), it is altogether to be understood of a foederal, a sacramental, and an external sanctification, such as is also found in the dogs and swine mentioned by Peter. It was proper to premise these things concerning the genuine object of a gracious conservation, because by this very means we obviate many objections of adversaries, arising from the improper manner of handling this subject.

V. It is true, elect believers considered in themselves and in their internal principles, are weak and may fall away; nor are they alone sufficient to surmount the assaults of the world and the devil.

Indwelling sin, "which easily besets them," Heb. 12:1, still resides in their members. They are often tempted by the flattering lusts of the flesh, Gal. 5:17. The very habits of engrafted graces are exceedingly imperfect in this life; and frequently, some degrees of sloth and drowsiness steal even upon the wise virgins and the chaste spouse of Christ, Matt. 25:5, Cant. 5:2, while the devil, that cunning and powerful enemy, watches these opportunities of acting, that he might easily bring them under his power, were they left to themselves alone. The perseverance therefore of those who are so weak in themselves, is owing partly to the internal principle of immortal life, which God has graciously bestowed upon them, and partly to the external superadded divine protection, guardianship, and support, which the immutability of the divine covenant causes to be perpetually, though not equally present with them.

VI. That which God preserves in his people is the essence of the spiritual life and the habits of the Christian graces. For as to the acts, we really own it to be possible, that a true believer may gradually sink to so torpid a state, as that the activity of that excellent life may seem almost to cease, and himself be like trees almost killed by a long and severe winter. For the church of God has also its alternate changes of winter and of summer, Cant. 2:11. Nor is that remarkable prophecy, Jer. 17:8, any objection to this assertion, which experience has so often proved, "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." For that promise is not universal, nor the lot of all believers, in whatever spiritual state they may be, seeing it is certain they are sometimes like a "bruised reed," Isa. 42:3, which certainly differs very much from such a fruitful tree. Neither by heat and withholding of rain, is here understood spiritual dryness, arising from restraining that

mystical influence which is the cause of vigour in believers; for, on the contrary, the abundance of that influence is supposed, when this tree is said to be planted "by the waters" and "to spread out her roots by the river;" whereby he intimated, that it is not without the watering of the stream that washes it from which the root may draw its juice and sap. The words therefore of God in Jeremiah, contain a description of a believer, who being filled with the grace of the Spirit of God, brings forth the fruits of righteousness most abundantly, in the midst of adversities and in the want of external things.

VII. We add, that it is possible a sanctified person may be guilty of some acts, which are directly opposite to spiritual life, and to the habits of Christian graces. And experience, as well as Scripture, has proved, that the most eminent men of God have frequently fallen into grievous and atrocious sins, by which they not only deserve the entire desertion on the part of God, disinheritance, and spiritual death; but also actually very much grieve the Spirit of grace, wound the spiritual life, and very greatly diminish the assurance of faith; nay, would entirely stifle the principle of life, unless their guilt being taken away by the blood of Christ, his quickening Spirit graciously prevented this mortal efficacy of such sins.

VIII. Nor do we disown that habits themselves, as to the facility and readiness of acting, are sometimes impaired, and spiritual life itself sometimes undergoes so violent a fainting fit, as to seem to be just at the point of death. This is thought by some practical writers to have been the case of Heman, when he complained, Ps. 88:15: "I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted."

IX. When we therefore speak of conservation, we mean, that God so continues to cherish by his gracious influence the principle of



spiritual life once ingrafted, and the habits of Christian graces once bestowed, that though they may be many ways shaken by various temptations, and sometimes by very grievous sins, yet they will never entirely fall away; but afterwards resuming strength, and renewing faith and repentance, they will at last triumph over all their enemies, and continue stedfast unto death.

X. Neither do we assent to those who teach, that the salvation of the elect is so secured that death shall not come upon them while they are destitute of faith, yet who think that the spiritual life is sometimes quite destroyed, but may afterwards be restored by some new and singular act of the grace of God, so that they admit a total defect of spiritual life sometimes in the regenerate, but deny equally with us a final. They are, indeed, to be commended in that they deny not the certainty of the salvation of the elect, but are to be blamed in that they would overthrow the stability of faith.

XI. The absurdity of this opinion, not to mention other things, appears from this, that should the believer wholly apostatize from his faith, he would then no longer have any interest in Christ, to whom we are united by faith alone, would be brought under the power of the devil, become his child, and be entirely excluded the communion of God for that time, which would be effects and indications of the grievous wrath of God towards the believer under the guilt of great wickedness. But now if the wrath of God could be so great towards his children, while as yet believers, as to deprive them of the faith and right of children, I would ask, after they shall be altogether wicked and enslaved to the devil, what shall bring them again into favour, that being anew adopted and restored, they may obtain the gift of faith? For if he shall be so offended with his own children, as for their condign punishment to deprive them of life, and seclude them wholly from the communion of the Lord Jesus, in whom alone

he can be reconciled (which yet is not at all suitable to the goodness and clemency of our heavenly Father), there can be no reason given why he should again receive them into his favour, when they are neither reformed nor yet lament their past sins, which they cannot do without the preventing grace of God. For on what account could they, who are thus disinherited, be received into favour? No probable cause can be assigned, but the satisfaction and intercession of Christ. But if that can procure the restoration of those who are already cast out of their Father's house, disinherited, and enslaved to the devil; shall it not rather procure, that they whose sin is pardoned shall never be ejected, disinherited, or brought under the power of the devil, but rather be corrected in measure, by their most gracious Father according to their fault? This is much more probable, and far more becoming God.

XII. The whole adorable Trinity concurs to that conservation of believers above described. The Father has, by a sure and immutable decree, predestinated them to eternal salvation, which we proved at large chap. iv. sect. xiv. seq. But they cannot obtain salvation unless they persevere in faith and holiness. Neither can they persevere unless they are supported by the power of God. Hence Christ himself infers the impossibility of the seduction of the elect from their election. Matt. 24:24: "They shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect." It is plain that the Lord Jesus there treats of the elect after their calling, and being brought to the knowledge of the truth; and speaks, not of any seduction whatever, but of that which is total and final; whereby, having forsaken Christ, they give credit to the most false and lying deceivers. He, moreover, foretells, that such would be the efficacy of those false prophets to deceive, that they would not only seduce those, who at least make some slight attempts after faith, but impose on the very elect, if (as it is not) the power of any seduction

was so great, as to overthrow the faith of such. But that those words, "if it were possible," intimate a real impossibility, from the supposition of the divine decree, is evident from this; because if it was possible for any of the elect to be seduced, which our adversaries suppose; it would also happen, according to our Lord's expression, that some of the elect might be actually deceived by the false prophets; which is contrary both to the intention of Christ, to experience, and all sound reasoning.

XIII. Yet our adversaries insist and pretend that the phrase, "if it were possible," does not always denote an absolute impossibility, but often the difficulty of doing a thing; and bring, for that purpose, various places of Scripture; as Acts 20:16, where Paul is said "to have hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of pentecost." Rom. 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Gal. 4:15, "I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." Matt. 26:39, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

XIV. But the answer is at hand. 1st. If the thing spoken of should really happen, then the expression "if it be possible," would denote the great difficulty of executing the same; if it should not, its real impossibility is then intended. Paul was in doubt whether it were possible for him, at so great a distance, to be at Jerusalem on the feast day; which was very difficult, nay, impossible, unless he made more than ordinary expedition. It is impossible, considering the great perverseness of mankind, to live always in peace with all men. It was impossible for the Galatians to pluck out their own eyes and give them to Paul, that they might become his and be of service to him. The thing could not be, except we suppose them out of their senses, thus without advantage to any, they should exercise such an

act of cruelty on their own body; and without suppose Paul to be out of his mind, who, for his own honour, would permit and commend it. In fine, it was impossible for that cup to pass from Christ without his drinking it. Impossible, I say, not absolutely, in which sense Christ says, "O my Father, all things are possible to thee;" but from the supposition of the divine decree, the suretyship he had undertaken, the prophecies and types by which he was foretold and perfigured. For Christ was to make satisfaction to the utmost farthing. Which satisfaction is represented by his drinking the cup. 2dly. Should we grant our adversaries what they strenuously content for, that impossible, sometimes denotes what is difficult; and possible, what is easy; yet that sense would not suit this passage. For, should any transform our Saviour's words, thus: "They will show signs and wonders, so as to deceive (if it might be easily done) the elect themselves;" he would render that most wise sentence impertinent and foolish.

XV. Secondly. The Father gave believers to Christ, John 17:6, for his inheritance, and as the reward and price of his labour, Ps. 2:8. But the Father will neither suffer the inheritance of his only begotten Son to be alienated, nor him to lose his purchase. Christ was secure as to this when he said, Isa. 49:4: "Surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God;" and John 10:29, "My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands:" that is, neither Satan, nor the world, nor the flesh, which three are the enemies of Christ's sheep, shall ever have so much power as to make them unwilling to abide under the saving protection of the Father; for they cannot be pulled away against their will. This violent taking them away consists in the alone change of the will. Whence it appears, that these persons trifle in a matter of serious importance, who would have this condition understood, viz. unless they willingly depart from God. For the tendency of Christ's

discourse is to assure believers that their enemies shall never be able to make them foolishly steal away from God. We are to attend to Christ's manner of arguing, which runs thus: "I give life to my sheep, nor shall they ever perish, because none can pluck them out of mine or my Father's hands." But if our adversaries' answer be true, that they may cease to be sheep, and of their own accord, by their sins fly out of his hands, though not plucked out of them; then Christ's reasoning would be weak and inconclusive. It is the greatest absurdity to restrict these words of Christ to those who have died in the faith; and that the plucking them out of Christ's hand, denotes the detaining them under death and condemnation, and preventing their being raised by Christ from death to eternal life. For, 1st. Christ here speaks of the sheep which hear his voice and follow him; the voice of a stranger they hear not, but fly from him: all which belong to the state of this life. 2dly. It is evident that Christ here comforts believers against those temptations by which they are most of all annoyed. But what believer is much disquieted by the thought, that, when he is dead in the faith of Christ, and his soul is received into the heavenly mansions, he shall be detained under death and condemnation? Who once doubts, but his happiness is then firmly secured? 3dly. Nothing can be spoken more unsoundly than that "they who have died in the faith of Christ, are detained under death and condemnation;" as the babbling apologist for the Remonstrants is pleased to say. What! are those who have died in the faith of Christ under a condemnation, under which they can apprehend they may be detained?

XVI. 3dly. The Father has, by an immutable covenant and testament, promised to take care that the elect should not fall away from him to their eternal destruction. But to doubt of the faithfulness of God promising and bequeathing by testament is blasphemous. To this purpose is Isa. 54:10, "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." By which words, God not only in general declares that he will faithfully adhere to what he has promised in behalf of his children; but intimates the stability of the covenant of grace, which he calls the covenant of peace, beyond the covenant of works. Certainly God would have performed what he had promised in the covenant of works, provided man had persevered in his obedience; but in the covenant of peace he absolutely promises, that his goodness shall not depart from his covenant-people, because it was that which was to preserve them in holiness, and so to bring them to happiness. And in this sense also, it may be said of the new covenant, that "it is better, and established upon better promises," Heb. 8:6, namely such as are absolute, without depending on any uncertain condition.

XVII. The same thing is more fully inculcated, Jer. 32:38–40, "and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give [put within] them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. 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 in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." The very same thing we have Jer. 31:31, 32, 33. On these testimonies we are to observe, 1st. That God here, in explaining his gracious covenant, proposes it by way of testament, while he absolutely promises what he is to do, requiring no conditions to be performed by man. 2dly. That this covenant or testament, is said to be perpetual, or everlasting, with an express opposition to another Covenant, which depended on a mutual condition, broken by man, and abrogated by God, Jer. 31:32. 3dly. That there is not only a promise of the constant affection of God towards them, whereby he will never turn away from doing them good, to which promise some condition might be understood; but

also of that fear of God whereby they shall not depart from him. Which being supposed, nothing further can be required. 4thly. That God says not he will invite them by his word, by the greatest promises, and by very many benefits to a constant fear of himself, and thus, by moral suasion, incline their minds as much as in him lay, which the Remonstrants repeat after the Socinians, but that he would actually, and by the invincible efficacy of his Spirit, put his fear in their hearts; the consequence of which would be, that "they should not depart from him." Could this almighty conservation of believers be possibly promised in clearer terms?

