

**OF THE
BLESSINGS
AND DOCTRINES
OF GRACE**

Dr. John Gill D.D.

Bierton Particular Baptists
11 Hayling Close
Fareham Hampshire
PO143AE
www.BiertonparticularBaptists.co.uk

Email: nbpttc@yahoo.co.uk

PUBLISHERS FOREWORD

This republication of Dr. John Gill's work is taken from his book VI, of *A Body of Doctrinal Divinity*. It treats the subject of the blessings of grace and the doctrines that holds them forth. It is presented to assist in the understanding of the subject and to promote discussions relating to the death resurrection and ascension of the lord Jesus Christ .

It treats the subject of the extent of the atonement due to the fact that most professing Christians today misunderstand the subject and speak against those who differ from them. This is due to ignorance and the need to understand the word of God more fully.

We recommend a careful study of Dr. John Gill's works, as set out in his *A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* (as listed at the back of this book). This book will assist those who are familiar with the disputes that have taken place in the past as those who will be aware of the Synod of Dort (also known as the Synod of Dordrecht) which was an international Synod held in Dordrecht in 1618–1619, by the Dutch Reformed Church, to settle a divisive controversy initially by the rise of Arminianism.

Presentation and Dedication

This new edition of Dr. John Gills, “**Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity**”, contains 11 books, now in 5 volumes. It is presented and dedicated to the students, pastors and teachers of Christ-Centered Church Inc. Ministries, Philippines, under the care of William Ola Poloc, its founder and senior pastor (Bishop) on the, 16th January 2020, by David Clarke, founder of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc.

Brief History of the Baguio Christ-Centered Churches Ministries Inc.

Pst. William O. Poloc Sr. was released from the New Bilibid prison in August 2002, where he graduated with a Degree in Theology, and started prison ministries in his hometown Baguio City, with his wife and the aid of a certain missionary from UK , by name David Clarke, the founder of Trojan Horse International. In December 2002 they

were able to baptize 22 inmates in Baguio City Jail, 9 inmates in Benguet Provincial jail, along with William's wife Beth Poloc and Josephine Ortis, along with her daughter Karen Basoon, who had all confessed their faith in the lord Jesus Christ. David Clarke returned to the UK in 2003 after his mission.

Later, God gave them a burden to open a church within the city so as to reach out to their families, relatives and the families of my co inmates who are still incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prison.

By His grace the Baguio Christ-Centered Church Inc. Stood up. As years go by God continued to bless the church by drawing more souls into it. He also bless us with a bible school to train ministers unable to study in an expensive bible schools. Graduates of our school were sent out to reach lost souls and augment Christ Centered mission churches to different places around the archipelago. As a result, by God's grace and providence Christ Centered Churches were established to the different places in the country.



God's work here in the Northern Philippines bloomed most especially here in the city of Baguio. The Baguio Christ-Centred Church is the mother church of all the Christ Centered Churches in the Philippines namely; The Pilot-Christ-Centred Church, The Kamog Christ-Centred Church, The Christ-Centered-Church Theological School(TULIP), The Christ-Centred Radio Ministry, The Christ-Centred Jail Ministries etc.). We'll, we are truly blessed by these works He has entrusted to us. To God be the glory!

Website <http://www.bccc.com> (Facebook)

Email: williampolocsr@yahoo.com

Christ-Centered Ministries Philippines

PERSONAL NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

It is noted and remarked that this date of publication is the

Golden Jubilee ¹(Leviticus 25:8-13 King) of conversion of David Clarke, which took place on, 16th January 1971.

<http://www.Biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk>



David Clarke is the sole remaining member of Bierton Particular Baptists who was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982. The doctrinal foundation of Trojan Horse Mission are those of the Bierton Particular Baptists Articles of religion.

View Wikipedia Entry for Bierton and View: None Conformist Place Of Worship [Click To view](#)

View the Wikipedia Entry

David Clarke

1 8 And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

Contents

PUBLISHERS FOREWORD	3
Presentation and Dedication	3
Chapter 1	7
OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST	7
Chapter 2	13
OF THE CAUSES OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST	13
Chapter 3	21
OF THE OBJECTS OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST	21
Chapter 4	33
OF THOSE TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE WHICH SEEM TO FAVOUR UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION	33
Chapter 5	50
OF THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST	50
Chapter 6	76
OF PROPITIATION, ATONEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION, AS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST	76
Chapter 8	102
OF JUSTIFICATION	102
Chapter 9	136
OF ADOPTION	136
Chapter 10	149
OF THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD	149
Chapter 11	156
OF REGENERATION	156
Chapter 12	176
OF EFFECTUAL CALLING	176
Chapter 13	191
OF CONVERSION	191
Chapter 15	219
OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS	219
FURTHER PUBLICATION	260
THE PAROUSIA	260
WHAT HAPPENED IN A.D. 70	273
FINAL DECADE BEFORE THE END	275

BOOK VI
OF THE BLESSINGS OF GRACE, WHICH COME BY
CHRIST; AND OF THE DOCTRINES IN WHICH THEY ARE
HELD FORTH

Chapter 1

OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST

Having, in the preceding book, gone through the twofold state of Christ, his humiliation and exaltation; and considered each of the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, sustained and exercised by him therein; I shall now proceed to consider the blessings of grace, which come by him, through the exercise of them; and especially his priestly office; for he is “come an High Priest of good things to come” (Heb. 9:11), which were future, under the former dispensation, were promised, prophesied of, and prefigured in it; but not accomplished; for “the law” had only a shadow of these good things to come, (Heb. 10:1), but now they are come, and are actually obtained, through Christ’s coming in the flesh; and through what he has done and suffered in it; as redemption, satisfaction, and reconciliation for sin, remission of sin, justification, adoption, &c. and as redemption stands in the first place; and is a principal and most important blessing and doctrine of grace, I shall begin with that. And,

First, I shall settle the meaning of the word; and show what it supposes, includes, and is designed by it. Our English word Redemption, is from the Latin tongue, and signifies, buying again; and several words in the Greek language, of the New Testament, are used in the affair of our Redemption, which signify the obtaining of something by paying a proper price for it; sometimes the simple verb ayopaco, to “buy”, is used: so the redeemed are said to be “bought unto God” by the blood of Christ; and to be “bought” from the earth; and to be “bought” from among men; and to be “bought” with a price; that is, with the price of Christ’s blood, (Rev. 5:9; 14:3, 4; 1 Cor. 6:20), hence the church of God is said to be purchased with it, (Acts 20:28). Sometimes the compound word eqxyopatco, is used; which signifies, to buy again, or out of the hands of another; as the redeemed are bought out of the hands of justice; as in (Gal. 3:13; 4:5).

In other places *auxpogw*, is used, or others derived from it; which signifies, the deliverance of a slave, or captive, from his thralldom, by paying a ransom price for him: so the saints are said to be redeemed, not with silver or gold, the usual price paid for a ransom; but with a far greater one, the blood and life of Christ, which he came into this world to give, as a ransom price for many; and even himself, which is *ccvxiauxpov*, an answerable, adequate, and full price for them (1 Pet. 1:18; Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6). There are various typical redemptions, and that are of a civil nature, which may serve to illustrate our spiritual and eternal redemption by Christ. As,

I. The deliverances of the people of Israel out of their captivities, Egyptian and Babylonian; the latter I shall not much insist upon; since, though the Jews were exiles in Babylon, they did not appear to be in much slavery and thralldom; but built houses, planted gardens, and had many privileges; insomuch that some of them, when they might have had their liberty, chose rather to continue where they were; and though their deliverance is sometimes called a redemption, yet sparingly, and in an improper sense (Jer. 15:21), for they were redeemed without money; and Cyrus, their deliverer, neither gave nor took a price for them; and is never called a redeemer; (see Isa. 14:13; 52:3). But the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt, was a very special and remarkable type of redemption by Christ, out of a worse state of bondage than that of Egypt. The Israelites were made to serve with rigor, and their lives were made bitter with hard bondage, in brick and mortar, and service in the field; and they cried to God, by reason of their bondage, it was so intolerable; and it was aggravated by the taskmasters set over them; who, by the order of Pharaoh, obliged them to provide themselves with straw, and yet bring in the full tale of brick as before: which fitly expresses the state and condition that men are in; who, through sin, are weak and unable to fulfill the law; yet is it as regardless of want of strength, as the Egyptian taskmasters were of want of straw: it requires sinless and perfect obedience to it; and curses and condemns such as continue not in all things to do it. The deliverance of the people of Israel, is called a redemption; God promised to rid them out of their bondage, and to “redeem” them with a stretched out arm; and

when they were delivered, he is said to have led forth the people he had “redeemed”: and the bringing them out of the house of bondage, or redeeming them out of the house of bondmen, is used as an argument to engage them to regard the commandments of God (Ex. 6:6; 15:13; 20:9; Deut. 7:8). And which redemption by Christ, from sin, the law, and death, lay the redeemed under a still greater obligation to do; Moses, who was the instrument God raised up, and whom he called and sent to redeem Israel, is said to be a “deliverer”, or as it should be rendered, a “redeemer” (Acts 7:35), in which he was a type of Christ, whom God raised up, called, and sent to be a Redeemer of his spiritual Israel: and there was, in some sense, a price paid for the redemption of literal Israel; since they are expressly said to be a purchased people, bought by the Lord (Ex. 15:16; Deut. 32:6), and their deliverance was owing to blood, the blood of the passover lamb, sprinkled on their door posts; typical of the blood of Christ, the price of our redemption. Besides, as it has been observed by some, the redemption of the people of Israel, being the Lord’s people, was by virtue of their future redemption by Christ; whose sufferings and death were for the “redemption of transgressions”, or of transgressors, who were “under the first testament”; and that the temporal deliverance of none but the Lord’s people, is called a redemption, not that of his and their enemies.