XVIII. Almighty, I say: for what we are fourthly to observe is, that God exerts his super-eminent power in the performance of those promises, for their conservation: that power by which he is "greater than all," as we have just heard our Saviour declaring. Of this Peter speaks 1 Pet. 1:5, "Who are kept by the power of God (as a garrison) through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." There Peter testifies, 1st. That the elect are kept unto salvation by the power of God. It is not therefore possible they should perish. 2dly. He compares that power to a strong garrison, which may not only bravely repulse all external violence, but also easily quell all commotions of intestine rebellion; for both these are incumbent on soldiers in garrison. 3dly. He shows the means of their conservation, namely faith, whereby we cannot be preserved unless it also be preserved in us. Thus far of the Father.

XIX. Now let us take a view of the SON. And first consider at what rate he purchased the elect; not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, with dreadful horrors of soul and tortures of body, with an accursed death, accompanied by the pains of spiritual and eternal death. Can any one think it probable, that Christ would suffer those, whom he purchased at so dear a rate, to be taken away from

him, and to fall into the power of another, and even of him who is our most enraged enemy? What! Will not Jesus protect them who are now become his peculiar property? Why was he willing to be at such expense for their purchase? Why are they called "λαος εἰς περιούησιν, a people purchased," 1 Pet. 2:9; and "λαος πέριούσιος, a peculiar people," Tit. 2:14? For περιποίησις and περιούσια are interpretations of the Hebrew word הַגִּילָה Segullah, which signifies a peculiar treasure, a thing of value, that is, a thing acquired by one's labour and expence, and therefore exempted from all foreign right and power, to be carefully kept by the purchaser, and its loss to be deemed a great detriment and damage. Elegantly says Moses Gerundensis on Exod. 19:5, "Ye shall be in my hands a purchase, a beloved thing, which one puts not into the hands of another." See what we have more fully said on these words in the preceding chapter, sect. 7. Or can he not keep them, unless they also themselves are willing? But he who could act so powerfully by his inclining efficacy on their will, when beset on every hand by the devil, as with full bent of soul towards him to rest, by faith and love, upon him; why can he not, by the same inclining efficacy, cause them, after having fully tasted his incredible sweetness, to abide with him with a fixed purpose of soul? Nay, he is both willing and able to keep them, and actually does so: "Those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost." John 17:12. From what our Lord adds, "but the son of perdition," we are not to conclude that Judas was, in the same manner given to Christ as the other apostles were; namely to be redeemed and saved. For "Christ knew who were his;" had long before known that Judas was a devil. John 13:18, and John 6:70. It is therefore plain that we cannot conclude, from the ruin of Judas, the perdition of those who are given to Christ to be redeemed, and whom he actually has redeemed with his own blood.



XX. Secondly, It is evident that the Lord Jesus is heard by his Father in all things, especially in those things which he asks as our intercessor. John. 11:42. But he prays the Father for all believers, that "he would keep them from the evil," or the evil one. John 17:15, 20. Our adversaries, by a ridiculous sophistry, endeavour to subvert this invincible argument, by affirming that Christ has nowhere prayed for the absolute perseverance of believers in the faith; nay, would not have prayed so earnestly for their preservance, had God absolutely determined it should be so. This assertion, together with the reason annexed, is very rash and extremely false. It is a rash assertion: for, 1st. Where, in this petition of our Lord, is there the least sign of a conditional prayer? It is not for us to frame conditions at our pleasure. And then, 2dly, What condition is understood, when Christ says, keep them from the evil, or the evil one? Is it this? unless they become willing to join themselves to that evil one? But their conservation consists in this very thing, that they shall be constantly unwilling to do that. 3dly. The Remonstrants themselves deny not that Christ prayed for the absolute perseverance of Peter. Luke 22:32. But that immunity from defection, which he prayed for in behalf of his disciples, he also prayed for in behalf of all who were to believe by their ministry. John 17:20. The reason they gave is most false, because it supposes that none earnestly prays for what he knows to be certainly decreed by God. The contrary appears in David, 2 Sam. 7:27–29, "For thou, O Lord, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house; therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee." And in Daniel; who, when he had found from the prophecies of Jeremiah, that the determined period for the Babylonish captivity was seventy years, immediately "set his face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications," that he would do, what David knew from Jeremiah was certainly decreed by God. Dan. 9:3. And lastly, in Christ himself, who certainly knew that it was a thing fixed and decreed, that he was

to be glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; and yet with no less earnestness does he ask for that, in this very prayer, than he did for the conservation of his own people. John 17:5.

XXI. Thirdly, We have Paul's authority to assert, that Jesus Christ built the church for his own house, Heb. 3:3. But Christ speaks of that building in order to show, by the strongest reasons, its impregnable stability; Matt. 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." From which place we argue these three ways. 1st. The building or house of Christ consists of "lively stones," 1 Pet. 2:5, "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth." Eph. 4:16. But should it happen (which our adversaries pretend it sometimes does) that some lively stones die away, and that the dead are removed from their place; the work would be interrupted, the towering walls totter, and the edifice of the greatest artist be disgraced with many flaws. 2dly. A house built upon a rock stands secure against all the shocks of storms, streams and tempests. Matt. 7:25. But what rock is that? Here let that of the apostle directly strike our mind, 1 Cor. 10:4, "that rock was Christ." "Who is a rock save our God?" Ps. 18:31. "Yea, there is no (rock) God, I know not any." Isa. 44:8. Christ, therefore, is at the same time, under a different metaphor, both the architect and the foundation of this house. 1 Cor. 3:11. And seeing he is "the rock of ages," Isa. 12:4, not only because he is from everlasting to everlasting, but also because he gives a blessed eternity and an eternal security to all those who are spiritually united to him: it is not possible that they should be torn, by any violence, or by any stratagem, from that rock on which they are built.

XXII. 3dly. What our Lord adds is most emphatical: "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Hell, in Greek ᾅδης, Hades, in

Hebrew שְׁאוֹל Sheol, in Scripture style signifies, the place and state of the dead: ἄδης property signifies, τὸν ἀϊδῆ τόπον, the unseen place, in which they who are, do not appear: שְׁאוֹל denotes that place, in which he who is, is to seek; whom you may seek, but not find. This place the Scriptures set in the lowermost parts, and oppose it to the high heavens. Matt. 11:23. Sometimes it signifies not so much a place as a state, as Gen. 37:35, where Jacob says, "I will go down שְׁאוֹל, εἰς ἄδην, into the grave (Hades) unto my son, mourning;" though he imagined his son was devoured by beasts. In like manner, Ps. 49:14, "like sheep they are laid לְשֹׂאֵל, ἐν ἄדῃ, in the grave (Hades)." Who yet are neither laid in a burying-place, nor carried away to a place of eternal torments. It therefore denotes the state of the dead: thus also Theophylact, on Luke 21. defines it, according to the opinion of many, "the translation of the soul from the state in which it appears (namely by its operations), into that in which neither appears nor is seen." Moreover, both the place and the state of the dead may be considered, either with respect to the body or the soul; and both are called Hell or Hades. Hezekiah spoke of the former, Isa. 38:10, I shall go to the gates of (Sheol or Hades) the grave;" and the sacred writers very frequently. The profane writers place all the souls both of the just and unjust in Hades. Diodorus Siculus explains the fabulous figment of Hades, by "the torments of the wicked; and the Elysium, or flowery meadows of the pious." And Iamblichus says, "We shall obtain in Hades, as the wise poets assert, the rewards of virtue:" Grotius, on Luke 16. has collected very much to this purpose. Yet I do not recollect that the Scriptures ever place the souls of the righteous in Hades. It therefore remains, that Sheol and Hades, when applied to the soul, denote a place of torments: and I see no reason why some learned men should deny this. For both Luke 16:23, and Prov. 5:5, persuade us of this; where Solomon says of the adulteress, "Her steps take hold on hell." Her steps are not directed to that which is truly life, but to [Sheol] the place of eternal misery; and Prov. 7:27, "Her

house is the way to hell (Sheol):" compare 1 Cor. 4:10, and Rev. 21:8, where whoremongers are excluded the kingdom of heaven, and thrust into the place which burns with fire and brimstone. To this purpose also is Prov. 15:24; "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell (Sheol) beneath:" which the Septuagint translate, "ἵνα ἐκκλίνας ἐκ τοῦ ᾗδοῦ σωθῆ, that declining from hell (Hades), he may be saved." The wise man's meaning is, that he may ascend to the heavenly mansions, where true life is enjoyed; and never sink down to hell, the place of eternal death. We see then, what hell signifies in Scripture; namely, in general, the state and place of the dead; and more especially the state and place of souls spiritually dead, who are associated with devils.

XXIII. But what mean the gates of hell? I think it may be far better learnt from Scripture than from the expressions used by the profane poets. 1st. Gates are the defence of a town, where bands of soldiers, and arms, and whatever may be necessary in sallies for repelling force, are usually kept in readiness. Hence we read of "the gates of the foundation," 2 Chron. 23:5, which 2 Kings 11:6, is called, "the gate of retreat," whither one may safely retire. 2dly. In the gates they formerly held courts of justice; Amos 5:15, "Establish judgment in the gate." 3dly. In the gates was held the solemn assembly of the citizens, where they deliberated on difficult matters, and the elders gave prudent counsel: hence Ruth 3:11, "All the city (gate) of my people doth know," that is, the whole assembly which usually meets in the gate; and Lament. 5:14, "the elders have ceased from the gate." The gates of hell therefore signify: 1st. All the power of death, and of him who hath the dominion of it, that is the devil. 2dly. The bloody edicts passed, and cruel sentences of death pronounced, at the instigation of the devil, by the princes and dreaded tyrants of the world, on the confessors of the Christian truth. 3dly. All the craft and

cunning of evil spirits, exciting each other mutually to deceive the godly.

XXIV. It is not to be doubted but these gates of hell have great strength and power; and yet they shall not prevail against the church. No force of the devil, though ever so strong, though he sallies out with his powers from the gates of hell against believers: no edicts of emperors, kings, and princes, though never so cruel, that are passed against them; no arts and deceits framed in the very council of hell, shall be able to subdue and force the saints from their faith in, and union with, Christ. And hence it is, that neither death, nor he that hath the power of death, can either bring or detain them under his dominion. This to us seems to be the fullest meaning of that saying.

XXV. Fourthly, Christ unites believers to himself, so that he is the head, and they, collectively taken, are the body; and every one in particular is a member of his body. Eph. 5:23. From this likewise we have a twofold argument. 1st. As it is impossible any member should be torn from the natural body of Christ, who is now in a state of glory; so it is no less impossible that any such thing should befall his mystical body. Because, as Christ, by the merit of his humiliation, obtained for himself a constant immunity in glory from all harm; so by the same merit he also obtained, "that he might present to himself" his whole mystical body "glorious," Eph. 5:27, that is, the true church, and each spiritual member thereof. But this he could not do, were any of his members to be wholly cut off. 2dly. As the animal spirits, which produce motion in the members by means of the nerves, incessantly flow from the head to the lower parts, so that power and efficacy, wherein spiritual life both consists and is exercised, flows continually from Christ to believers; and though it unequally moves them to produce spiritual actions, he at least preserves that life, and will not suffer it altogether to be stifled.

XXVI. There is no ground to object the instance of David, as if, when he defiled himself by his adultery with Bathsheba, and was joined to her, "he had taken a member of Christ, and made it a member of an harlot," according to 1 Cor. 6:15. For, 1st, It is certain that David was neither finally nor totally cut off from Christ. For the spiritual life, which incessantly flowed from Christ, being exceedingly oppressed, and almost stifled with the poison of sin, did, in its appointed time, powerfully exert itself by the evidence of a sincere repentance. Hence he begged of God "not to take his Holy Spirit away from him," Ps. 51:11; intimating, that though he was indeed very much grieved and oppressed, yet not quite taken away. 2dly, Paul's words run thus: "Ἄρας οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ποιήσω πόρνῆς μέλη; shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?" But the verb ἄρω does not always signify to take away, but to take upon oneself, to attempt or enterprise something therewith. And so the meaning is, shall I take upon me to put the members of Christ to so vile a use? 3dly, The apostle does not say, that a person is so estranged from Christ by one act of incontinence, as to become one with the harlot; but speaks of him who is "joined to an harlot;" being as much inclined towards her, as a husband, by the command of God, towards his lawful spouse. In sum, "he declares the natural consequence of whoredom, and the usual case of those who do not desist from it: but he does not limit the grace and mercy of God; as if he who has joined himself to a harlot, could not for some time be continued in union with Christ." These are the words of Ames in his *Antisynodalia, de persever. sanct. c. 5.*

XXVII. The HOLY SPIRIT, by an insurmountable efficacy, takes possession of the hearts of the elect, which was the place Christ had designed for him, and having vanquished and expelled the evil spirit, keeps his throne constantly there alone, and never quite forsakes his habitation: according to what Christ says, John 14:16, 17: "And I will

pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." This promise was not made to the apostles alone, nor does it treat of that effect of the Spirit only, by which they were rendered infallible, in preaching the gospel; but regards all believers. For, 1st, It is proposed as the fruit of our Lord's ascension to heaven, and of his sacerdotal intercession; the benefit of all which redounds to all the elect. 2dly, He is not speaking concerning the Spirit, as the author of infallibility in teaching, which the apostles and some other evangelists had; but as an advocate and comforter, which belongs to all the faithful. 3dly, They to whom the Spirit is promised, are not distinguished from other believers, as teachers are from the common people; but from the world of reprobates, who neither see nor know the Spirit, and consequently cannot receive him. Nor are we to think that this continual indwelling of the Spirit is so promised to the whole church, that every member of it cannot claim it to himself: for, by these words, our Lord comforts every one of his disciples in particular; for being grieved for his approaching departure, he gives them the promises of such a presence of the Spirit, that shall never at any time be entirely taken from them. But so long as the Spirit of Christ dwells in any person, so long, it is self-evident, he is Christ's, nor can he belong to the devil. We, indeed, allow, that the Holy Spirit, when he is ill treated and grieved by believers, will sometimes depart, as to the influences of his consolations, and their having cheerfulness in the spiritual life: yet abides with them as the source of their life, and the band of their union with Christ.