2. The ransom of the people of Israel, when numbered, was typical of the ransom by Christ; which was made by paying half a shekel, called the atonement money for their souls, and which was paid alike for a rich man, as a poor man; whereby they were preserved from any plague among them (Ex. 30:12-16). None but Israelites were ransomed; and none are ransomed by Christ, but the spiritual Israel of God, whom he has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; even the whole Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles: they were a numbered people for whom the ransom was paid; and so are they that are redeemed and ransomed by Christ; whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life; who have passed under the hands of him that telleth them, and have been told into the hands of Christ; and are particularly and distinctly known by him, even by name; the sheep for whom

he has laid down his life; and are a special and peculiar people. The half shekel was paid alike for rich and poor, for one neither more nor less. Christ's people, though some may be redeemed from more and greater sins than others; yet they are all redeemed from all their sins, and with the same price, the price of his blood; and which is, as the half shekel was, an atonement for their souls; by which peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction are made for sin, so that no plague shall come nigh them; they are delivered from going down to the pit of destruction; and are saved from the second death; (see Job 33:24).

3. The buying again of an Israelite, waxen poor, and sold to another, by any near akin to him; is a lively representation of the purchase and redemption of the Lord's poor people (Lev. 25:47-49) who, in a state of nature, are poor, and wretched, and miserable; even so as to be like beggars on the dunghill; when such was the grace of Christ, who, though rich, for their sakes became poor, that they, through his poverty might be made rich; and to such a degree, as to be raised from the dunghill and sit among princes, and inherit the throne of glory. Though some may not sell themselves to work wickedness, as Ahab did, yet all are sold under sin; for if this was the case of the apostle Paul, though regenerate, much more must it be the case of an unregenerate man; who, through sin, is brought into subjection to it, a servant of it, and a slave to it; as the poor Israelite, sold to a stranger, was a bondman to him: and such an one cannot redeem himself, being without strength, unable to fulfil the law, and to make atonement for sin; nor can any of his friends, though ever so rich, redeem him, or give to God a ransom for him; such may redeem a poor relation, or friend from a prison, by paying his pecuniary debts for him; but cannot redeem his soul from hell and destruction; may give a ransom price to man for one in slavery and bondage; but cannot give to God a ransom to deliver from wrath to come: only Christ, the near Kinsman of his people, can do this, and has done it; he that is their "Gaol", their near "Kinsman", partaker of the same flesh and blood with them, is their Redeemer, who has given himself a ransom for them.

4. The delivery of a debtor from prison, by paying his debts for

him, is an emblem of deliverance and redemption by Christ: a man that is in debt, is liable to be arrested, and cast into prison, as is often the case; where he must lie till the debt his discharged, by himself or another: sins are debts; and a sinner owes more than ten thousand talents, and has nothing to pay; he cannot answer to the justice of God for one debt of a thousand; nor can he, by paying a debt of obedience he owes to God, pay off one debt of sin, or obligation to punishment; and so is liable to a prison, and is in one; is concluded under sin, under the guilt of it, which exposes him to punishment; and he is held with the cords and fetters of it; which he cannot loose himself from; and he is shut up under the law, in which he is held, until delivered and released by Christ; who, as he has engaged to pay the debts of his people, has paid them, cleared the whole score, and blotted out the hand writing that was against them; in consequence of which is proclaimed, in the gospel, liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and in the effectual calling Christ says “to the prisoners”, “Go forth”, opening the prison doors for them; and to them that sit in darkness, in the gloomy cells of the prison, “show yourselves”; all which is done in virtue of the redemption price paid by Christ for his people.

5. The ransoming of persons out of slavery, by paying a ransom price for them, serves to give an idea of the redemption of the Lord's people by Christ. They are in a state of slavery, out of which they cannot deliver themselves; Christ is the ransomer of them out of the hands of such that are stronger than they; his life and blood are the ransom price he has paid for them; and they are called, the ransomed of the Lord; their deliverance from present bondage, and future ruin and destruction, is in consequence of a ransom found and given; “Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom” (Job 33:24; Zech. 9:11). In which there is an allusion to a custom in the eastern countries, to put their slaves in an evening into a pit, where they are close shut up till the morning, and then taken out, to be put to their slavish employments; but not delivered, unless a sufficient ransom is given for them; and such is the blood of the covenant. Now all these views of redemption plainly point out to us the following things with respect to the redemption of the Lord's

people.

1. That they are previous to their redemption, and which that supposes, in a state of captivity and bondage; they are sinners in Adam, and by actual transgressions; and so come into the hands of vindictive justice, offended by sin; and which will not clear the guilty without satisfaction given to it; which is made by paying a price: redemption by Christ is nothing more nor less than buying his people out of the hands of justice, in which they are held for sin; and that is with the price of his blood; which is therefore paid into the hands of justice for them: hence they are said to be redeemed, or bought unto God by his blood (Rev. 5:9). Being sinners, and offenders of the justice of God, that holds under sin; under the guilt of it, which binds over to punishment, unless delivered from it; it holds them under the sentence of the law, transgressed by them; which not only accuses of and charges with sin, but pronounces guilty, and condemns and curses: it holds them in subjection to death, even eternal death; which is the wages and just demerit of sin: the law threatened with it in case of sin; sin being committed, the sentence of death passed upon all men; all having sinned, judgment, or the judicial sentence, came upon all men to condemnation in a legal way; and sin reigned unto death in a tyrannical manner; or, in other words, man became not only deserving of wrath, but obnoxious to it; the wrath of God was revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; and indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, come upon every soul of man, as upon the children of disobedience, unless delivered from it, through the redemption that is by Christ. In such an enthralled state are men to sin, to the justice of God, to death, and wrath to come.

Ie2. That redemption by Christ is a deliverance from all this. It is a redemption from sin; from all iniquities whatever, original and actual (Ps. 130:8; Titus 2:14), from avenging justice, on account of sin; from the guilt of sin; for there is no condemnation by it to them that are interested in redemption by Christ; “Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died!” and by dying, has redeemed his people from sin, and secured them from condemnation (Rom. 8:1, 33) and in virtue of this they are delivered from the dominion of sin; for though this is

done in the effectual calling, by the power of divine grace, it is in virtue of redemption by Christ, by whom sin is crucified, and the body of it destroyed; so that it shall not reign in them, or have dominion over them: one branch of redemption lies in being delivered from a vain conversation; and, ere long, the redeemed shall be delivered from the very being of sin; when their redemption, as to the application of it, will be complete; as it will be in the resurrection; when the soul will not only be among the spirits of just men made perfect; but the body will be clear of sin, mortality, and death; which is called redemption that draws near, the redemption of the body waited for, and the day of redemption (Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14; 4:30). Redemption is a deliverance from the law, from the bondage of it, and from the curse and condemnation by it; so that there shall be no more curse; and from eternal death and wrath to come: life is forfeited into the hands of justice by sin; which life is redeemed from destruction by Christ, giving his life a ransom for it; he, by redeeming his people, has delivered them from wrath to come; being justified through the redemption that is in Christ, by his blood, they are, and shall be saved, from everlasting wrath, ruin, and destruction.

le3. That redemption by Christ is such a deliverance, as that it is setting persons quite free and at entire liberty; such who are dead to sin by Christ are freed from it, from the damning power of it, and from its dominion and tyranny; and though, not as yet, from the being of it; yet, ere long, they will be; when, with the rest of the members of the church, they will be presented glorious, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and such are free from the law; though not from obedience to it, yet from the bondage of it; they are delivered from it, and are no longer held in it, as in a prison; but are directed and exhorted to stand fast in the liberty from it, with which Christ has made them free; and this will have its full completion on all accounts, when the saints shall be delivered from every degree of bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Chapter 2

OF THE CAUSES OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST

Secondly, The next thing to be considered are the causes of

redemption; what it springs from, by whom, and by what means it is obtained; and for what ends and purposes it is wrought out.

First, the moving cause of it, or from whence it springs and flows; and that is, the everlasting love of God; which, as it is the source and spring of every blessing of grace; as of election, regeneration, and effectual calling; so of redemption. The gift of Christ to be the Redeemer of his people flows from this love. Christ was given to be a Redeemer before he was sent; when he was given for a covenant to the people he was given in covenant to be the Redeemer of them; and this gift was the effect of love; to this Christ himself ascribes it; “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son”; that is, to be their Redeemer; hence, before he came, Job had knowledge of him as his living Redeemer; and all the Old Testament saints waited for him as such. The mission of Christ in the fulness of time, to be the propitiation for the sins of men, and to redeem them from them, is given as a manifest, clear, and undoubted instance of his love; “In this was manifested the love of God”, &c. “Herein is love”, &c. (1 John 4:9,10) and God’s not sparing his Son, but delivering him into the hands of justice and death, to die in the room and stead of sinners, while they were such, is a full demonstration and high commendation of his great love unto them (Rom. 5:8). The free grace of God, for grace, if it is not altogether free is not grace; and which is no other than unmerited love, clear of all conditions, merit and motives in the creature; it is at the bottom of our redemption by Christ; for as we are “justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus

Christ”; so that redemption that is in and by Christ is of free grace; the gift of Christ is a free grace gift; his being sent and delivered up to death are owing to the grace of God; it is “by the grace of God he tasted death for everyone”; for everyone of the sons of God: and this cannot be attributed to any merit or desert in those for whom Christ died; since they were without strength, ungodly wicked sinners, the chief of sinners, and enemies in their minds, by wicked works (Rom. 5:6-8, 10). Mercy, which is no other than the love and grace of God, exercised towards miserable creatures, gives rise to this blessing of redemption: God first resolved to have mercy on sinful men; and then determined to redeem and save them by his Son; and it is through

the tender mercy of our God, that Christ, the dayspring from on high, visited and redeemed his people; and so performed the mercy promised to men (Luke 1:68, 69, 72, 78), hence God is said to save men according to his mercy; and mercy is glorified in their salvation and redemption by Christ; and they are under obligation to sing of mercy, to praise the Lord, and give thanks unto him, on account of it (Titus 3:5; Ps. 107:1, 2; 136:23, 24), it is now, by the love, grace, and mercy of God to sinful men, that his will is determined, and his resolution fixed, to redeem them; for redemption is according to an eternal purpose he has purposed in Christ; who was foreordained before the foundation of the world, to redeem men from a vain conversation, with his precious blood: he was set forth, in the decrees and purposes of God, to be the propitiation for sin; God appointed him to be the Redeemer and Saviour; and appointed men, not unto wrath, which they deserved, but to obtain salvation by him; even the vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory; and being moved, from his love, grace, and mercy, within himself, to determine upon the redemption of them, his wisdom was set to work to find out the best way and method of doing it: upon this a council was held; God was, in Christ, forming a scheme of peace, reconciliation, and redemption; in which he has “abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence”, in fixing upon the most proper person, and the most proper means, whereby to effect it: and hence the scheme of redemption, as formed in the eternal mind and council of God, is called “the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 1:7, 8; 3:10). But of the wisdom of God, as it appears in redemption by Christ, I have more largely treated when on the attribute of Wisdom. All these workings in the heart and will of God, issued in a covenant between him and his Son; in which he proposed to his Son, that he should be the Raiser up, Restorer, and Redeemer of his people, both among Jews and Gentiles; and to which he agreed, and said, “Lo, I come to do thy will!” which was no other, than to work out the redemption of his people (Isa. 49:5, 6; Ps. 40:7, 8). Hence this covenant is by some called, the covenant of redemption, in which this great affair was settled and secured. Now upon all this, the love, grace, and mercy of God, the good will and purpose of his heart, his council and covenant, the plot of man’s

redemption is formed; this is the source and spring of it.

Secondly, The procuring cause, or author of redemption, is Christ, the Son of God; he was appointed to it, and assented to it; was prophesied of as the Redeemer that should come to Zion; he was sent to redeem them that were under the law; and he has obtained eternal redemption; and in him believers have it, through his blood, and he is of God made redemption to them.

1. If it be asked, how Christ came to be the Redeemer? it may be answered, as the love, grace, and mercy of God the Father moved him to resolve upon redemption, and appoint his Son, and call him to this work; so like love, grace, and mercy, wrought in the heart of the Son of God to accept of this call, and engage in this work; the love of Christ, which was in his heart from everlasting, and was a love of complacency and delight; this showed itself in various acts, and especially in giving himself for his people to redeem them; in giving himself an offering and a sacrifice for their sins; in laying down his life for them; all which is frequently ascribed to his love (Titus 2:14; Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 John 3:16), and this love is unmerited, as appears from the characters of the persons for whom he died, observed before; and so is called the grace of Christ, free grace, unmoved and unmerited by anything in the creature; and to this is attributed the whole affair of our redemption and salvation by Christ (2 Cor. 8:5), pity and compassion in his heart towards his people in their miserable and enthralled state, moved him to undertake and perform the work of their redemption: “in his love and in his pity he redeemed them”, as he did Israel of old (Isa. 63:9). This love, grace, and mercy, influenced and engaged him to resolve upon the redemption of them; hence he said, “I will ransom them, I will redeem them”; as from the grave and death, so from every other enemy (Hosea 13:14), and as he entered into covenant engagements with his Father from everlasting, he considered himself as under obligation to perform this work, and therefore spoke in language which imports the same; as that he must work the works of him that sent him, of which this is the principal; that he “ought” to suffer and die as he did; and that he “must” bring in those the Father gave him, and he undertook for, and bring them safe to glory.

2. The fitness of Christ to be a Redeemer of his people is worthy of notice. As he engaged in it he was every way fit for it; none so fit as he, none fit for it but himself; no creature, man or angel: no man, for all have sinned, and so everyone needs a redeemer from sin, and can neither redeem himself nor any other; nor could an angel redeem any of the sons of men; God has put no trust of this kind in those his servants the angels, knowing that they were unequal to it: the angel Jacob speaks of, that redeemed him from all evil, was not a created but the uncreated angel; the angel and messenger of the covenant, the Messiah. Now Christ's fitness for the work of redemption lies in his being God and man in one person. It was the Son of God that was sent to redeem men, who is of the same nature, and possessed of the same perfections his divine Father is; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal to him: this Son of God is the true God, the great God, and so fit to be the Redeemer and Saviour of men; and a mighty redeemer he must be, since he is Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, and therefore equal to such a work as this (Gal. 4:4; 1 John 5:20; Titus 2:13; Jer. 50:34), and he is both God and man; he is the child born, as man, and the son given, as a divine person; he is Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, God manifest in the flesh, and so fit to be a mediator between God and man; and to be an umpire, a daysman to lay hands on both; and to do the work required of a redeemer of men, to make reconciliation for their sins, and to take care of things pertaining to the glory of God, his justice and holiness. As man he could be made, as he was made, under the law, and so capable of yielding obedience to it, and of bearing the penalty of it; which it was necessary he should, as the surety and redeemer of men; as man, he had blood to shed, with which most precious blood he could redeem them unto God; had a life to lay down, a sufficient ransom price for his people, and was capable of suffering and dying in their room and stead, and so of making full satisfaction for them. As God, he would be zealously concerned for the glory of the divine perfections, and secure the honour of them in the redemption wrought out by him; as such, he could put an infinite virtue into his blood, and make it a full and adequate price for the

purchase of his church, and the redemption of it; as such, he could support the human nature under the load of sin and of sufferings for it, and of carrying it through the work, otherwise insupportable; and as both God and man he had a right to redeem; as Lord of all, he had a right as well as power to redeem them that were his; and being, as man, their near kinsman, the right of redemption belonged to him, and therefore bears the name of Gaol which signifies a redeemer, and a near kinsman; see the law in Leviticus 25:47-49 and who so fit to be the redeemer of the church as he who is her head and her husband?

3. The means by which redemption is wrought out by Christ; and that is by his blood, his life, to which it is often ascribed (Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rev. 5:9), this was shed, and shed freely, for the remission of sins, and for the redemption of men; had it been shed involuntarily, by accident, or by force, against his will, it would not have been a proper redemption price, or have answered such an end; but it was purposely and voluntarily shed, and with full consent; Christ, as he had the full disposal of his own life, freely gave his life a ransom price for many; “Hay down my life for the sheep”, says he, as a ransom price for them; “I lay it down of myself” (Matt. 20:28; John 10:15,18), and the blood that was thus freely shed was the same with that of those for whom it was shed, which was necessary; not the blood of bulls and goats, which could not be an adequate price of redemption, but human blood; Christ partook of the same flesh and blood with the children for whom he died; only with this difference, it was not tainted with sin as theirs is; which is another requisite of the ransom price; it must be the blood of an innocent person, as Christ was: much notice is taken in scripture of the innocence, holiness, and righteousness of the Redeemer; that he was holy in his nature, blameless in life, knew no sin, nor ever committed any; that he, the just and Holy One, suffered for the unjust; a great emphasis is put upon this, that the price with which men are redeemed is “the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18,19), for if he had had any sin in him, he could not have been a redeemer from sin, nor his blood the price of redemption: and yet more than all this, it is necessary to make this price a full and adequate one, it must not be the blood of a mere

creature, but of one that is God as well as man, and such is Christ; hence God, who is Christ, is said to “purchase the church with his own blood”; being God and man in one person, this gave his blood a sufficient virtue to make such a purchase; and a peculiar emphasis is put upon his blood, being the “blood of” Jesus Christ “the Son of God”, which cleanses from all sin (Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:7). Now this price is paid into the hands of God, whose justice is offended, whose law is broken, and who is the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy; and against whom all sin is committed: and who will not clear the guilty unless his justice is satisfied; for he is the judge of all the earth, who will do right; wherefore Christ is said “to redeem” men “unto God by his blood” (Rev. 5:9). The price of redemption, which is the blood of Christ, was paid unto God, whereby redemption from vindictive justice was obtained; it was not paid into the hands of Satan, or any other enemy that had power over the redeemed; for the power of Satan was only an usurpation; he had no legal right to hold them captives; and therefore the delivery of them out of his hand is by power and not by price: but the justice of God had a legal right to shut them up, and detain them as prisoners, till satisfaction was given; and therefore redemption from avenging justice, which is properly the redemption that is by Christ, is by a price paid to justice for the ransom of them.

Thirdly, The final cause, or causes, or ends, for which redemption was wrought out and obtained by Christ in this way; and they are these.

1. That the justice of God might be satisfied in the salvation of a sinner; that God might appear to be just, while he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and be just and faithful in forgiving sins, and cleansing from all unrighteousness; that the attributes of his justice, holiness, truth, and faithfulness, might be glorified in the redemption of men, as well as the other perfections of his (Rom. 3:25, 26; 1 John 1:9; Ps. 85:10).

2. That the people of God might be reconciled unto him, and have peace with him, and joy through believing in Christ; for the price of redemption being paid for them, and satisfaction given, they are reconciled to God by the death of his Son; even to his justice, as

they always stood in his love and favour; and peace being made by the blood of Christ on such a footing, they may joy in God through Christ,

by whom they have received the atonement (Rom. 5:10,11)

3. Another end of redemption by Christ is, that the redeemed might enjoy the blessing of adoption; for so it is said, that God sent his Son “to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons”, (Gal. 4:4, 5) for though the saints are predestinated to the adoption of children in the purpose of God from everlasting; and this blessing is provided and secured in the covenant of grace; yet sin having thrown an obstruction in the way of the enjoyment of it in their own persons, consistent with the holiness and justice of God, this is removed by the redemption which is through Christ; so that they come to receive and enjoy this blessing of grace in themselves in virtue of their redemption by Christ, and through believing in him.