XXVIII. Nor is there any reason to object David's prayer, Ps. 51:11, where he so earnestly entreats that God would not take away his Holy Spirit from him; which he would not have done, had he been

assured he was never taken from the elect. For, 1st, We have proved already, sect. xx., the falsehood of that hypothesis; namely, that none prays fervently for what he is well assured will be granted him. 2dly, After a believer has fallen into so horrid a sin, his faith and his full assurance are usually so much shaken, that he dare not always securely promise himself the continuance of divine grace in that state: hence those sighs and anxious ejaculations of soul to his God. 3dly, When David prays that the Spirit of God may not be taken from him, it may be understood,—1. Of the Spirit of royal wisdom and military prowess, of which he had seen a melancholy instance in Saul. 2. Of the prophetic Spirit, which had before spoken by his mouth, 2 Sam. 23:2. 3. Of that operation of the Spirit, which should prevent his commission of other sins in the administration of government, whereby the wrath of God would be kindled against Israel. 4. Of those motions of the Spirit, whereby he now found his heart pricked, and which he sincerely wished, that they might not be stifled again, but heightened by new accessions, so as to end in a true and solid repentance.

XXIX. The case is different as to what we read, Isa. 63:10, "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." For he is not there speaking of elect believers, but of the rebellious Israelites. God had placed among that people his Holy Spirit, who spoke by the prophets and sanctified the elect. The rebellious resisted that Spirit, rushed upon him like wild beasts, Acts 7:51, by persecuting the faithful servants of God and his dear children,\* Isa. 66:5. In this manner then, "they vexed his Holy Spirit," who dwelt not in them, but in the prophets and other holy persons; that is, they gave him occasion to do those things which are the effects of wrath, and which are usually done by him who avengeth the injuries he has received; or, if we may explain it of the Spirit working in those rebels, then it is to be



understood of the convictions of natural conscience, excited by the Spirit, which they impiously opposed. Therefore it was, "that he turned to be their enemy," and rejected that people, and took their kingdom from them, and gave them up to hardness of heart: "and fought against them," as well externally by his armies, which slew them, and destroyed their city and polity; as internally by terrors and anguish of conscience, Deut. 28:65. All which is no proof of the total departure of the Holy Spirit from believers.

XXX. As that Spirit continually abides in believers, so he is also in them as the spring of eternal life. For he is "the Spirit of life," Rom. 8:3. His holy and comfortable energy is the life of the soul: for death reigns in a blind and depraved mind. John 17:3: "This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Spiritual life consists in knowing, loving, revering the grace and truth of God the Father and of Christ, and in the joy which arises from these; which is called eternal, because, when it is begun in this world, it is carried on by the continual influence of the Spirit, and brought to perfection in the world to come. In another place it is called "a root within," Matt. 13:21. "The anointing which abideth," 1 John 2:27. "The seed that remaineth," 1 John 3:9. "A well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14.

XXXI. The nature of that life, which is infused into the elect in regeneration, is far different from that which was in Adam in innocence, though even that was holy, and from the Holy Spirit. For, 1st, In that state, man was left to himself, without any promise of the constant inhabitation of the Spirit; such as, we have just proved, the elect have now. 2dly, That cause which first produced this life, seems also to be the same which makes them persevere therein; but this life is implanted in man, who resists it, and takes pleasure in spiritual death, and sets himself with all his might against God: it is infused, I

say, by the invincible efficacy of the Spirit, which Paul has so highly commended, Eph. 1:19. As, therefore, that efficacy of the Spirit has, notwithstanding, overcome and subdued those that resisted and opposed his operations, so, in like manner, after he has once settled himself in souls thus vanquished and subdued, he constantly keeps the place he has once occupied; and should any thing arise, either from within or from without, that should attempt to weaken it; the more violent the attack, the more carefully it will collect its whole force and prepare for a resistance. And what should retard its progress, when its enemies are now vanquished; seeing nothing could withstand its power in the beginning, when every thing was against it.

XXXII. Moreover, 3dly, This life flows from the life of Christ, Gal. 2:20, "Nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Moreover Christ, by his death, has obtained, that he should live for ever. Rev 1:18: "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." But Christ lives not only in glory with the Father as to his person, but also by his Spirit in the elect. The Spirit of life, which, residing in him as the fountain, flows from thence to his people, and he is the author of the same glorious life in them, which shall be perfected in their several degrees. And hence he argues from his own to our life, John 14:19, "because I live, ye shall live also." This life therefore of Christ in us is different from the life implanted in Adam by creation. For that was given him for the trial of his constancy, and might therefore be lost. But after his constancy was at length tried, he might expect a confirmation in a holy and blessed life, as was the case with the blessed angels. Whereas the life of Christ in believers is the fruit of his satisfaction and merits, and therefore must be everlasting and eternal, that he might not lose the pains he had been at: and is to be compared, as, to its duration, not with the life of Adam, when in a state of probation, but with that life

which he was to obtain, had he happily finished the course of his trial.

XXXIII. That expression of Paul is very memorable, which we have, Col. 3:3, "ye are dead," namely, to the devil, the world, sin, and yourselves, "and your life is hid with Christ in God;" every word of this sentence is sufficient to prove the perpetuity of this life. Life here denotes that holy and blessed energy, or activity of believers, which result from the communication of the Spirit of Christ, which begins in this life, and is perfected in that which is to come. That life is hid, 1st, From believers themselves, who do not fully conceive the manner in which the Spirit now worketh in them; and still less that inexplicable knowledge, that perfect holiness, that unshaken love, that unspeakable joy, which is ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 John 3:2. 2ndly, From the world. For as Christ, who is our life, is not seen by the world; so neither does the world know, how we live in Christ, and Christ in us; but reckons these mysteries of our Christianity as a kind of melancholy madness. 3rdly, From the devil;\* whose mortal blows and triumphs can have no access to it. The life of God's children, like a most precious treasure, is laid up in a secret place, from which the evil Spirit cannot take it away, neither by open violence, or secret stratagem. In this sense it is said, Ps. 83:3: "They have consulted against thy hidden ones," whom thou protectest in thy bosom. This life is hid "with Christ," to whose care and custody it is intrusted, "who is able to keep that which is committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. As Christ therefore, though invisible to the world, actually sits at God's right hand, and will be really revealed; so in like manner, our life is with Christ, and is really kept for us. In fine, the same life is hid in God: that is, is contained in the decree and love of God, who, in his own time, will make it manifest for what end he loved us in Christ. The

bosom of God is that most sacred repository, in which that treasure is kept safe.

XXXIV. The same Spirit, who is the author of this everlasting life, is the seal wherewith believers are sealed, Eph. 1:13. The apostle compares believers to "an epistle, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God," 2 Cor. 3:3. Now, that epistle contains God's testament. And whenever the elect have received the promises of that testament by a lively faith, then, in some measure, they have the Spirit to write them on their minds. Moreover, God ratifies that inscription with the stamp of his seal. That seal is the Spirit of promise, not only with respect to the extraordinary gifts, which formerly abounded in the church (for these were neither conferred on all, nor on true believers only, neither were they an earnest of the heavenly inheritance), but chiefly with respect to saving gifts or graces. It is called "the Spirit of promise," either because he was promised, or because it is his office to intimate to, write and seal the promises of the Gospel upon the hearts of believers. A sealing is the impression of the image, which is on the seal upon the thing sealed, whereby we both assure the person to whom we write, of the author thereof, and more strongly confirm the contents of the epistle or testament, so as he may have no doubt about the truth of the thing. This mystical sealing, therefore, by the seal of the Spirit, consists in the effectual communication of that divine light, purity, holiness, righteousness, goodness, blessedness, and joy which are found in the Holy Spirit; of which the first lines are drawn at the beginning of regeneration, and this is the writing on the heart by the Spirit. But after faith in Christ comes to be strong and operative, all these things are confirmed, strengthened, increased, and more deeply imprinted by the same Spirit; and in this deeper impression consists the sealing, by the view and sense of which believers have assurance that they are the children of God.

XXXV. Moreover, this sealing of the Spirit is a proof of the unshaken steadiness of believers, for the apostle himself with good reason, joins their establishment with this sealing, 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. "He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us." For, 1st, The promises of the eternal testament are confirmed and ratified to us by that seal. The wonderful and almost incredible goodness of God shines forth in this matter. He not only promises the elect, that he will never depart from them, but will so order it, that they shall never depart from him. And he likewise ratifies the same in the sacred and inviolable writings of both testaments: but this is not all, for he also engraves the same promises, by the finger of his Spirit, on the hearts of the elect. Nor does he stop here: but he adds the seal of the same Spirit whereby they are assured, in the highest degree, of the donation of these excellent promises. 2dly, This sealing denotes a firm and indelible impression of the graces of the Holy Spirit. For who can efface God's own seal, which he has appended to his eternal testament, and deeply impressed on the hearts of his people? 3dly, By this sealing, the sealed are rendered inviolable or sacred: thereby God declares that they are his peculiar property, which he will never suffer to be alienated, Rev. 7:3.

XXXVI. We cannot here omit that remarkable passage, 2 Tim. 2:19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Chrysostom, by the "sure foundation of God," understands, "These stedfast souls, who stand firm and immoveable." Which exposition is suitable both to this context and to the language of Scripture. It is agreeable to this context: for the sure foundation of God is distinguished from those men, who suffered themselves to be drawn aside from the doctrine of the true faith, by the new doctrines and deliriums of deceivers, such

as were Hymenæus and Philetus. And it is agreeable to the language of Scripture, where the believer is called "an יסוד עולם," a foundation of ages, or "an everlasting foundation," Prov. 10:15; and "a pillar in the temple of God, which shall go no more out," Rev. 3:12. To this also might be referred, Isa. 28:16, where Christ is called פנת יקרת מוסד מוסד which may be translated "a precious corner (corner stone) of the surest foundation." For, Christ is the corner-stone of his church, which, being built upon a rock, has the surest foundation; therefore the church of the faithful is the foundation. And as none but God can lay such a firm foundation, it is therefore called "the foundation of God." "Ye are God's building," 1 Cor. 3:9. That foundation of God stands sure, and unshaken against all temptations. But what is the reason and cause of that stability? Believers have it not of themselves, but from the seal of God: of which seal a two-fold use is here proposed, 1st, To set a mark on the elect, as those who are known to and beloved by God, and on whom he imprints characters, as his peculiar treasure which he highly esteems and choicely keeps, and as testimonies of his dominion and property: of this it is said, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2dly. To impress upon them the likeness of that holiness, which is in the seal, that is, in the Holy Spirit, whereby they are made to be diligently on their guard against iniquity and defection. To this purpose is the caution, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." For, whoever has this law inscribed within, so that it becomes the proper law of his heart, which he frequently repeats to himself, as from this he may know that he is chosen and beloved of God, so he carefully reserves himself for God, to whom he belongs.