4. The sanctification of God’s elect is another end of redemption by Christ; “who gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14), and again, Christ is said to love the church, and give himself for it, a ransom price for it, “that he might sanctify and cleanse it” (Eph. 5:25,26) and the redeemed are said to be redeemed by his blood “from a vain conversation” (1 Pet. 1:18), for in consequence of redemption by Christ, the Spirit of Christ comes as a Spirit of sanctification, and begins and carries on that work in the souls of God’s people; and by applying the grace and benefit of redemption, lays them under the highest obligation to holiness of life and conversation; see Galatians 3:14.

5. In a word, the end of Christ’s redeeming his people is, that they might be freed from all evil, from every enemy, and all that is hurtful, sin, Satan, the world, law, hell, and death; and that they might be put into the possession of every good thing. “Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, that the blessing of Abraham”, even all the blessings of the covenant of grace, in which Abraham was interested, “might come on them through Jesus Christ” (Gal.3:13,14)

6. And lastly, The subordinate end of redemption is the everlasting salvation of God's elect, and their eternal life and happiness; and the ultimate end is the glory of God, of his grace and justice, and of all the perfections of his nature.

Chapter 3

OF THE OBJECTS OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST

Thirdly, the objects of redemption come next under consideration. These are a special and distinct people; they are said to be "redeemed from the earth"; that is, from among the inhabitants of the earth, as after explained, "redeemed from among men"; and one end of Christ's redemption of them is, "to purify to himself a peculiar people" (Rev. 14:3,4; Titus 2:14). The inspired writers seem to delight in using the pronoun "us", when speaking of the death of Christ, and redemption by it; thereby pointing at a particular people, as the context shows: "Christ died for us"; God "delivered him up for us all; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us; hath redeemed us unto God by thy blood" (Rom. 5:8; 8:32; Titus 2:14; Rev. 5:9). They are many indeed for whom Christ has given "his life a ransom", a ransom price, the price of their redemption (Matthew 20:28). But then these are so described as show they are a peculiar people; they are the "many" who are ordained unto eternal life; the "many" the Father has given to Christ; the many whose sins he bore on the cross; the "many" for whom his blood was shed for the remission of their sins; the "many" who are made righteous by his obedience; the "many" sons, he, the Captain of their salvation, brings to glory. That the objects of redemption are a special people, will appear by the following observations.

1. The objects of redemption are such who are the objects of God's love; for redemption, as has been observed, flows from the love of God and Christ; and which love is not that general kindness shown in providence to all men, as the creatures of God; but is special and discriminating; the favour which he bears to his own people, as distinct from others; "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated":and the love which Christ has expressed in redemption is towards his own that were in the world, whom he has a special right

and property in, “his” people, “his” sheep, “his” church; as will be seen hereafter.

2. The objects of election and redemption are the same; “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?~It is Christ that died!” died for the elect: so the same, us all, for whom God delivered up his Son, are those whom he foreknew, and whom he predestinated; and whose calling, justification, and glorification are secured thereby (Rom. 8:30-33), and the same us, who are said to be chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, have redemption in him through his blood (Eph. 1:4, 7). Election and redemption are of equal extent; no more are redeemed by Christ than are chosen in him; and these are a special people: what is said of the objects of the one is true of the objects of the other. Are the elect the beloved of the Lord? and does the act of election spring from love? Election presupposes love: so the redeemed are the beloved of God and Christ; and their redemption flows from love. Are the elect a people whom God has chosen for his peculiar treasure? the redeemed are purified by Christ, to be a peculiar people to himself. Do the vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory, consist of Jews and Gentiles; even of them who are called of both? so Christ is the propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, or the Redeemer of them only; but for the sins of the Gentile world also, or the Redeemer of his people among them. Are the elect of God a great number, of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues? Christ has redeemed those he has redeemed unto God, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. Is it true of the elect, that they cannot be totally and finally deceived and perish? it is true of the ransomed of the Lord, that they shall come to Zion with everlasting joy; Christ will never lose any part of the purchase of his blood.

3. Those for whom Christ has died, and has redeemed by his blood, are no other than those for whom he became a Surety. Now Christ was the Surety of the better testament, or covenant of grace; and of course became a Surety for those, and for no other, than who were interested in that covenant, in which he engaged to be the Redeemer: Christ’s suretyship is the ground and foundation of redemption; the true reason of the sin of his people, and the punishment of it, being laid upon him, and of his bearing it; of the payment of the debts of

his people, and of redeeming them out of the hands of justice; was because he engaged as a Surety, and laid himself under obligation to do all this. But for those for whom he did not become a Surety, he was not obliged to pay their debts, nor to suffer and die in their room and stead. Christ's suretyship and redemption are of equal extent, and reach to the same objects; they are the Lord's Benjamins, the sons of his right hand, his beloved sons, that Christ, the antitype of Judah, became a surety for, and laid himself under obligation to bring them safe to glory, and present them to his divine Father,

4. The objects of redemption are described by such characters as show them to be a special and distinct people; particularly they are called, the people of God and Christ; "for the transgressions of my people," saith the Lord, "was he stricken"; that is, Christ was, or would be, stricken by the rod of justice, to make satisfaction for their sins, and thereby redeem them from them (Isa. 53:8), and when he was about to come and redeem them, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, at his birth said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel! for he hath visited and redeemed his people"; by sending Christ, the dayspring from on high, as he afterwards calls him, to visit them, and redeem them by his blood (Luke 1:68, 78). Hence, also, the angel that appeared to Joseph, and instructed him to call the Son that should be born of his wife by the name of Jesus, gives this reason, "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Now though all men are, in a sense, the people of God, as they are his creatures, and the care of his providence; yet they are not all redeemed by Christ; because those that are redeemed by Christ are redeemed "out of every people"; and therefore cannot be every or all people (Rev. 5:9), the redeemed are God's covenant people; of whom he says, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God": they are his portion and his inheritance; a people near unto him, both with respect to union and communion; a people given to Christ, to be redeemed and saved by him; of whom it is said, "Thy people shall be willing", &c.

5. The objects of redemption; or those for whom Christ laid down his life a ransom price, are described as "sheep"; as the sheep of Christ, in whom he has a special property, being given him of his Father; and who are represented as distinct from others, who are not

his sheep (John 10:15, 26, 29), and such things are said of them as can only agree with some particular persons; as, that they are known by Christ; “I know my sheep”, not merely by his omniscience, so he knows all men; but he knows them distinctly as his own; “the Lord knows them that are his”, from others; he has knowledge of them, joined with special love and affection for them; as he has not brothers, to whom he will say, “Depart from me: I know you not”. Likewise Christ is “known” by those sheep of his he has laid down his life for; they know him in his person, offices, and grace; whereas there are some that neither know the Father nor the Son; but those know the voice of Christ; that is, the gospel of Christ, the joyful sound; whereas the gospel is hid to them that are lost: and the sheep Christ has died for “follow” him, imitate him in the exercise of grace, of love, patience, humility, &c. and in the performance of duty; and this is said of the redeemed from among men; that they “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes” (Rev. 14:4). It is also affirmed of those sheep, that they shall “never perish”; whereas the goats, set on Christ’s left hand, shall he bid to go, as “cursed”, into everlasting fire (Matthew 25:33, 34).

6. The objects of redemption are the sons of God; redemption and adoption belong to the same persons; according to the prophecy of Caiaphas, Christ was to die, not for the nation of the Jews only, but to “gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad” throughout the Gentile world (John 11:52), and those who are predestinated to adoption by Christ are said to have redemption in him, through his blood (Eph. 1:5, 7), and the blessing of adoption, in the full enjoyment of it, in the resurrection, is called “the redemption of the body”; when redemption, as to the application of it, will be complete also (Rom. 8:23). Now these sons, or children of God, are a peculiar number of men, who are given of God to Christ, to redeem; the seed promised to him in covenant, that he should see and enjoy; and to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father; these are they on whose account he became incarnate, “took part of the same flesh and blood”; and these are the many sons he brings to glory (Heb 2:10, 13,14). Now these are not all men; “the children of the flesh”, or such as are never born again, they are “not the children of

God”; only such are openly and manifestly the children of God who believe in Christ; and this is owing to special grace, to distinguishing love; and is a favour that is only conferred on some (Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:26; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1).

7. The objects of redemption are the church and spouse of Christ; it is the church he has loved, and given himself as a sacrifice and ransom price for; it is the church he has purchased with his blood; even the general assembly, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; that is, the elect of God, whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28), of that church of which Christ is the head and husband, he is the Redeemer; “thy Maker is thine husband; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel!” (Isa. 54:5). This cannot be said of all communities and bodies of men: the whore of Babylon is not the spouse of Christ; nor sects under the influence of false teachers, though there may be “threescore queens, and fourscore concubines”, of this sort; yet, says Christ, “my dove, my undefiled, is but one”; and who only is redeemed by Christ, and espoused to him (Song of Sol. 6:9).