XXXVII. In the last place, this Spirit is "ἀρραβῶν τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν, the earnest of our inheritance," Eph. 1:14. Grotius has learnedly observed on this place, that the word ἀρραβῶν (earnest) is

not of Greek, but Syriac origin; but we say, it is of Hebrew derivation, as appears from Gen. 38:17, where Tamar asks ערבוני Arabon, a pledge, of Judah. It is probable, the Greeks had this word from the Phenicians, with whom they carried on much commerce. But arrabo, an earnest, or, as the Latins express it shorter, arra, is a part of the price given beforehand, as an assurance that the whole should afterwards follow. And Chrysostom says, "ὁ ἀρράβων μέρος ἐστὶ τοῦ παντός, an earnest is part of the whole." In like manner, those gifts of the Spirit of which we have just spoken, are a part of the future happiness, and of the principal thing that is to come after: and they clearly resemble that earnest, which the bridegroom gives to the bride in testimony of her communion with him in all his possessions. For who will not readily believe, that there is a reference here to the ceremony of betrothing? to which there is certainly an allusion, Hos. 1:21, 22. Moreover, that possession of which the Spirit is an earnest, is called "the inheritance of the children of God," because it is perpetual, and never to be alienated from the possessors: whoever has it, has it continually, from the first moment of possession, through all the ages of eternity. Therefore we conclude, that it is not possible that they, who have once received the Holy Spirit, can forfeit the heavenly inheritance: because, otherwise, which God forbid, the Spirit of truth would be a false and fallacious earnest.

XXXVIII. Thus far we have shown, that the whole adorable Trinity contribute their part to the conservation of believers, whence it appears that their salvation is secure under such guardians. Let us now further enquire into the method which God takes for their conservation. First, then, he employs that infinite and supernatural power, by which he, at first, infused the beginning of the spiritual life into elect souls, so that it may be cherished and maintained for ever by no less efficacy than it was at first produced. To this purpose is

what we have advanced, Sect. xviii. concerning the power of God displayed in this affair.

XXXIX. But, as it becomes God, to deal with a rational creature in a way suitable to its nature; so he superadds to that supernatural power some means, acting morally, as they commonly speak, by which the elect themselves are excited carefully to keep themselves under God's protection. Here he uses the ministry of his Word, which is "the incorruptible seed," and "the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," 1 Pet. 1:23. He sets before them the excellence of faith and godliness, thereby "confirming the souls" of his people, and "exhorting them to continue in the faith," Acts 14:22. He gives the promises of a great reward to those and only those who persevere, Matt. 24:13. Rev. 2:10, 11. He subjoins the threatenings of a dreadful vengeance against backsliders and apostates, Ezek. 33:13–15: and at times awakens dull and drowsy souls with his chastening rod, and reminds them of their duty, Ps. 119:67, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." These admonitions, promises, threatenings, and the like actions of God, towards the elect, are so far from giving the least ground to conclude any thing against their perseverance; that, on the contrary, they are powerful means for their conservation.

XL. For when God, by the power of his Spirit, excites the mind attentively to consider these things, a certain holy fear and trembling are produced on man, Phil. 2:12, which stir him up to be diligently upon his guard against the flesh, the world, and the devil, and all their snares, least, by being imposed upon by their deceits, he should do any thing prejudicial to his own salvation. And should it happen, that he has departed from God by some abominable iniquity, the sense of the wound he has given his conscience, and which, unless timely cured, must at last issue in eternal death, does not suffer him



to be easy till, by renewed repentance, he has returned to God and obtained, with many tears, the pardon of his sin from his infinite mercy. And as every believer is conscious of his own weakness, therefore, with humble dependence on the assistance of divine grace, he is earnest in devout prayers for the continual influences of it, in order to his conservation and corroboration; praying, according to our Lord's direction, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And in this manner all true believers, being excited and assisted by God, also persevere and preserve themselves: "We know, that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not," 1 John 5:18. And indeed, whoever forms a right judgment of the vileness of sin, the torments of hell, and the greatness of divine wrath; whoever has had but the slightest taste of the beauty of religion, the pleasantness of grace, the honour of eternal glory, and the incredible sweetness of the love of God; it is not possible he should not exclaim: "Lo! they that are far from thee shall perish; thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee: but it is good for me to draw near to God," Ps. 73:2, 28. This is "with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord," Acts 11:23.

XLI. Hence appears the falsehood of the calumny of our adversaries, that, by this doctrine concerning the almighty conservation of God, a wide door is opened to profaneness and carnal security. That it is highly useful and effectual for the consolation of believers, provided it is true, will not be contradicted even by those who deny it. But nothing can be effectual for the consolation of the saints, which, at the same time, is not effectual for the promoting of holiness. For in every consolation, there is a demonstration of the beneficent love of God towards the wretched sinner who is solicitous about his salvation; and the clearer that demonstration of divine love is, and the more particular the application, the stronger also is the

consolation. Besides, nothing is more powerful for inflaming our hearts with love to God, than the knowledge, sense, and taste of the divine love shed abroad in them. Whoever, therefore, most amplifies the powerful grace of God in his consolation, which impudence itself will not deny we do, presents to the saints the most powerful motives to divine love and the consequences thereof.

XLII. But let us more particularly show, that our doctrine is far more adapted to promote piety, than what our adversaries maintain concerning the unstable happiness of believers. And first, our doctrine doth certainly most of all illustrate the glory of God, which the opposite tends to obscure. We celebrate the infinite power of the Deity, whereby he can not only restrain our outward enemies from overthrowing our salvation, but also so fix the wavering disposition of our will, that it may not depart from the constant love of holiness; also his truth in the promises of the covenant of grace, on which we safely and securely rely; being assured, that he who hath promised will also perform; and his goodness, whereby he does not altogether reject or disinherit his children, or cut them off from the communion of Christ, even when they have fallen into some grievous sin, but by his fatherly chastisements, graciously recovers them from their fall and stirs them up to repentance; and his holiness, to which it is owing that he hides his face from his children, when, for some time, they seem to give too much way to sin, so that he does not grant them familiar access to himself, nor the influences of his consolations, but sharply stings and thoroughly terrifies their conscience with the sense of his indignation, lest he should appear to be like the sinner, or could bear with sin in his own people without resentment; and the efficacy of the merits and intercession of Christ, whereby he has acquired and preserves for himself an inheritance never to be alienated. In fine, we celebrate the invincible power of the Holy Spirit, who so preserves his mystical temple, that it neither

can be destroyed, nor be made an habitation of impure spirits. But as the sum of our religion consists in glorifying God; so that which illustrates the glory of God in this manner, does most of all promote godliness.

XLIII. But as the opposite doctrine separates the immutable bent of the free will to good from the efficacy of divine grace; as it maintains that God does not always perform what he has promised; as it will not grant that God's children, when they fall into some grievous sins, are chastised with rods, but disinherited and punished by spiritual death; as it asserts that the impetration of salvation by Christ may be perfect, and in every respect complete, though none should happen actually to be saved thereby, and that Christ was not always heard in his prayers; and that the Holy Spirit is sometimes constrained, by the mutability of the human will, to give up his habitation to the evil spirit; the opposite doctrine, I say, must in many respects, be injurious to the power, truth, and goodness of God the Father, to the merits and intercession of God the Son, and to the invincible efficacy of the Holy Spirit.

XLIV. 2dly, Our doctrine is excellently adapted to allure the unconverted seriously to endeavour after conversion and repentance; for the more sure and stable that happens it, which is promised to the penitent, the more effectual is the motive taken from the consideration of it. The Scripture every where dissuades men from searching after the good things of this world, and encourages them to seek those good things which are spiritual, from this argument, that the former will perish, but the latter endure for ever. John 6:27: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." 1 John 2:15, 17: "Love not the world: the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." And indeed, what can be more powerful

to excite to repentance than this reflection? "As long as I am distracted with the anxious cares of this life, let my success be ever so great, I can only amass perishing treasures, of which I may perhaps be deprived in this very life, and the remembrance of which shall certainly torment me in the next. But if I diligently pursue the work of my conversion, I shall, from the very first moment of that, obtain that love of God in Christ, from which nothing shall ever be able to separate me again; and the sooner I enjoy that, the sooner I acquire that supreme good which is possessed without any danger of having my misery renewed."

XLV. But the opposite doctrine is adapted to procrastinate endeavours after repentance. For, when it is inculcated on a man, that a child of God by regeneration, after having for some time been engaged in the practice of holiness, not only may, but actually has often fallen away, and become a child of the devil, been disinherited by his heavenly Father, and is with greater difficulty renewed to repentance, the further progress he had made in holiness: the thought will easily be entertained by those who hear of exhortations to repentance, that there is no occasion to press the matter of their conversion so strenuously in their tender years, lest perhaps, considering the great inconstancy of unstable youth, they be overtaken by some great sin and their condition be far worse than it was before: that it is more advisable to wait for those years (for we generally promise ourselves long life), in which both our judgment is riper, and the mind usually pursues with more constancy what it has once applied to, enjoying in the mean time the delights of this world. Now, nothing can be more pestilential than this thought, which yet this doctrine suggests.

XLVI. 3dly, Our doctrine is also very powerful to confirm the elect, already converted in the spiritual life, and to quicken them to the

constant practice of religion, which may be proved various ways: 1st, All the arguments which are raised from the possible apostasy of the saints, are taken from the fear of punishment and the terror of dreadful threatenings; but those taken from God's most powerful conservation, breathe nothing but his love and the incredible sweetness of divine grace. Moreover it is certain, that the children of God, "who have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father," Rom. 8:15, are more powerfully drawn by the cords of love, than driven by the scourge of terror; for, "that love of Christ constraineth us," 2 Cor. 5:14. 2dly, All our religion is nothing but gratitude; but it is clear, that that person more effectually promotes gratitude, who proves by cogent arguments, that the happiness bestowed from grace, shall be perpetual by the help of the same grace, than he who maintains, that though it be truly great, yet it may be lost. 3dly, It is equitable, that the better secured the reward of our duty is, the more diligent we should be in the practice of religion. For the consideration of the reward is among those things which render the commands of God sweet, Ps. 19:10. But we assure the faithful worshippers of God from his own word, that, from their very first entrance on the course of sincere godliness their reward is sure; calling upon them with the apostle, 1 Cor. 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." But our adversaries unhappily discourage all diligence, while they teach that we know not whether our labour shall be in vain or not, since it is possible we may fall away, and so have all along laboured for nothing.

## **CHAPTER XI: Of Glorification**

I. As all God's works tend to his glory, so also to the glorification of his chosen people. This doubtless is the glory of God, to manifest himself in his elect, to be what he is to himself, the fountain of consummate happiness. When he does this, "he is glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. 1:10. Believers exult in this hope of their salvation, which is so connected with the glory of God, that it is called by that very name in the holy Scripture: "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God," Rom. 5:2. Our glorification is called the glory of God, not only because it comes from, and is freely bestowed on us by God; but also, because the magnificence of the Divine Majesty displays itself no where more illustriously, than in that glorious happiness which he makes to shine in his beloved people.

II. Some would prove that we are called to this by God, from 2 Peter. 1:3, who hath called us to glory and virtue; but the Greek runs, "διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς, by glory and virtue," which may be understood either of our glory and virtue, or of the glory and virtue of God and of Christ. If we understand it of ours, the meaning will be, that God had called us to communion with himself, by such a clear display of the glory to be revealed in the saints, and by the proposal of true virtue, which is made in the Gospel, that none can be acquainted with it, but must be inflamed with a desire after it. But it will be better to apply them to God, as Peter elsewhere calls them "τὰς ἀρετὰς τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς, the virtues (praises) of him who hath called us," 1 Peter. 2:9. And some manuscripts have "ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ, his own glory and virtue;" and then the meaning will be, he hath called us by his own glorious virtue; or, what I take to be fullest, the Lord Jesus hath called us by glory, while he presents unto us a glory in himself, as of the only begotten of the Father, and by virtue, while he discovered a life full of every instance of virtue, which, as they are set forth in a preached Gospel, clearly show, that he was the Son of God

and Saviour in the world. And thus we keep to the proper signification of the particle διὰ, which I have not yet seen proved by any example to signify the same as εἰς, to. Indeed, the venerable Beza adduces Rom. 6:4, where Christ is said to be raised from the dead, διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ Πατρὸς, that is, says he, "to the glory of the Father." But such an explication is unnecessary; let us say, as the words bear, "by the glory of the Father," which admits a twofold sense, and both of them very agreeable. As first, by glory to mean the strength and glorious power of God, for sometimes the Greek word δόξα answers to the Hebrew כבוד, Isa. 45:24. Thus God is said to "have raised Christ, διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, by his own power," 1 Cor. 6:14, in the same sense. Again, if by glory we understand the display of the divine supereminent excellency, we will say, that Christ was raised by the glory of the Father, because it was for the Father's glory that the only begotten and righteous Son of God should live a glorious life in himself, and a holy life in his members.

III. But whatever be Peter's meaning, it is evident we are both called and justified, in order to glory; and for that end powerfully preserved by God. Paul speaks of our calling, 1 Thess. 2:12: "Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory:" of justification he says, Rom. 8:30, "Whom he justified, them he also glorified:" of conservation Peter speaks, 1 Epist. 1:5: "Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

IV. GLORIFICATION is the gracious act of God, whereby he actually translates his chosen and redeemed people from an unhappy and base, to a happy and glorious state. And it may be considered, either as begun in this life; or as consummated in the next. "The first-fruits of the Spirit," Rom. 8:23, who is "the Spirit of glory," 1 Pet. 4:14, are even in this life granted to the children of God; not only that by these they might comfort themselves in adversity, but also that, from

these, they might in some measure infer, what and how great that future happiness is, which is reserved for them in heaven; and that, having had a foretaste of that great reward they expect, they may be the more cheerful in the course of faith and holiness: now these first fruits consist in the following things.

V. First, In that most excellent holiness, which is freely bestowed on the elect, and was described, chap. xii. For, as there is the greatest filthiness in sin, it being contrary to the most just and righteous law of God; so also the greatest vileness and misery, as it makes man most unlike the infinitely glorious and blessed God. Accordingly these two things are conjoined; "they have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. 3:23; and sin is called "that shameful thing," Jer. 3:24. On the contrary, in righteousness and holiness, there is not only some moral goodness, in so far as they agree with the law and with God, the pattern of them; but also an excellent glory, in so far as there is in them a resemblance of the most blessed God; whom Moses represents as נאדר בקודא magnificent, "glorious in holiness," Exod. 15:11. Accordingly, "the image and glory of God," 1 Cor. 11:7, are connected. See what we have said, chap. viii. sect. ix. To say nothing now about that incredible sweetness and boldness with God, which the consciousness of sanctification gives those who endeavour after it. On which account David described "the statutes of the Lord to be the rejoicing of the heart, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb," Ps. 19:8, 10.

VI. Secondly, in that vision of God, with which He honours the saints even in this life. We shall presently hear, that the complete happiness of the life to come consists in the perfect vision of God. That vision, therefore, which is the privilege of believers here, is certainly the beginning of that other. Now God presents himself here to be seen; 1st, By faith, which, indeed, is mere darkness, when compared with



the light of glory, and, in that respect, is distinguished from sight, 2 Cor. 5:7, and said to be the evidence of "things not seen," Heb. 11:1; yet it is a clear and shining light, in comparison of the ignorance of unbelievers, "in whom the god of this world hath blinded their minds," 2 Cor. 4:4. Hence Moses is said by faith "to have seen him who is invisible," Heb. 11:27. By faith also "we all with open face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord," 2 Cor. 3:18. Nor does the faith of believers behold the perfections of God only in general, as they are in him, but it likewise beholds them as belonging to them, and become theirs for the sake of Christ. Which certainly has no small influence on our salvation. He that believes, and by faith views God, and that as his own, not only expects, but already has eternal life, and through that very "faith he is saved," Eph. 2:8; according to that of our Lord, John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." 2dly, God is also seen by an experimental sense of his goodness, which intimately insinuates itself into the soul, in the holy use of the creatures. So that he not only knows by reasoning that God is good, not only believes it on the authority of infallible testimony, but has the experience of it both by sight, sense, and taste, while God himself, by means of his creatures, wonderfully delights the soul. To this purpose is the invitation of the psalmist, Ps. 34:8: "O! taste and see, that the Lord is good." 3dly, He is seen still more immediately, when he reveals himself to the soul, while deeply engaged in holy meditation, prayer, and other exercises of devotion, as the fountain of life and the source of light; so as wonderfully to affect it with the immediate darting of his rays into it. This, I imagine, was what David desired, when he sought "to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," Ps. 27:4. And this, I am apt to think, he obtained, when he sung, כן בקדש חזיתוך, "to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary," Ps. 63:3. 4thly, Something peculiar is at times imparted to sick and

dying Christians, in whose imagination God sometimes draws so distinctly the brightest images of heavenly things, that they seem to see them before their eyes; nor are they otherwise affected than if the things themselves were present before them. The nearer the soul is to heaven, it is also enlightened with the brighter rays of supercelestial light, flowing from him who, being light itself, dwells in light inaccessible. Of which there are not a few instances in the history of the life and death of godly persons, and very many experiences offer in our daily visitation of the sick. This is a kind of descent of heaven into the soul, before the soul is taken up to heaven.

VII. Maimonides, the wisest among the Jews, seems to have had something to his purpose in his mind, when, in *More Nevochim*, p. 3, c. 51, towards the end, he speaks thus: "The more the faculties of the body are impaired, and the fire of lust is extinguished, the more is the understanding strengthened, its light increased, the apprehension purified, and the more it rejoices at what it apprehends; so that when the perfect man is arrived at mature age, and just approaching to death, the apprehension, the joy arising from that apprehension, and the love of the thing apprehended, are, in an extraordinary manner, heightened, so that the soul, as it were, is in a state of separation from the body, during the time of that high pleasure. To this our wise men had an eye, while they say that, at the death of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, these three died *בנשיקה*, in the kiss, or by the kiss. For, say they, what is said, 'So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab *על פי יהוה*, at the mouth of the Lord,' Deut. 34:5, which shows, that he died in the act of kissing, *בנשיקה*. And so it is said of Aaron, 'At the mouth of the Lord, and he died there,' Numb. 33:38. They also affirm of Miriam, that she died *בנשיקה*, in the act of kissing: but yet the Scripture does not say of her, at the mouth of the Lord, because, being a woman, that parabolical mode of speech was not suitable. But the meaning is, that they died

from excessive love, in the pleasure of the apprehension thereof. As to the phrase itself, our wise men borrowed it from the song of songs, where the apprehension of the Creator, conjoined with the supreme love of God, is called נִשְׁקָה, 'kissing, let him kiss me with the love of his mouth,' Cant. 1:2." Thus far that learned Jew.

VIII. Thirdly, In the gracious possession and enjoyment of God; when God himself, according to the promise of his covenant, holds communion with them, and gives them not only to see him, but also to possess and enjoy him in the manner we explained, Chap. x. sect. 33; and in this consists salvation. "Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord," Ps. 145:15. He may justly glory of riches, who is admitted into the possession of such great happiness. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup, thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage," Ps. 16:5, 6. But that fruition of God consists in that sweet and frequent delight the soul takes in him as its treasure, Ps. 73:28, in its being enriched with his riches, fed with his plenty, preserved by his power, directed by his wisdom, refreshed by his goodness, and, in fine, filled with his sufficiency; so that he knows of nothing he can desire, besides the perfect fruition of him, of which he has now only the first fruits. "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: he shall be filled with the goodness of thine house, even of thy holy temple." Ps. 65:4.

IX. Fourthly, Such magnificent beginnings of glory beget "all riches of the full assurance of understanding," Col. 2:2, and the firmest certainty of consummate happiness to be enjoyed in its appointed time. For when one has obtained the first fruits of the Spirit, and has so many and such evident signs of his communion with God and Christ, why may he not say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed,

and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day," 2 Tim. 1:12: and again, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. 8:38, 39. And indeed, I know not, whether any thing more delightful and pleasant can be desired in this life, than that full assurance of our faith, which entirely calms the conscience, and delights it with the ineffable sweetness of consolations.

X. Fifthly, These so many and so great benefits joined together, beget a joy unspeakable and full of glory, whereby Peter testifies, "though now not seeing, yet believing they rejoice," 1 Pet. 1:8. For that God, with whom they have fellowship as their God, is their exceeding joy אל שמחת נילם "the God of the joy of their exultation," Ps. 43:4. Nothing exceeds this joy in efficacy, for it penetrates into the inmost soul, and is alone sufficient to sweeten the most grievous of all afflictions, let them be ever so bitter, and easily dispel the greatest anguish of soul: so that the faithful martyrs of Christ, who had tasted the sweetness of it, have gone with joy and songs of praise to the most cruel torments, as to the most sumptuous feasts. Nothing is more pure. It does not discompose the mind, unless in a salutary, wise, and holy manner; that, having no command of itself, but being full of God, and on the very confines of heaven, it both favours and speaks above the capacity of a man. The more plentifully one has drank of this spiritual nectar, though he may appear delirious to others who are unacquainted with those delights, he is the more pure, and wise, and happy. Nothing, in fine, is more constant; "Everlasting joy upon their heads," Isa. 35:10; "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you," John 16:22. If it is not constant as to the second effects, or after acts, as they are called, yet it is so at least, as to the foundation and first act. For though God in this life, according to his infinite wisdom, mixes the communication

of his sweetness with much bitterness, yet believers have that in them, which proves the inexhausted fountain of a joy springing forth at times, and of a delight that is afterwards to continue flowing for ever. Nor does God at all times deal out this joy with a sparing hand: he sometimes bestows it in such plenty on his people, that they are almost made to own themselves unable to bear such heavenly delight on earth, and to say with Ephrem Syrus; "Lord, withdraw a little, lest the brittle vial of my heart should burst by the rays of thy favour darting too strongly." If God does so great things for his people in the prison, what will he not do in the palace? If the first fruits are so plentiful, how abundant will the harvest be?

XI. The glorification of the future life has again its several degrees and periods; and is either of the soul separated from its body, before the last judgment, or of the whole man after the resurrection. We are here to take notice of the gangrene of the Socinian divinity, whose meaning it is hard to come at, these worst of hypocrites are so involved and dark. I shall give their own words, from the compendiolum they themselves drew up, and which the venerable Cloppenburg undertook to refute.

XII. Their sentiments about the state of souls after death are these: That man by death undergoes such a total dissolution, as to be altogether nothing, unless that his spirit (even as the spirit of the beasts) like a kind of wind or breath, returns to God, who gave it, Eccl. 12.—because that breath or spirit is a kind of virtue or efficacy of him, to whom it returns—moreover, they infer from this, that souls after death have no sensation; nay, do not, indeed actually subsist in themselves, as persons do. The whole comes to this: 1st, Since they contend that the soul is not a substance, but a kind of virtue and efficacy, as strength, health, wit, skill, and the like; they deny that it any ways subsists of itself. 2dly, As they say, it returns to

God, they ascribe nothing to it, but what it has in common with the spirit of beasts; dreaming, namely, of a kind of divine air or breath, a particle of which every man, and every beast enjoys; by which God inspires, vegetates and moves their bodies, and which, when it is breathed out at death, he receives as a kind of virtue or efficacy of his own. 3dly, However that return to God hinders not man, "after death, from becoming altogether nothing," as beasts are nothing after death; only with this difference, that the soul of man is rational, and has the hope of eternal life; such as the souls of the righteous who will actually live for ever. But then they mean that eternal life, which begins at the resurrection, by which the soul as well as the body will be again brought into being; while the souls of the wicked will remain in the same condition with those of the beasts, which are not to be reproduced by any resurrection. 4thly. Since they deny the souls, surviving death, to be substances; it is much more evident, that they deny them to be capable of rewards or punishments, which is downright epicurism.

XIII. We are therefore to prove these three things in their order: 1st, That human souls truly survive after death. 2dly. That they live and think; for that life, which is essential to the soul, consists in these; and consequently they either enjoy the beatific communion of God with the highest delight, or are tormented with the gnawing worm of conscience, and the horrible expectation of a future judgment with the utmost pain. 3dly. That the souls of the righteous (for we now treat of their glory) are immediately, upon their quitting the body, received, not only into heavenly joys, but also into heavenly mansions.