Now from all this it appears, that redemption is not universal, is not of all men; for though they are many for whom the ransom price is paid; yet though all are many, many are not all; and if the redeemed are such who are the objects of God’s special love and favour, then not all men; for there are some of whom it is said, “He that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will show them no favour” (Isa. 27:11). If they are the elect of God who are redeemed by Christ, and them only, then not all men; for all are not chosen; “The election hath obtained it”; and “the rest are blinded” (Rom. 11:7), if only those are redeemed for whom Christ became a surety, then not all men; since Christ did not engage to pay the debts of all men; and if they are the people of God and Christ, then not all; since there are some on whom God writes a “loammi”, saying, “Ye are not my people; and I will not be your God” (Hosea 1:9). And if they are the sheep of Christ, to whom he gives eternal life; then not the goats, who will go into everlasting punishment; and if they are the children of God, and the church and spouse of Christ; then not all men; for all do not bear these characters, nor stand in

these relations. What may be further necessary, will be to produce some reasons, or arguments, against universal redemption; and to give answer to such scriptures as are brought in favour of it. It should be observed, that it is agreed on both sides, that all are not eventually saved: could universal salvation be established, there would be no objection to universal redemption; the former not being the case the latter cannot be true; Christ certainly saves all whom he redeems.

First, I shall give some reasons, or produce some arguments against the universal scheme of redemption. And,

Ist. The first set of arguments shall be taken from hence, that universal redemption reflects highly on the perfections of God; and what is contrary to the divine perfections, cannot be true; for God cannot deny himself, nor say, nor do anything contrary to his nature and attributes.

1. The universal scheme greatly reflects on the love of God to men: it may, at first sight, seem to magnify it, since it extends it to all; but it will not appear so; it lessens it, and reduces it to nothing. The scriptures highly commend the love of God, as displayed in the death of his Son, and in redemption by him; but what kind of love must that be, which does not secure the salvation of any by it? it is not that love which God bears to his own people, which is special and distinguishing; when, according to the universal scheme, God loved Peter no more than he did Judas; nor the saints now in heaven, any more than those that are damned in hell; since they were both loved alike, and equally redeemed by Christ; nor is it that love of God, which is immutable, invariable, and unalterable; since, according to this scheme, God loves men with so intense a love, at one time, as to give his Son to die for them, and wills that they all should be saved; and afterwards this love is turned into wrath and fury; and he is determined to punish them with everlasting destruction. What sort of love must this be in God, not to spare his Son, but deliver him up to death for all the individuals of mankind, for their redemption; and yet, to multitudes of them, does not send them so much as the gospel, to acquaint them with the blessing of redemption by Christ; and much less his Spirit, to apply the benefit of redemption to them; nor give them faith to lay hold upon it for themselves? Such love as

this is unworthy of God, and of no service to the creature.

2. The universal scheme, highly reflects on the wisdom of God: it is certain, God is “wonderful in counsel”, in contriving the scheme of redemption; and is “excellent in working”, in the execution of it: he is the wise God, and our Saviour; and is wise as such. But where is his wisdom in forming a scheme, in which he fails of his end? there must be some deficiency in it; a want of wisdom, to concert a scheme, which is not, or cannot be carried into execution, at least as to some considerable part of it. Should it be said, that the failure is owing to some men not performing the conditions of their redemption required of them; it may be observed, either God did know, or did not know, that these men would not perform the conditions required: if he did not know, this ascribes want of knowledge to him; which surely ought not to be ascribed to him that knows all things: if he did know they would not perform them, where is his wisdom, to provide the blessing of redemption, which he knew beforehand, would be of no service to them? Let not such a charge of folly, be brought against infinite Wisdom.

3. The universal scheme, highly reflects on the justice of God: God is righteous in all his ways and works; and so in this of redemption by Christ; and, indeed, one principal end of it is, “To declare the righteousness of God, that he might be just”, or appear to be just, “and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”. But if Christ died for the sins of all men, and the punishment of their sins is inflicted on him, and bore by him, and yet multitudes of them are everlastingly punished for them, where is the justice of God? It is reckoned unjust with men, to punish twice for the same act of offence: if one man pays another man’s debts, would it be just with the creditor to exact, require, and receive payment again at the hands of the debtor? If Christ has paid the debts of all men, can it be just with God to arrest such persons, and cast them into the prison of hell, till they have paid the uttermost farthing? Far be it from the Judge of all the earth to do so, who will do right.

4. The universal scheme, reflects on the power of God; as if he was not able to carry his designs into execution; whereas, “The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save”; but, according to this

scheme, it seems as if it was; for if Christ has redeemed all men, and all men are not saved, it must be either from want of will in God to save them, or from want of power: not from want of will; for, according to this scheme, it is the will of God that every individual man should be saved: it must be therefore for want of power; and so he is not omnipotent. Should it be said, that some men not being saved, is owing to evil dispositions in them, obstructing the kind influences and intentions of God towards them; to the perverseness of their wills, and the strength of their unbelief. But, what is man mightier than his Maker? Are the kind influences of God, and his gracious intentions, to be obstructed by the corrupt dispositions of men? Is not be able to work in them, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure? Cannot he remove the perverseness of their wills, and the hardness of their hearts? Cannot he, by his power, take away their unbelief, and work faith in them, to believe in a living Redeemer? Far be it to think otherwise of him, with whom nothing is too hard, nor anything impossible.

5. The universal scheme reflects on the immutability of God, of his love, and of his counsel: God, in the scripture, says, “I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Mai. 3:6). But, according to this scheme, it should be, rather, I am the Lord, I change; and therefore the sons of men, or at least some of them, are consumed, are lost and perish, though redeemed by Christ; for the love of God, as has been observed, is changeable with respect unto them: one while he loves them, so that he wills their salvation; at another time his love is changed into hatred, and he is resolved to stir up his wrath to the uttermost against them. He is said to be “in one mind, and who can turn him?” and yet, according to this scheme, he is sometimes in one mind, and sometimes in another; sometimes his mind is to save them; and at another time his mind is to damn them. But let not this be said of him, “with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning”.

6. The universal scheme disappoints God of his chief end, and robs him of his glory. The ultimate end of God, in the redemption of men; as has been observed; is his own glory, the glory of his rich grace and mercy; and of his righteousness, truth, and faithfulness:

but if men, any of them who are redeemed, are not saved, so far God loses his end, and is deprived of his glory; for should this be the case, where would be the glory of God the Father, in forming a scheme which does not succeed, at least with respect to multitudes? and where would be the glory of the Son of God, the Redeemer, in working out the redemption of men, and yet they not saved by him? And where would be the glory of the Spirit of God, if the redemption wrought out, is not effectually applied by him? But, on the contrary, the “glory of God”, Father, Son, and Spirit, “is great in the salvation” of all the redeemed ones (Ps. 21:5).

2ndly, Another set of arguments against universal redemption, might be taken from its reflecting on the grace and work of Christ: whatever obscures, or lessens, the grace of Christ in redemption, or depreciates his work as a Redeemer, can never be true. Whereas,

1. The universal scheme reflects on the love and grace of Christ. The scripture speaks highly of the love of Christ, as displayed in redemption; and Christ himself intimates, that he was about to give the greatest instance of his love to his people, by dying for them, that could be given; even though and while they were enemies to him, (John 15:13). But what sort of love is that, to love men to such a degree as to die for them, and yet withhold the means of grace from multitudes of them, bestow no grace upon them, and at last say to them, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!”

2. The universal scheme reflects upon the work of Christ; particularly his work of satisfaction, which was to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, by satisfying divine justice for it; by putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Now, either he has made satisfaction for every man, or he has not: if he has, then they ought to be set free, and fully discharged, and not punishment inflicted on them, or their debts exacted of them: if he has not made satisfaction by redeeming them, this lessens the value of Christ’s work, and makes it of no use, and ineffectual; and indeed, generally, if not always, the advocates for general redemption deny the proper satisfaction, and real atonement by Christ; plainly discerning, that if he has made full satisfaction for the sins of all men, they must all be saved; and so the work of reconciliation, which is closely connected with, and involved

in satisfaction, is not perfect according to the scriptures: Christ, by redeeming them with the price of his blood, has made satisfaction to justice for them, and thereby has procured their reconciliation; for they are said to be reconciled unto God by the death of his Son; and peace is said to be made by the blood of his cross, which is the redemption price for them; and he is pacified towards them for all that they have done; which is meant by Christ being a propitiation for sin, whereby justice is appeased. But, according to the universal scheme, God is only made reconcilable, not reconciled, nor men reconciled to him: notwithstanding what Christ has done, there may be no peace to them, not any being actually made for them; and, indeed, the work of redemption must be very incomplete; though Christ is a “Rock”, as a Saviour and Redeemer, and his work is “perfect”, his world of redemption; and hence called a “plenteous” one; and Christ is said to have obtained “eternal redemption” for us; and yet if all are not saved through it, it must be imperfect; it cannot be a full redemption, nor of eternal efficacy; the benefit of it, can at most, be only for a time to some, if any at all, and not be for ever; which is greatly to depreciate the efficacy of this work of Christ.

3. According to the universal scheme, the death of Christ, with respect to multitudes, for whom he is said to die, must be in vain; for if Christ died to redeem all men, and all men are not saved by his death, so far his death must be in vain: if he paid a ransom for all, and all are not ransomed; or if he has paid the debts of all, and they are not discharged, the price is given, and the payment made, in vain. According to this scheme, the death of Christ is no security against condemnation; though the apostle says, “Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died!” so that there is no condemnation to them whose sins are condemned in Christ; and he has condemned them in the flesh (Rom. 8:1, 33), and yet there is a world of men that will be condemned (ICor. 11:32), and therefore it may be concluded, that Christ did not die for them, or otherwise they would not come into condemnation; or else Christ’s death has no efficacy against condemnation.

4. The universal scheme separates the works of Christ, the work of redemption, and the work of intercession; and makes them to

belong to different persons; whereas they are of equal extent, and belong to the same; for whom Christ died, for them he rose again from the dead; and that was for their justification; which is not true of all men: for those he ascended to heaven, to God, as their God and Father, for the same he entered into heaven, as their forerunner, and appears in the presence of God for them and ever lives to make intercession for them; and for the same for whom he is an advocate, he is the propitiation; for his advocacy is founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice: now those for whom he prays and intercedes, are not all men, himself being witness; “I pray for them; I pray not for the world” (John 17:9). Yet, according to the universal scheme, he died for them for whom he would not pray; which is absurd and incredible.

5. If Christ died for all men, and all men are not saved, Christ will not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; as was promised him (Isa. 53:11), for what satisfaction can he have to see his labour, with respect to multitudes, all lost labour, or labour in vain? it was the joy that was set before him, of having those for whom he suffered and died, with him in heaven: but what joy can he have, and what a disappointment must it be to him, to see thousands and millions whom he so loved as to give himself for, howling in hell, under the everlasting displeasure and wrath of God?

Thirdly, Other arguments against universal redemption, may be taken from the uselessness of it to great numbers of men. As,

1. To those whose sins are irremissible; whose sins will never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come: that there are such sinners, and such sins committed by them, is certain, from what Christ himself says (Matthew 12:31, 32), and the apostle speaks of a sin which is “unto death”, unto eternal death; which he does not advise to pray for (1 John 5:16), and surely Christ cannot be thought to die for such sins, for which there is no forgiveness with God, and no prayer to be made by men for the remission of them; to say that Christ died for those, is to say that he died in vain: besides, there were multitudes in hell at the time when Christ died; and it cannot be thought that he died for those, as he must, if he died for all the individuals of mankind; as the men of Sodom, who were

then, as Jude says, “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”; and the inhabitants of the whole world, the world of the ungodly, destroyed by the flood; those that were disobedient in the times of Noah; whose spirits, as the apostle Peter says, were, in his time, in the prison of hell (Jude 5:7; 1 Pet. 3:20), if he died for these, his death must be fruitless and useless; unless it can be thought, that a jail delivery was made at his death, and the dominions and regions of hell were cleared of their subjects.

2. Redemption, if for all, must be useless to those who never were favored with the means of grace; as all the nations of the world, excepting Israel, for many hundred of years were; whose times of ignorance God winked at and overlooked, and sent no messengers, nor messages of grace unto them; (see Ps. 147:19, 20; Acts 17:30), and since the coming of Christ, though the gospel has, in some ages, had a greater spread, yet not preached to all; nor is it now, to many nations, who have never heard of Christ, and of redemption by him (Rom. 10:14).

3. The universal scheme affords no encouragement to faith and hope in Christ: redemption, as it ascertains salvation to some, it encourages sensible sinners to hope in Christ for it; “Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with him is plenteous redemption” (Ps 130:7), a redemption full of salvation; and which secures that blessing to all that believe. But, according to the universal scheme, men may be redeemed by Christ, and yet not saved, but eternally perish: what hope of salvation can a man have upon such a scheme? it requires no great discernment, nor judgment of things, to determine, which is most eligible of the two schemes, that which makes the salvation of some certain; or that which leaves the salvation of all precarious and uncertain; which, though it asserts a redemption of all; yet it is possible none may be saved.

4. Hence, even to those who are redeemed and saved, it lays no foundation for, nor does it furnish with any argument to engage to love Christ, to be thankful to him, and to praise him for the redemption of them; since the difference between them and others, is not owing to the efficacy of Christ’s death, but to their own wills and works; they are not beholden to Christ, who has done no more

for them than for those that perish; they are not, from any such consideration, obliged to walk in love, as Christ has loved them, and given himself for them; since he has loved them no more, and given himself for them no otherwise, than for them that are lost; nor are they under obligation to be thankful to him, and bless his name, that he has redeemed their lives from destruction; since, notwithstanding his redemption of them, they might have been destroyed with an everlasting destruction; it is not owing to what Christ has done, but to what they have done themselves, performing the conditions of salvation required, that they are saved from destruction, if ever they are, according to this scheme: nor can they indeed sing the song of praise to the Lamb, for their redemption; saying, “Thou art worthy~for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by that blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation!” since, according to this scheme, Christ has redeemed every kindred, every tongue, every people, and every nation.

Chapter 4

OF THOSE TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE WHICH SEEM TO FAVOUR UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION

There are several passages of scripture, which, at first sight, may seem to countenance the universal scheme; and which are usually brought in support of it; and which it will be necessary to take under consideration: and these may be divided into “three” classes,

1. Such in which the words”all”,and”every”one,are used,when the death of Christ, and the benefits of it are spoken of.

2. Those in which the words “world”, and the “whole world”, occur, where the same subjects are treated of. And,

3. Those that seem to intimate, as if Christ died for some that may be destroyed and perish.

1. Such in which the words “all”, and “every” one, are used; when the death of Christ, and the benefits of it, particularly redemption and salvation by him, are spoken of. As,

1. The declaration of the angel, in Luke 2:10, 11. “Behold, I bring good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ

the Lord". Let it be observed, that Christ is not here said to be the Saviour of all men; but to be born for the sake of some, that he might be the Saviour of them; "Unto You is born a Saviour"; to you the shepherds, who appear to be good men, waiting for the salvation of God, and the coming of their Saviour, and therefore praised and glorified God for what they heard and saw; the words fully agree with the prophetic language, in which the birth of Christ is signified, in Isaiah 9:6. "To us a Child is born": indeed, it is said, that the news of the birth of a Saviour, would be great joy "to all people", or "to all the people"; not to all the people of the world, many of whom never heard of it; nor to all the people of the Jews, who did hear of it; not to Herod the king, and to the Scribes and Pharisees, and to many, at least, of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; for when he and they heard the report the wise men from the East made, of the birth of the king of the Jews, "Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matthew 2:3), but to all the people of God and Christ; to the people Christ came to save, and does save; on whose account his name was called "Jesus, for he shall save HIS people from their sins"; the people given him in covenant, and for whose transgressions he was stricken, and for whose sins he made reconciliation (Matthew 1:21; Isa. 53:8; Heb. 2:17), at most, the birth of Christ, as a Saviour, can only be matter of great joy to whom the tidings of it come; whereas, there are multitudes that come into the world, and go out of it, who never hear of the birth of Christ, and of salvation by him; and where the gospel, the good tidings of salvation by Christ, does come, it is only matter of great joy to them to whom it comes in power, and who are, by it, made sensible of their lost, perishing estate, of their want of a Saviour, and of the suitableness of salvation; such as the three thousand convinced and converted under Peter's sermon; and the jailer and his household, who cried out, sirs, what must I do to be saved? To such, and to such only, the news of Christ as a Saviour, is matter of great joy.

2. The account given of John's ministry, and the end of it; "That all men, through him, might believe" (John 1:7), from whence it is concluded, that all men are bound to believe that Christ came to save them, and that he died for them; and if he did not die for them, then

they are bound to believe a lie; and if condemned for not believing, they are condemned for not believing an untruth. But John's ministry only reached to the Jews, among whom he came preaching; and the report he made of Christ they were bound to believe, was, not that he died for them; as yet he had not died; but that he was the Messiah: and their disbelief of this was their sin and condemnation: as it is the sin of the deists, and of all unbelievers, to whom the gospel revelation comes; and they give not credit to it; for such are bound to believe the report it makes, and give an assent to the truth of it; and which is no other than an historical faith, and which men may have and not be saved; and which the devils themselves have: so that men may be bound to believe, and yet not to the saving of their souls; or that Christ died for them. As is the revelation that is made to men, so they are under obligation to believe; if no revelation is made, no faith is required; "How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?" The Indians who have never heard of Christ, are not bound to believe in him; nor will they be condemned for their unbelief; but for their sins against the light of nature, they have been guilty of; (see Rom. 10:14; 2:12). Where a revelation is made, and that is only external, and lies in the outward ministry of the word, declaring in general such and such things, concerning the person and office of Christ, men are obliged to give credit to them, upon the evidence they bring with them, and for their unbelief will be condemned; not because they did not believe that Christ died for them, to which they were not obliged; but because they did not believe him to be God, the Son of God, the Messiah, and the Saviour of men. Where the revelation is internal, "By the Spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Christ"; showing to men their lost estate, and need of a Saviour; acquainting them with Christ, as an able and willing Saviour; setting before them the fulness and suitableness of his salvation; such are, by the Spirit and grace of God, influenced and engaged to venture their souls on Christ, and to believe in him, to the saving of them; but then the first act of faith, even in such, is not to believe that Christ died for them; for it is the plerophory, the full assurance of faith to say, "He hath loved me, and given himself for me!" (Gal. 2:20).

3. The words of Christ in John 12:32. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men to me"; are expressive of the death of Christ, and of the manner of it, crucifixion; which would be the occasion of drawing a great number of persons together, as is usual at executions; and more especially would be and was at Christ's, he being a remarkable and extraordinary person; some to deplore his case and bewail him, and others to mock at him and reproach him. Though rather this is to be understood of the great multitude of souls who should be gathered to Christ through the ministry of the word after his death, as the fruit and consequence of it; who should be "drawn" and influenced by the powerful and efficacious grace of God to come to Christ, and believe in him; in which sense the word "draw" is used by Christ in John 6:44 but this is not true of all and every individual person; for there were multitudes then, as now, who will have no will to come to Christ, and are never wrought upon by the grace of God, or drawn by it to come unto him and believe in him; and will be so far from being gathered to him, and into fellowship with him, that they will be bid to depart from him another day, with a "Go, ye cursed"; and in the words before the text, mention is made of the "judgment", or condemnation of the world, as being then come; as well as of the prince of it being cast out. But by all men, are meant some of all sorts, Jews and Gentiles, more especially the latter, that should be gathered to Christ after his death, through the gospel preached unto then; as was foretold, that when Shiloh, the Messiah, came, who now was come, "to him should the gathering of the people be"; that is, the Gentiles: and it may be observed, that at this time, when Christ spoke these words, there were certain Greeks that were come to the feast to worship, who were desirous of seeing Jesus; with which he was made acquainted by his disciples, and occasioned the discourse of which these words are a part; and in which our Lord suggests, that at present these Greeks could not be admitted to him, but the time was at hand when he should be "lifted up from the earth", or die; by which, like a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying, he should bring forth much fruit; and should be lifted up also as an ensign in the ministry of the word, when the Gentiles in great numbers should flock and seek

unto him.