XIV. As to the first: that the soul, on being set free from the body, subsists; and that man after death is not reduced into nothing, the Sacred Writings so evidently declare, that scarce any thing can be

clearer. The Lord Jesus invincibly proves that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob existed, when, long after their death, God declared that he was their God, Matt. 22:32, compared with Luke 20:38. For, how could he be their God, when themselves had no existence? And if the soul, when separated from the body, could not at all subsist, Paul would have ridiculously doubted, whether he was caught up into the third heaven, in the body or out of the body, 2 Cor. 12:2, 3. His words also had been vain, Phil. 1:23, "I have a desire to be dissolved, or depart, and to be with Christ." Indeed, he says, to be dissolved, or depart, and not to be extinguished: nor can we refuse that he has a being, who is said to be with Christ. And how, pray, are we come not only to myriads of angels, but also to the spirits of just men made perfect, who are in the heavenly Jerusalem, if none such existed? Heb. 12:23. To what purpose also is that well known parable of the rich man and Lazarus, but to acquaint us with the existence of separate souls, and their different conditions? Luke 16. To what end those prayers of believers, and of Christ himself, by which they commended their departing spirits to God? Ps. 31:5; Acts 7:59. In a word, seeing Christ, whom these men reproach as a mere man, was a true man, and in all things like unto his brethren, I ask, what they think was become of his soul during the three days of his death? Did it also vanish into thin air, and was Christ really annihilated after his death, till his soul was raised together with his body? One or other of these they must say! either that the soul of Christ was of a quite different nature from ours, which, they assert, can no ways subsist, viz. in a state of separation, and so they contradict Paul, who declares that "He was in all things like unto his brethren, yet without sin," Heb. 2:17, and 4:15: or that Christ was annihilated during the three days of his death; and so they contradict Christ himself, who promised the thief that he should be with him in paradise, immediately upon the death of both, Luke 23:43.

XV. The heretics, in like manner, pervert the meaning of the Preacher, who says, Eccl. 12:7, "then shall the dust return to the earth, as it was; and the spirit shall return God, who gave it:" as if that return was nothing but a resolution into God, of I know not what virtue, which they call a particle of divine breath, proceeding from God; almost in such a manner with God as now received from the body, as it was with him before it removed into the body, which are monstrous opinions! It is contrary as well to the nature of God, as to ours, that either our soul should be any part of God, or God any part of our soul. The meaning of the preacher is no ways obscure. After the death of the man, he says, that the condition of the body is quite different from that of the spirit. The body, when deprived of the soul, he calls dust; because the union of soul with body is the band, and as it were, the cement whereby the parts of the body remain conjoined. After the departure of the soul, the lifeless body, which at first was formed out of the earth, is nothing but a heap of earthy particles, into which also it resolves in process of time. But the condition of the soul is quite different. It dies not, nor is dissolved, as the body; but "goes to God," as to the judge, who is to assign it its place, either of reward or punishment. Nay, "it returns to God," not as if it had actually been with God, before it was infused into the body; (for God "formeth the spirit of man within him," Zech. 12:1,) but because, in order of nature and of efficiency, it was God's before it was man's; for God gave it to and made it for man. What Euripides has elegantly said, as quoted by Philo in his book, De Mundi Immortalitate, wonderfully agrees with this saying of the preacher,

Χωρεῖ δ' ὀπίσω, τὰ μὲν ἐκ γαίας

Φύντ' εἰς γαῖαν· τὰ δ' ἀπ' αἰθερίου

Βλαστόντα γονῆς, εἰς οὐράνιον



Πύλον ἦλθε πάλιν.

That is, as Grotius explains it.

Retroque meant, quæ terra dedit,

Iterum in terram. Quod ab ætherio

Venerat ortu, cæleste poli

Repetit templum.

In English thus:

"What springs from earth, goes back to earth again: but what from heaven derives its high pedigree, thither again returns?" Similar to this is that of Epicharmus, apud Plutarch ad Appollon: "Συνεκρίθη καὶ διεκρίθη καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ὅθεν ἦλθε ἦλθε πάλιν• γὰρ μὲν εἰς γᾶν, πνεῦμα δ' ἄνω. They are joined together, and afterwards separated, and return again from whence they came; earth to earth, the spirit to heaven."

XVI. None should oppose to this testimony, the 19th verse of the 3d chapter; "I said in my heart—that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity." For, it is evident, that the comparison between man and beast is only made with respect to what is external and strikes the eye; inasmuch as man equally with the beasts is deprived of that life, whereby he can enjoy the pleasures of this world. He does not here consider the condition of the next world, which is apprehended by faith. And it is plain that these words cannot be understood absolutely, but only relatively, as to the privation of animal life, because, otherwise man and beast would

have the same kind of spirit; and that man has no pre-eminence above the beasts, none who is not out of his senses will affirm, and who, by giving up all pretence to solid reason, has willingly turned himself to a beast.

XVII. When the Scripture affirms, that the dead "are no more," Ps. 39:13, Jer. 31:15, it does by no means say, that nothing of them survives more, including even the soul in the same condition; which the adversaries themselves will scarce venture to affirm: but that they are not to be what they were before, namely, living men, consisting of soul and body united; nor, where they were before, "באדָּץ החיים in the land of the living;" and because all their converse with the living is cut off, so that with respect to that intercourse it is much the same as if they had no existence: see Gen. 5:24.

XVIII. Now let us proceed to what we undertook to prove in the second place. That the soul not only survives after death, but also lives, understands, and feels either the favour or vengeance of God. Not only Scripture, but even reason should persuade us of this: for the faculty of thinking, in which the life of the soul consists, is so essential thereto, that the soul cannot exist without it. Though we really approve not their way of speaking who affirm that the soul is thought; yet it is evident that thought is so essential to a rational soul, that a soul which cannot think, is not, indeed, to be deemed a soul. And if the soul has lived in the body, without deriving its life from the body; why should it not live, when it is freed from the prison of the body? Will it, when it comes to God, the fountain of life, lose its own life? Nay, on the contrary, it is agreeable to think, that the nearer it comes to God, it will live in a more excellent manner. Some of the heathen philosophers have spoken much more justly of the soul, than those who are the reproach and disgrace of the Christian name. Plato said the soul was "αὐτοκίνητος," self-moving,

or endowed with spontaneity: Alcinous, de doctrina Platonis, has best explained the meaning of that word, c. 25: "Αὐτοκίνητον δὲ φησὶ τὴν ψυχὴν· ὅτι σύμφυτον ἔχει τὴν ζωὴν, αἰεὶ ἐνεργουσαν καθ' αὐτήν. He affirms the soul to be "self-moving, because it has a connate life, ever active in itself." Aristotle, in like manner, lib. iii. de anima textu septimo: "Τὸ μὲν αἰθητικὸν οὐκ ἄνευ σώματος, ὃ δὲ νοῦς χωριστός. The act of sense is not performed without a body; but the mind is separable therefrom. Also, textu decimo novo et vicessimo; "Χωρίσθεις δὲ ἐστὶ μόνον τοῦθ' ὅπερ ἐστὶ, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ αἰῶδιον· the soul alone, whatever that be, is separated, and that alone is immortal and eternal." See Vossius de Idololat. lib. 1. c. 10. Thus the philosophers ascribe life to the soul, even in the state of separation, and a faculty of acting independent of the body. But nothing, from a mere heathen, can exceed in grandeur those words of Maximus Tyrius: "How then shalt thou be able to emerge out of this sea, and obtain a view of God? Then only, and that perfectly, when thou shalt be called by him, which will soon be the case, only tarry thou, and wait till he call. Old age will presently come, which shall conduct thee thither: death, which cowards, or the faint-hearted deplore, and tremble at its approach, will soon be here. Whoever, on the contrary, longs to be joined to God, expects it with joy, receives it with undaunted resolution." And again, Dissert. ii. 25: "Ὅν γὰρ καλοῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ θάνατον, αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἦν ἀθανασίας ἀρχή, καὶ γένεσις μελλοντος βίου· what the generality call death, is the very beginning of immortality, and a birth to a future life; while the body, indeed, perishes by the very law of its nature, and drops in its appointed time; τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτῆς τόπον καὶ βίον ανακαλουμένης, but souls are recalled to their proper element and life." See also Dissert. 28. For it would be too tedious to transcribe all.

XIX. But let us take a view of the Scripture testimonies: the Lord Jesus expressly declares, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, after death, do all live unto God, Luke 20:38. Which is not only to be understood of that happy life of the entire compound, which they are to obtain by the resurrection from the dead; but of the blessed life of the soul in a state of separation, which our Lord ascribes to them in the present time. In order to prove the resurrection he proceeds in this manner; as first, he concludes, that the soul survives and lives, and then from that infers the resurrection of the body, because God's covenant was not made with souls, but with entire persons. And what is clearer than that testimony of Paul? Rom. 8:10: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness." He opposes the spirit to the body; to this last, he attributes death, as the effect of sin; to the former, life, flowing from the life of Christ, even while the body is dead. Add, that not only Elias, who, without death was taken up to heaven; but also Moses, who it is evident died, appeared to the disciples in discourse with Christ, Matt. 17:3, which could not possibly be without the life of the soul. But what kind of body Moses appeared in, is not for us to determine, as the Holy Ghost is silent about it.

XX. And why had Paul a desire "to depart and to be with Christ," and thought it "far better" for him? Phil. 1:23: why did he judge it "gain to die?" ver. 21; and why are believers actuated by the same spirit, "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord," 2 Cor. 5:8; if, after death, they are to be altogether deprived of that most holy and sweet communion with God in Christ, which they enjoy in this life? Can it be imagined, that believers expected no happiness but what they were only to obtain at the last day? as Smalcius impertinently talks. But what should oblige them to wish therefore for death, which was to bring them no nearer to that day? Paul longed for death, and reckoned it gain; believers were willing

rather to be absent from the body. Say, Smalcus, tell us, why Paul desired it, why believers rather chose it, if they had nothing to expect before the last day? Certainly, death in that case is not any gain, but an inestimable loss, as it deprives them of so many and great blessings we so lately described, and brings them no manner of advantage.

XXI. But by what cavil will they elude what is asserted, Rev. 14:15: "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." This testimony contains many things. 1st, That the dead in the Lord are blessed; but, to suppose any blessedness without knowledge or feeling, is only for those to affirm who are destitute of all spiritual knowledge and feeling. 2dly, That the dead are happy ἀπάρτι, from henceforth, which is to be understood either of that time, when John heard that voice from heaven, and was ordered to write these things; or, of that time when believers die in the Lord. But pray, what new change was introduced in the dead from that time in which the revelation was made to John, that the dying should then be happier than those, who, a little before, had died in the Lord? Unless, perhaps, it be intended to show, that at what time the everlasting Gospel shall be again preached, ver. 6, after convicting Antichrist and purging the church, there will from that time, be preached and written in the church, what we contend for concerning the happiness of believers after death, the fiction of a purgatory being quite exploded. But it seems more natural to think, that ἀπάρτι, from thenceforth, denotes the moment of their death; because, from that time the more perfect happiness of their souls shall commence. 3dly, That they then "rest from their labours," which rest consists not in a sleep that deprives them of all sense; but in a freedom from all vexations, and in the most calm and never to be interrupted participation of the divine glory; and, in a word, in a

continued serenity of conscience. 4thly, That "their works follow them:" that is, that they enjoy the free reward of their good actions, which can then, as little as afterwards, be unattended with any sensible feeling of the intelligent soul.

XXII. Nothing more plausible is advanced by our adversaries against this truth, than that reasoning of Paul, by which he proves the resurrection of the dead from this consideration; because otherwise, they who believe in Christ, would to no purpose stand in jeopardy every hour, in vain undergo so many calamities for Christ, and because Christians would of all men be the most miserable, 1 Cor. 15:19, 30, 31, 32. Certainly, they say, this would be false, should the souls of the righteous, immediately upon death, enjoy the happiness of heaven, and of the wicked feel the torments of hell; for the former would not bear their calamity in vain, nor the latter pursue the pleasures of the flesh with impunity; and the pious would be much more happy than the wicked, though their bodies should never rise. But it is to be observed; 1st, That they whom Paul refutes, did not only deny the resurrection of the body, but also the immortality of the soul, just as the Sadducees did, against whom Christ disputed concerning the resurrection. And this is the reason why both our Lord, and his faithful servant, reason in such a manner as to draw both conclusions at once. This appears from the points which the apostle undertook to refute, ver. 18, 19: "They which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ;" and ver. 32, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." All which tended to persuade men, that there was nothing after death either to be feared or hoped for. If that be true, says the apostle, that all who die perish, if our hope be confined to this life, if the soul neither survives, nor the body is to be raised, in vain are so many calamities undergone for Christ, and Christians of all men are the most miserable, which is not a false or deceitful, but a solid way of

reasoning, and worthy of an apostle. 2dly, As the dangers and calamities the apostle here speaks of, principally concern the body, he justly argues, that the body seems to have been in vain employed for the Lord, if it also was not to be raised, in its appointed time, to a participation of the reward; so that no inference can be deduced from this against the immortality of the soul.