4. The passage of the apostle in Romans 5:18. "By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life"; is undoubtedly meant of the righteousness of Christ, called the free gift, because it was freely wrought out by Christ, and is freely imputed without works; and faith, which receives it, is the gift of God; but then this does not come upon, or is imputed to, every individual son and daughter of Adam; for then they would be all justified by it, and entitled to eternal life through it; and would be glorified, for "whom he justified, them also he glorified": and being justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ, they would be secure from condemnation, and saved from wrath to come; but this is not true of everyone; there are some who are righteously "foreordained to condemnation"; yea, there is a "world" of ungodly men, a multitude of them, that will be "condemned" (Jude 1:4; 1 Cor. 11:32). The design of the apostle in the text and context is to show, that as all men are sinners, and are originally so through the sin and offence of the first man Adam; so all that are righteous become righteous, or are justified, only through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them to their justification; and those who are justified by it, are described by the apostle in this epistle as the elect of God; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies"; as believers in Christ, on whom his righteousness comes, or is imputed to their justification; that is, "unto all, and upon all them that believe"; and such who receive that, receive also "abundance of grace" (Rom. 8:33; 3:22; 5:17), all which cannot be said of every individual of mankind. But what will set this matter in a clear light is, that Adam and Christ, throughout the whole context, are to be considered as two covenant heads, having their respective seed and offspring under them; the one as conveying sin and death to all his natural seed, and the other as conveying grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual seed; now as through the offence of the first Adam judgment came upon all to condemnation, who descended from him by natural generation, and upon none else; as not upon the human nature of Christ, which did not so descend from him; nor upon the angels that sinned, who were condemned and punished for their own offences, and not his, being none of his

offspring; so the free gift of Christ's righteousness comes upon all to justification, and to none else, but those who are the spiritual seed of Christ; given to him as such in the covenant of grace in which he stands an head to them; and "in whom all the seed of Israel", the spiritual Israel of God, "are justified", and shall glory (Isa. 45:24, 25).

5. The parallel place in 1 Corinthians 15:22. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive"; which is similar to the preceding in some respect, though not in everything; it is similar to it in that Adam and Christ are to be considered as representative heads of their respective offspring. Though these words have no respect at all to justification of life, nor to men being quickened together with Christ, nor to the quickening of them by the Spirit and grace of God; but of the resurrection of the dead, when men that have been dead will be made alive, or quickened; (see 1 Cor 15:36), and the design of them is to show, as in the preceding verse, that "as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead"; as death came by the first Adam, the resurrection of the dead comes by the second Adam; as the first Adam was a federal head and representative of all that naturally descended from him, and they were considered in him, and sinned in him, and death passed upon all in him, and actually reigns over all his posterity in all generations; so Christ is a federal head and representative of all his spiritual seed, given to him in covenant, and who, though they die a corporal death, shall be made alive, or raised from the dead, by virtue of union to him; for of those only is the apostle speaking in the context, even of such of whom Christ is the first fruits, and who belong to him (1 Cor. 15:23), for though all shall be made alive, or raised from the dead, by Christ, through his mighty power; yet only those that belong to him, as his seed and offspring, or the members of his body, shall be raised through union to him, and in the first place, and to everlasting life; others will be raised to shame and everlasting contempt, and to the resurrection of damnation.

6. The text in 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 is sometimes brought as a proof of Christ's dying for all men in an unlimited sense; "if one died for all, then were all dead": now let it be observed, that in the supposition "if one died for all", the word "men" is not used; it is not

“all men”, but all, and may be supplied from other scriptures, “all” his “people”, whom Christ came to save; and “all the sheep”, he laid down his life for; all the members of the “church” for whom he gave himself; “all the sons” whom he brings to glory: and the conclusion, “then were all dead”, is not to be understood of their being dead “in” sin, which is no consequence of the death of Christ; but of their being dead to sin in virtue of it; and could it be understood in the first sense, it would only prove that all for whom Christ died are dead in sin, which is true of the elect of God as of others (Eph. 2:1), but it would not prove that Christ died for all those that are dead in sin, which is the case of every man; but the latter sense is best, for to be dead to sin is the fruit and effect of Christ’s death; Christ bore the sins of his people on the cross, that they being “dead to sin, should live unto righteousness”; through the death of Christ they become dead to the damning power of sin; and to the law, as a cursing law; that they might serve the Lord in newness of spirit: this puts them into a capacity of living to him, and affords the strongest argument, drawn from his love in dying for them, to such purposes; to influence and engage them to live to his glory; (see Rom. 6:2, 6; 7:4, 6). And let it be further observed; that the same persons Christ died for, for them he rose again; now as Christ was delivered for the offences of men unto death, he was raised again for their justification; and if he rose for the justification of all men, then all would be justified; whereas they are not, as before observed.

7. The words in 1 Timothy 2:4. “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”. It is certain that all that are saved, it is the will of God they should be saved, and that by Christ, and by him only; “I will save them by the Lord their God”; salvation of whomsoever, is not of the will of men, but flows from the sovereign will and pleasure of God; and if it was the will of God that every individual of mankind should be saved, they would be saved; for “who hath resisted his will?” he works all things after the counsel of it; he does according to it in heaven and in earth; but as it is certain in fact that all are not saved, it is as certain that it is not the will of God that every man and woman should be saved; since there are some who are “foreordained to condemnation”; and if there are any

he appoints to condemnation, it cannot be his will that the selfsame individuals should be saved; besides, there are some of whom it is clearly signified that it is his will they should be damned; as the man of sin and the son of perdition, Antichrist and his followers; to whom "God sends strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they might be damned" (2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12). Besides, those it is the will of God that they should be saved, it is his will that they should "come unto the knowledge of the truth"; both of Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, the true way to eternal life; through the faith of whom, as well as through sanctification of the Spirit, men are chosen unto salvation; and of the truth of the gospel; not a notional and superficial, but an experimental knowledge of it; now to all men it is not the will of God to give the means of knowledge, of Christ, and the truths of the gospel: for hundreds of years together God gave his word to Jacob, and his statutes unto Israel, a small people in one part of the world; and as for other nations, they knew them not; God winked at and overlooked the times of their ignorance, and sent not the gospel, the means of knowledge, unto them; and this is the case of many nations at this day; yea, where the gospel is sent and preached, it is the will of God to hide the truths of it from many, and even from those who have the most penetrating abilities; "even so, Father", says Christ, "for so it seemeth good in thy sight" (Matthew 11:25, 26), it was his will it should be so, and therefore it could not be his will they should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. It is best therefore to understand by "all", some of all sorts, as the word "all" must be understood in many places, particularly in Genesis 7:14, and this sense agrees with the context, in which the apostle exhorts that prayers and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings, and for all in authority; not only for men of low degree, but for men of high degree also; for all sorts of men; this being agreeable to God, and acceptable in his sight; whose will it is that men of all sorts should be saved, and know the truth. Though it is best of all to understand this of the Gentiles, some of whom God would have saved as well as of the Jews; and therefore had chosen some of both unto salvation; and had appointed his Son to be his salvation to the ends of the earth; and therefore had sent his gospel among them,

declaring that whoever believed in Christ should be saved, whether Jew or Gentile; and had made it the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; and therefore it was proper that prayers and thanksgivings should be made for Gentiles in every class of life.

8. Another passage in the same context, in which Christ is said to “give himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:6), or a ransom price, *avxiA/uxpov*, in the room and stead of all; but this cannot be understood of all and every individual man; for then all would be ransomed, or else the ransom price must be paid in vain; but of many, as it is expressed by Christ (Matthew 20:28), and particularly of the Gentiles, as before; the truth contained herein being what has been testified in the gospel, of which the apostle was ordained a preacher, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity, when the Jews forbid him and other apostles to preach unto them; but as he opposed this prohibition of theirs, so another notion of theirs in the next verse, which confined public prayer to a certain place; all which show whom the apostle had in view throughout the whole context, and intended by the word “all”.

9. Another passage in the same epistle is sometimes brought in favour of the general scheme (1 Tim. 4:10), where God is said to be “the Saviour of all men”; but the passage is not to be understood of Christ, and of spiritual and eternal salvation by him; which it is certain all men do not share in; but of God the Father, and of temporal salvation by him; and of his preservation of all his creatures; who is the “preserver of men”, supports and upholds them in being, and supplies them with the necessaries of life; and in a providential way is “good to all”; but his providence is extended in a special manner towards those that trust and believe in him; he takes a particular care of them, and makes particular provisions for them; these being his people, his portion, and the lot of his inheritance, like Israel of old, he surrounds them by his power, leads them about by his wisdom, and keeps them as tenderly as the apple of his eye.

10. So the words of the apostle, in Titus 2:11, 12. “For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men”: but it is not said, that this grace brings salvation to all men, but has appeared

to all men; nor that it teaches all men to deny ungodliness, &c. but only us, to whom the gospel of the grace of God comes with power; for that is to be understood by it; not the grace and love of God, in his own heart, towards men; for this is not manifested to all men; but is a favour he bears to his own people: nor grace, as wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God for this is not vouchsafed unto all men; all men have not faith; and some are without hope and God in the world, and have no love to God and Christ, and to his people; but the gospel, which often goes by this name, because of the doctrines of grace contained in it; this had been like a candle lighted up in a small part of the world, in Judea; but now it was like the sun in its meridian glory, and appeared to Gentiles as well as Jews, being no longer confined to the latter; and where it came with power, as it did not to every individual, it produced the effects herein mentioned; from whence it appears, the apostle is speaking only of the external ministration of the gospel, and of the extent of that; and not of redemption and salvation by Christ; of which when he speaks, in a following verse, it is in a very different form; “Who gave himself for us”, not for all, “that he might redeem us”, not every man, “from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people”, a special and distinct people, “zealous of good works”.