XXIII. Let us now in the last place show, that when the souls of the godly are separated from the body, they are received not only into heavenly joys, but also into heavenly mansions. The apostles assures us of this, 2 Cor. 5:1: "for we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He assigns a twofold receptacle for the soul; one earthly, that is, the body, in which it resides during this animal life, and from which it departs at death; the other heavenly, which it possesses immediately on quitting the former. For here he speaks of that eternal receptacle for man, which death makes way for, and which is said to be eternal in the heavens. In the same "heavenly Jerusalem," he places the "spirits of just men made perfect;" where are "myriads of angels," and "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," Heb. 12:22, 24. In like manner also, John saw "a throne set in heaven, and round about the throne four and twenty elders," who are the patriarchs [or representatives] both of the Old and New Testament church, sitting on so many thrones, Rev. 4:2, 4.

XXIV. Nor are we to doubt, but this was Christ's meaning, when he said to the penitent thief: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise," Luke 22:43. These words are an exact answer to the petition of the thief, who prayed that Christ would "remember him:" Christ answers, I will not only remember thee as absent, but promise that thou shalt be in my presence in everlasting

glory: "thou shalt be with me." The thief fixed the time in which he desired his petition might be granted, viz., "when thou comest unto thy kingdom." Christ informed him not only of the place where he was to reign, which he calls "Paradise," that is, the third heavens, compare 2 Cor. 12:2, 4. A very common way of speaking among the Jews, who place the souls of the godly deceased  $\text{יְטַבְּטוּ}$ , in the garden of Eden, but also of the time, in which he was to enter on his kingdom, TO-DAY: "and it was about the sixth hour," the noon of the day, before the expirations of which, the death of both intervening, that our Lord promised him these joys. But because such a sudden change of condition seemed to be strange and almost incredible, Christ confirms his promise by an asseveration, AMEN, verily.\* These things are plain. Whereas, on the other hand, the interpretations of our adversaries are strained and foolish. They imagine the words may be thus pointed or distinguished, "I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in paradise," as if Christ did not fix the time when the thief was to be with him in paradise, but only declared the truth of what he promised. And they refer to Deut. 30:11, 15, 17, 18, where Moses says, "I command thee this day," &c. But how weak is this! For, 1st, The thief could not be ignorant of the time, when Christ said this to him; he did not want that inculcated. 2dly, It is not our Lord's saying "to-day," but his saying "Amen, verily," that declares the truth of the promise. 3dly, To-day denotes a time, and answers to the when,\* which was in the petition of the thief. 4thly, Maldonat himself looks upon this exposition as insipid and weak: Bellarmine accounts it ridiculous, from the same arguments almost with ours. See Riveti, Catholicus Orthodoxus, quæst. 60. 5thly, The phraseology of Moses is of a different nature: "I command thee this day;" "I denounce unto you this day;" for, besides, that the words there cannot be otherwise construed, here they both may and ought. Moses there prophesies of things that were to come to pass afterwards, and would have the Israelites mindful of



that time, in which he had foretold them in such a pathetic protestation; and therefore, this day or to-day, has a remarkable emphasis in the discourse of Moses, but renders the discourse of Christ, if construed as our adversaries would have it, weak and insipid. Moreover, what they contend for, that the thief understood by Christ's coming into his kingdom, his coming to judge the quick and the dead, is asserted without any proof, nor will they ever be able to prove it. He had certainly been mistaken, if he imagined that Christ's kingdom was to be deferred to the last day. Christ had reigned long before, notwithstanding the vain rage of all his enemies. And Christ's kingdom so far from beginning at the last day, that Paul declares, he will then "deliver up the kingdom to his Father," 1 Cor. 15:24. But a grosser impiety, than any Christian could well be imagined guilty of, is what the heretic subjoins; that, "from all these things, there is not the least pretence to conclude, that Christ, in any respect, lived after death, or that any other men live after death." These things are blasphemous, and cannot be either read or heard without horror.

XXV. Let us add Luke 16:22, and Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. It is the general opinion of the Jews that God uses the ministry of angels in carrying home the souls of the pious. Thus they relate concerning Moses, that when the moment of his death was come, God said to Gabriel "צא והנא נשמתו של משה", go and bring me the soul of Moses." And Christ confirms the opinion about the ministry of angels by his own authority. But whither was the soul of Lazarus conveyed? Into Abraham's bosom. From which expression it is certainly manifest, that the place and state of the blessed are understood, from the opposition to the place and state of the miserable, in which the rich man was. But the learned are not agreed about the derivation of that metaphor. Some think, that this present life is compared to a tempestuous sea, the condition of the pious soul

after death to a calm haven, signified by the term, bosom. Thus in Virgil:

*Nunc tantum sinus, et statio malefida carinis.*

It is now only a bosom, or bay, and an unsafe harbour.

And James Capellus has observed, that what the Latins called "navem appellere, to bring a ship to land," the Greeks express by *κελλειν*. from which Eustathius remarks, is derived *κολπος*, a bosom, or bay, which is the word that Luke uses here. But Ludov. Capellus thinks, that the bosom of Abraham is an expression borrowed from the custom of parents, who cherish their dear infants in their bosom, in which they also sometimes sweetly rest and sleep: just as the godly are said to sleep, when they die, and to rest from their labours: but where can they be said more properly to rest and sleep, than in the bosom of Abraham, their spiritual father? For confirming this interpretation, we may add, that little ones thus tenderly treated, are called by the Greeks *εγκολπίδια βρέφη*, children in the bosom; see also John 1:18, "the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father," that is, who is most intimate and familiar with, and extraordinarily beloved by the Father. But, if I mistake not, they explain that expression best, who think that here, as also Matt. 8:11, and often elsewhere, eternal happiness is represented under the similitude of some splendid and sumptuous feast. For it was customary, that whoever of the guests was allowed to lean on the bosom of the master of the entertainment, was accounted the most honourable person. Thus John 13:23, "there was leaning on his bosom one whom Jesus loved." Moreover, there is no doubt but the Jews ascribed to Abraham, the father of the Gentiles, the principal place among the righteous. Here then is denoted the very great honour conferred on Lazarus, who, in that blessed abode, was placed

next to Abraham. See Cameron and Grotius on the place. I conclude in the words of Augustine, lib. ii. de Origine Animæ, c. 4: "Were you then so very ignorant of this sound and very wholesome article of faith, that souls are judged upon their departure out of the body, before they come to that other judgment, in which they must be judged, at the restitution of their bodies, and that they are either tormented or glorified in that very flesh, in which they lived? Who has with such obstinacy of mind been so deaf to the Gospel, as not to hear, and, upon hearing, not to believe these things, in the instance of that poor man who, after death, was carried into Abraham's bosom, and in that of the rich man, who was consigned to eternal torment?" What the opinion of the ancients was concerning the bosom of Abraham, Martyr has with great learning, explained at large, *Classis Tertia Loc. xvi. §. 7, seq.*

XXVI. When we ascribe to separate souls, not only a change of state, but also of place, and new habitations or mansions, we speak agreeable to the Scriptures, which assign mansions and a place to heaven, John 14:2, 3, and everlasting habitations, Luke 16:9, and a house, 2 Cor. 5:1, 2. Yet we do not think that souls are in a place in the same manner that bodies are: nor do we conceive that they consist of some very subtle corpuscles, whose particles are commensurate to the parts of the space, in which they are included. The very learned Parker, *de descensu ad inferos*, p. 106, 107, has given undoubted testimonies, that a great many of the ancients were of this opinion. But we think that, not only with respect to their external operations, but even as to their substance, they are in that part of the created world, where Christ is bodily present, so as not to be on the earth. We distinguish the essence of the soul, which is a spiritual and immaterial substance, from all its operations whatever, whether internal or external, as an agent is distinguished from its action. Nor do we only inquire about the actions of the soul, in what

place they may be exerted, but also about its substance, in what place it may exist. Seeing it ceases not altogether to be, it ought to be somewhere: and as it is not infinite, it cannot be everywhere. It is therefore in some place; for instance, in some part of heaven, or of hell, not indeed locally, as if it had parts commensurate to the parts of space; but in a way suitable to a spiritual nature: so that while it is in this place, it cannot be in another. Nor is it in this place, because it operates therein; but on the contrary, operates in this and in no other place, because it exists in this place. Hence the presence of the soul, as to its substance, is, in order of nature, prior to its presence as to its operation. And when the Scripture asserts that souls are in heaven, we are to understand that of their substance, even secluding every consideration of their external operations. We would rather be content with this plain way of speaking, than to say with some, that "the soul, considered in itself, without any operation ad extra, cannot be conceived to be in any ubi or place," from which it would follow, that if the soul does not operate without itself, it has no ubi, and is incapable of every change of place after death. But we do not remember that any has explained whether and what it then operates without itself. Of a kin to this, is that inference from the subject relating to the condition of the separated soul, "that by heaven and hell, we are only to understand the states of happiness and misery," which is crude and indigested.

XXVII. We need not be very solicitous about the place of those separate souls, which were soon to be reunited to their bodies, by a miraculous resurrection: nor here give too great a loose to our curiosity: nor venture to "intrude into those things which we have not seen," Col. 2:18. The Sacred Writings say nothing distinctly on that subject. The safest course is to commit those souls to the hands of God, who has wisdom abundant to assign them a proper place of rest for that time, and of whose goodness and justice, we need

entertain no apprehension that he will do them any injustice. This is their glory, this their salvation, that, in whatever place they are, they are still for the glory of God, and in his favour and grace. This is the language of modesty; to determine any thing peremptorily would be only presumption.

XXVIII. Let us now see what happiness the souls of the righteous enjoy, when they are set free from the body in heaven. And first, It is their happiness that they are "with God and Christ in glory," John 12:26, "where I am, there shall also my servant be." John 17:24, "Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Believers even here are with Christ by faith and love: Christ with the Father cometh to them, and manifests himself to them, John 14:21. And they find an incredible rest to their souls, in that gracious presence of God and of Christ. "It is good for me to draw near to God," Ps. 73:28. But the greatest nearness they are favoured with in this life, is mere distance from God, if compared with the future state of the soul: "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord," 2 Cor. 5:6. And hence it was, that Paul "had a desire to depart, and to be with Christ," Phil 1:23.

XXIX. Secondly, Being in the presence of God, they shall also see him in the light of glory. That is, they shall attain to that knowledge of the most blessed God, which shall be sufficient both to perfect and content the understanding, and with respect to this, that vision of God which is allowed them in this world is mere darkness and blindness, as we have formerly hinted. Of this vision our Lord speaks, Matt. 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And they shall see God:—1st, In the works of glory, which are now made known in heaven, wherein his most illustrious perfections will shine forth with far greater clearness, than in the works both of nature and grace. 2dly, In the face of Jesus Christ, whom they will

continually contemplate face to face, and very familiarly and intimately know, John 17:24, "That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." 3dly, More immediately, in himself; so far as man is capable to approach to God, in a degree and measure incomprehensible to us.

And love him with the greatest delight.

XXX. Thirdly, This vision of God, who is essential truth, shall be accompanied with the most holy and, at the same time, the most delightful love of the same God, who is also perfect goodness: nor can it otherwise be. For when the understanding beholds, and without interruption, contemplates God himself and his most desirable perfections, not in a fallacious appearance, nor with obscure and confused ideas, as here, but in their native light, the holy will cannot but be inflamed with most ardent love to them. That happy soul, not only in the light of God, beholds God as the fountain of light, but is, on every hand, surrounded with the flames of divine love, by which it continually gives love for love. And that love makes it feel neither weariness nor uneasiness in the presence, contemplation and fruition of God; while new pleasures, one after another, arising from the intimate possession of the chief good, supremely beloved, and its unvaried complacency, charm the soul. For that love is not a love of longing, but of long desired fruition. And this is that love which the apostle, 1 Cor. 13:8, declares abides for ever, when even faith and hope are no more.

XXXI. Fourthly, To perfect love is conjoined the most perfect conformity of the soul to God, in holiness and glory. If Moses were so favoured, that rays of unusual light shone from his face, after his familiar converse with God in the mount, which yet can scarce be compared with that familiarity of intimate access, which the blessed

enjoy in heaven; how great, do we think, must that effulgence of divine glory be, which the infinite goodness of God communicates to the souls who are the objects of his love, and who perfectly love him! What the first-born Son of God is, in a most eminent degree, and in a way altogether peculiar to himself, viz. "the brightness of the Father's glory," Heb. 1:3, that also they shall be in their measure, even perfectly, according to that state, though only so far as mere creatures can be, that Jesus "may be the first-born among many brethren," Rom. 8:29.

XXXII. Fifthly, From all these things taken together, a joy arises more than inexpressible, more than glorious, of which that joy we have already described, sect. v., is but a faint and transient image. For as the blessings of grace are infinitely exceeded by those of glory, so the soul also, in a state of glory, is capable of those that are more excellent, is a far better judge of them, and enjoys them much more perfectly: hence also the joy flowing from them must be much more excellent. In Matt. 25:21, it is called "the joy of the Lord." Because, 1st, It proceeds from, and is freely bestowed by the Lord. 2dly, It has the Lord for its object. Ps. 16:11: "In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." 3dly, and lastly, It is the most excellent and worthy of the Lord.

XXXIII. There can be no doubt, but the things we have thus far mentioned, are most excellent: yet they are not the complete fulness of that state; nor do they fully contain that abundance of happiness and glory, which the gospel commands us to hope for. And for this reason, the Sacred Writings frequently put off the consummation of our happiness, till the glorious coming of our Lord; as 2 Tim. 1:12. "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day;" and ver. 18, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." 2 Tim. 4:8: "There is

laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give me at that day." 1 Pet. 1:2: "The salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." And 1 Pet. 5:4: "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away; add Col. 3:4, and 1 John 3:2. From these testimonies we are by no means to conclude, that the souls of the righteous shall be, till then, without all sense of happiness; but only, that what they have till then been favoured with, is but a kind of prelibation, till the work of salvation shall be in every respect completed. For certainly, it cannot be denied, that there is a great difference between that measure of happiness, which the souls of believers enjoy while they are separated from the body, and that consummation of glory which is to be revealed at the last day; and that because the happiness of a part is not to be compared with the whole; since even that part, which is already received into heaven, has not attained to that perfection which the gospel has promised, as we shall presently more fully show. Hence, also, the ancients said, that the souls of believers have indeed a joy, but it is only enjoyed in part; as sinners have a sorrow and a punishment in part, while they are shut up in prison they are reserved for the coming of the judge, Auctor quæst. et respos. quæst. 20 (who is said to be Athanasius). And Chrysostom, places these souls as in a kind of porch. Bernard called it a hall, Serm. 3, de Sanctis, distinguishing three states of men, or of souls; "the first in the tabernacle, the second in the hall, the third in the house of God." Which, however, is to be understood with caution, not that the souls of believers are out of heaven, and have not the vision of God, but we are to think that then they will obtain their most perfect happiness, when they shall be reunited to their bodies.

XXXIV. The things, which the last day will contribute to the consummation of happiness, we comprise chiefly under three heads. First, the bodies of believers, when raised in glory, shall be restored



to their souls. The apostle has fully treated on this subject, 1 Cor. 15. The bodies, indeed, shall be the same which believers, as was their duty, tenderly cherished in this life, in which, as in temples dedicated to the most holy God, they glorified God, and often underwent so many afflictions for the cause of Christ and religion. For both the justice of God, the comfort of the godly, and the very term, resurrection, which can only be applied to what fell by death, do require them to be the same. But though they are to be the same as to substance, yet they shall be so changed as to qualities, that they will seem to be altogether different: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality: then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory," 1 Cor. 15:53, 54. Great, therefore, shall be the change of the body, but the same subject shall remain. Which the apostle intimates by the term, this, as if he had pointed to his own body. And to what purpose is the repetition of the same particle, four several times, but to remove all ambiguity, and every cause of hesitation? And in fine, how otherwise can death be said to be "swallowed up in victory?" Ought it not rather to be said, that death swallowed up our bodies εἰς νίκης, or as it is in the Prophet לבצח, which may also be translated for ever, if the same numerical bodies do not rise?

XXXV. Moreover, we cannot here but admire the almost incredible goodness of God. The divine mercy was willing to bless our bodies also with a participation of heavenly felicity. But their present constitution renders them incapable of so great a glory. As herbs and flowers wither and fade by the excessive heat of the radiant sun, so also our bodies, such as we now carry about with us, are unequal to bear the heavenly glory. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. 15:50. Where flesh and blood do not denote our nature, corrupted by sin, but the very substance of the human body, with those infirmities of animal life which naturally follow it. Our

flesh is from blood; blood from meat and drink; and in blood consists that animal life from which the body is called animal, ver. 44. By flesh and blood, therefore, is signified the nature of the human body, as it is nourished and preserved in this life, by taking in meat and drink, and by the circulation of the blood. But such flesh and blood is incapable of the heavenly glory. What then? Is God to diminish the heavenly glory, that our body may also be admitted to have some participation of it? By no means. He will rather change the qualities of our body, and of terrestrial make it heavenly, and of animal spiritual, so as thus to bear a suitable proportion to the glory wherewith it shall be endowed, ver. 40, 43. But who, while he still remains on this earth, can comprehend this heavenly language? Who can form an idea of such a spiritual body? And yet it is evident from undoubted testimonies of holy writ, that the righteous shall have this granted to them, and we are to look for it from our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," Phil. 3:21. that we may shine forth, not as to our soul only, but also as to our body, "as the sun in the kingdom of our Father," Matt. 13:43.

XXXVI. The second thing, in which the last day shall contribute to the consummation of our happiness, is such a great effulgence of the divine perfections in the works of glory, that a more illustrious neither the understanding can conceive, nor the heart wish for. Undoubtedly the soul of man, immediately upon its reception into heaven, most distinctly sees very many things in and concerning God, which on earth it understood only by the faint glimmering light of faith; but yet God has postponed the full display of his glory to that day. And therefore that vision of God, which we maintain to belong to the separate soul, though more evident than we can now well conceive, is not yet so perfect but a greater measure of new light. For

as knowledge depends most of all on the revelation or discovery of the objects, so that knowledge cannot be brought to its perfection, while a great part of the objects lie concealed. But a great part of the objects, in the contemplation of which our mind shall be employed, lie concealed, till a new heaven and a new earth are made, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Indeed, the more illustrious the works of God are with which the blessed find themselves surrounded, the greater is the pleasure with which they contemplate the glory of God therein. But what more illustrious, than to see this vast universe, delivered from the bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, which this created world, with earnest expectation, waited for? Rom. 8:19, 21. What more noble and divine than that general judgment, in which they shall hear themselves not only acquitted, their enemies not only condemned, but themselves also appointed to judge angels in Christ their head? 1 Cor. 6:3. What more illustrious than that general assembly of all the elect, from the beginning of the world to the last day, who, being clothed with heavenly bodies, shall each of them shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father? And with what pleasing astonishment may we imagine the soul will look upon its body, which it formerly knew to be subject only to very many and great infirmities, but shall then behold it glittering with such a blaze of light, as that it may seem not indeed equal to, but yet greatly resembling the glorious body of Christ? And as, in all these things, it can admire nothing but the effulgence of the divine glory, may it not be said, while it beholds them, to see God himself in a most eminent manner? Hence John says, 1 Epis. 3:2, "But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." And David, in like manner, promises himself only after the resurrection, that contemplation of God which gives the most full satisfaction. Ps. 17:15; "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." To this also we are to refer that of Paul: "For now

we see 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," 1 Cor. 13:12. That is, in a manner most perfect and altogether divine, a more excellent than which cannot, it seems, be the portion of any creature. For both the object shall be most clearly represented, as well in its most glorious operations, as in its immediate illapse or entrance into the mind, in a manner which at present we cannot explain; and the subject will be disposed in the best manner, in order to behold and observe in God whatever can complete its happiness.

XXXVII. Thirdly, That day shall bring the blessed to that fruition of God, which shall be much more perfect and immediate, than whatever they had enjoyed before. As long as there are some believers who are still in this miserable life; as long as the bodies of the elect, who are departed out of it, are detained in the prison of death, and lie hid in the dust, the saints in heaven cannot be ignorant, that very many remains of that power which sin had gained over man, must still subsist. And consequently something must be wanting to the full perfection of their joy. And seeing the effects and remains of sin are not yet abolished in their own bodies, and in believers not yet made perfect, who, together with them, are members of the same mystical body, hence God does not communicate himself to them, but by the intervention of a mediator. But by the resurrection, "death itself, which is the last enemy, shall be abolished, 1 Cor. 15:26. and "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," Rev. 20:14, never more to have any power but over the enemies of God and of believers. Nor shall there be any member of the whole mystical body of Christ, which shall not be perfectly holy, and absolutely subject to him. And after all the remains and effects of sin shall be entirely destroyed, nothing shall hinder God from communicating himself immediately to men without the intervention of a mediator, as he does to the holy angels. We are of the opinion,

with the best interpreters, that this is the meaning of Paul in 1 Cor. 15:28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

XXXVIII. To this happiness belongs a boundless and immutable eternity: without which it would in reality be no happiness. For no good, how great soever, that one is possessed of with a fear of losing it, can, by its fruition, yield that perfect and solid joy which is requisite to happiness. Wherefore happiness is called "eternal life," Matt. 25:46. Rom. 2:7, and "a crown of glory, that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. 5:4, and "an incorruptible crown," 1 Cor. 9:25, and the apostle declares concerning the righteous, 1 Thess. 4:17, that they "shall ever be with the Lord".

XXXIX. Here it is usual to inquire, whether there will be any difference of degrees among the blessed. In this question, indeed, (though we utterly disclaim the proud doctrine of the Romanists concerning the disparity of glory, founded on the inequality of merits) the arguments of those who think, that God will crown the unequal measure of the gifts of grace with a disparity of gifts of glory, seem more probable to us. To this purpose are those Scriptures, Rom. 2:6, "who will render to every one according to his deeds," and 2 Cor. 5:10, "That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done." By which words is not barely signified the quality of the free reward which shall be granted the righteous, according to their works; but also the quantity of that reward, answering in a certain proportion to their works. Which is expressly explained by the apostle, 2 Cor. 9:6, "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Moreover, that this harvest, and its diversity or different product, is erroneously confined to this life,

appears from comparing this place with Gal. 6:8, "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." To the same effect is 1 Cor. 3:8, "He that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour." Where it is clearly enough declared, that the proportion of the reward will be adjusted to that of the labour. Nor unlike to this is the discourse concerning the resurrection of the dead, 1 Cor. 15:40, 41, "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." Where first, the bodies laid aside at death are compared with those assumed at the resurrection: and then, the celestial bodies are said to differ very much in glory from each other. As the sun, moon, and stars are all truly celestial bodies, but greatly unlike in glory. And to what purpose is that distinct mention of sun, moon, and stars, and of the unequal glory of each, if the apostle only intended to teach us the difference of the terrestrial from the celestial bodies, while all the celestial were notwithstanding to have the same degree of glory?

XL. It cannot, it seems, on any pretence be denied, that at least the principal leaders, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and diligent teachers of the Old and New Testament church, shall have some greater degree of glory assigned them. What was said to the apostles was not said to all, Matt. 19:28, "When the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The meaning of these words, if I can form any judgment, the illustrious Grotius has best of all explained. It is as if our Lord had said, you shall occupy the next place of honour to me your king. To judge here denotes, to be set over or to preside, by a metalepsis, because general presidents are

employed in passing sentence. Whence a presidentship or province is called by the Hebrews סדיכה, Gen. 49:16. Zech. 3:7. The metaphor is taken from the ancient state of the kingdom of Israel, in which the Phylarchæ, or heads of the tribes, stood in the next degree to the royal majesty, and are supposed to have sat by the king's throne, in chairs of state, in the public assemblies. But to confine this glory of the apostles within the limits of the church militant in such a manner, that in the triumphant, where they have the full reward of their labours, they shall quit their thrones, seems repugnant to reason: nor does it agree with John's vision, who saw in heaven four and twenty thrones, and twenty-four elders sitting on them, that is, the patriarchs of the Old and New Testament church, "clothed in white raiment, and having on their heads crowns of gold." Rev. 4:4. And these things are so evident, that those very persons, who in other respects contradict the disparity of celestial glory, own that we are to distinguish between that happiness which shall be the portion of believers, as believers, and the commendation which, in the last day, shall be given to every one, in proportion to the diligence and success he shall have laboured in promoting the kingdom of Christ, and which, it seems, is to be unequally distributed. But because it is a glorious thing to obtain such a commendation from the mouth of Christ, and the memory of that testimony shall for ever abide in the minds of believers; they cannot deny, but in the kingdom of heaven a disparity of degrees in that kind of glory may be admitted to take place among the blessed. For certainly, it is not to be thought, that then there will be many servants of Christ, who may in that respect be compared with the apostle Paul. See Theses Amyraldi de vita æterna, § 34.

XLI. The apostle John seems to have given a check to other things, which are too curiously made the matter of inquiry, concerning the condition or state of the future world, when he said. 1 John 3:2,

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." It is then more prudent and pious to endeavour to become hereafter partakers of that glorious life, than to gratify an itch of curiosity with insipid and vain speculations. This, however, we may look upon as a certain truth, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. 2:9.

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