11. Likewise what the author of the epistle to the Hebrews says (Heb. 2:9), “That he (Christ) by the grace of God, should taste death for every man”; but the word “man” is not in the text; it is only for “every one”; and is to be interpreted, and supplied, by the context, for everyone of the sons Christ brings to glory (Heb. 2:10), for everyone of the brethren whom he sanctifies, and is not ashamed to own in that relation (Heb. 2:11), and for every one of the members of the church, in the midst of which he sung praise, and for the whole of it (Heb. 2:12), for everyone of the children given him by his Father, and for whose sake he became incarnate (Heb. 2:13,14). Besides, the words may be rendered, “that he should taste of every death”, of every kind of death, which it was proper he should, in bringing many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10), and as he did; of the death of afflictions, of which he had waters of a full cup wrung out to him; of corporal death, being put to death in the flesh; and of spiritual and eternal death, or what

had a semblance thereof, and was tantamount thereunto, when he was deprived of the divine presence, and had a sense of divine wrath; as both in the garden, when his soul was “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death”; and on the cross, when he said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!”

12. One passage more, is in 2 Peter 3:9. “God is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance”. This cannot be understood of every individual of mankind; for certain it is, that God is willing that some should perish; “What if God willing”, &c. (Rom. 9:22). Nor is it true, that it is the will of God that all men should have repentance unto life; for then he would give it to them; for it is solely in his own gift; at least, he could give them the means of it, which he does not: the key to this text lies in the phrase, “toward us”, to whom God is longsuffering; these design a society to which the apostle belonged, and not all mankind; and who are distinguished, in the context, from scoffers and mockers, that would be in the last days (1 Pet. 3:3, 4), and are described by the character of beloved (1 Pet. 3:8), beloved of God and Christ, and of his people; for whose sake he waited, did not bring on the destruction of the world so soon as, according to his promise, it might be expected; but this was not owing to any dilatoriness in him; but to his longsuffering towards his beloved and chosen ones, being unwilling that any of them should perish; but that they should all come to, and partake of, repentance towards God, and faith in Christ; and when everyone of them are brought thereunto, he would delay the coming of Christ, and the destruction of the world, no longer; when the last man was called by grace, and converted, and become a true believer, and a real penitent; when the head, or last, stone was laid upon the top of the building, the church, and that edifice completed thereby, he would stay no longer, but come suddenly, as a thief in the night, and burn the world about the ears of the ungodly: this world is but like scaffolding to a building, which, when finished, the scaffolding is taken down and destroyed, and not before; the building is the church, for the sake of which this world was made; and when this edifice is finished, which will be when all the elect of God are called, and brought to repentance, then it will

be destroyed; the earth, and all therein, will be burnt with fire; as in 1 Peter 3:10.

II. A second class of scriptures, which may seem to favour, and are sometimes brought in support of the universal scheme, are such in which the words “world”, and the “whole world”, are used; when the death of Christ, and the benefits of it, are spoken of. As,

1. The words of John the Baptist to his hearers, in John 1:29. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” which are to be understood, neither of original sin, which is common to the whole world; but is not taken away, with respect to all: nor of the actual transgressions of every person; which is not true in fact; and is only true of such whose sins are laid on Christ, and imputed to him; and which he bore, and the whole punishment of them; and so has taken them away, as to be seen no more; which cannot be said of the sins of all men (1 Tim. 5:24), they are the sins of “many”, and not all, which have been made to meet on Christ, and he has bore them, and took them away (Isa. 53:6,12)

2. The words of Christ himself, in John 3:16. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son”, &c. But all the individuals in the world are not loved by God in such a manner; nor is Christ the special gift of God to them all; nor have all faith in him; nor can it be said of all, that they shall never perish, but have everlasting life; since many will go into everlasting punishment: but by the world, is meant the Gentiles; and Christ opposes a notion of the Jews, that they themselves only were the objects of God’s love, and that the Gentiles had no share in it, and would not enjoy any benefit by the Messiah when he came; but, says Christ, I tell you, God has so loved the world of the Gentiles, as to give his Son, that whosoever believes in him, be he of what nation soever, shall be saved with an everlasting salvation.

3. The words of the Samaritans to the woman of Samaria, in John 4:42. “We know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world”, of Gentiles as well as Jews; this they learnt from what Christ had made known of himself, and of his grace to them; for they were originally Gentiles, and were now reckoned by the Jews as heathens; (see also 1 John 4:14.)

4. The words of our Lord in his discourse about himself, as the

bread which “giveth life unto the world”; and which “is his flesh he gave for the life of the world”: now no more can be designed by the “world”, than those who are quickened by this bread applied unto them, and received by them, and for the obtaining of eternal life; for whom the flesh, or human nature of Christ, was given, as a sacrifice for sin, whereby that is secured unto them: but this is not true of all men; since even the gospel, which exhibits the heavenly manna, and holds forth Christ, the bread of life, is to some “the savour of death unto death”, while to others it is, “the savour of life unto life” (2 Cor. 2:16).

5. The words of the apostle, in 2 Corinthians 5:19. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself”: these are the same with the us, in the preceding verse, which were a special and distinct people; for it cannot be said of every man what follows, “not imputing their trespasses unto them”; which is a special blessing, that belongs to some; for though it comes upon both Jews and Gentiles, that believe, yet not upon all and every man (Rom. 4:6-8), for some men’s sins will be charged upon them; and they will be punished for them, with an everlasting destruction; by various circumstances in the context it seems, that by the “world” the Gentiles are meant.

6. The famous, and well known text, in this controversy, is 1 John 2:2 where Christ is said to be, “the propitiation for the sins of the whole world”. Now let it be observed, that these phrases, “all the world”, and “the whole world”, are often in scripture to be taken in a limited sense; as in Luke 2:1 “that all the world should be taxed”; it can mean no more than that part of the world the Roman empire, which was under the dominion of Caesar Augustus: and in Romans 1:8 it can only design the Christians throughout the world, not the heathens; and when the gospel is said to be “in all the world, and bring forth fruit” (Col. 1:6), it can only intend true believers in Christ, in all places, in whom only it brings forth fruit; and when it is said, “all the world wondered after the beast” (Rev. 13:3), at that same time, there were saints he made war with, because they would not worship him: and so in other places; and in this epistle of John, the phrase is used in a restrained sense (1 John 5:19), where those that belong to God, are distinguished from the whole world, described by lying in

wickedness, which they do not. And as John was a Jew, he spake in the language of the Jews, who frequently, in their writings, use the phrase 31V \$has “the whole world”, in a limited sense: sometimes it only signifies a large number of people; sometimes a majority of their doctors; sometimes a congregation; or a whole synagogue; and sometimes very few: and so here in the text under consideration, it cannot be understood of all men; only of those for whom Christ is an advocate (1 John 5:1), whose advocacy is founded on his propitiatory sacrifice; now Christ is not an advocate, or does not make intercession for all men; for he himself says, “I pray not for the world”: and Christ can be a propitiation for no more than he is an advocate; if he was a propitiation for all, he would surely be an advocate for all; and plead on their behalf his propitiatory sacrifice; but Christ was “set forth”, or preordained, to be “a propitiation”, not for all men; but for such only, who, “through faith in his blood”, receive the benefit of it, and rejoice in it (Rom. 3:25; 5:11), moreover, in this epistle, the persons for whom Christ is a propitiation, are represented as a peculiar people, and the objects of God’s special love (1 John 4:10), but what may be observed, and will lead more clearly into the sense of the passage before us, is, that the apostle John was a Jew, and wrote to Jews; and in the text speaks of them, and of the Gentiles, as to be distinguished; and therefore says of Christ, “he is” the propitiation “for our sins; and not for ours only”, for the sins of us Jews only; “but for the sins of the whole world”; of the Gentiles also, of all the elect of God throughout the Gentile world: in which a notion of the Jews is opposed, that the Gentiles would receive no benefit by the Messiah, as has been observed, on John 3:16 and here the apostle takes up the sentiment of his Lord and Master, in whose bosom he lay, and expresses it. Nothing is more common in Jewish writings, than to call the Gentiles the world, the whole world, and the nations of the world; as they are by the apostle Paul, in distinction from the Jews (Rom. 11:12,15)

3. Another class of scriptures, which may seem to favour the universal scheme, and are usually brought in support of it, are such which it is thought, intimate that Christ died for some that may be destroyed and perish.

1. The first passage is in Romans 14:15. "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died": which can never design eternal destruction; for that cannot be thought to be neither in the will nor power of men; could it be supposed, that it was in the will of any, or that any were of such a malicious disposition, as to wish for, and seek the eternal damnation of another; which surely cannot be imagined among men professing religion; yet it could never be in their power; for none but God can destroy soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28), nor can one instance be produced, of any that were eventually destroyed for whom Christ died; nor can such destruction be brought about by eating meat, of indifferent use, that might, or might not be eaten, of which the apostle is speaking, neither through themselves nor others eating it: for that can never affect the eternal state of men, which makes a man neither better nor worse (1 Cor. 8:8). But the passage is to be understood of the destruction of a weak brother's peace and comfort, through the imprudent use of things indifferent, by a stronger brother; who thereby may be the occasion of offending and grieving his brother, and of his stumbling and falling, so as to wound and distress him, though not as to perish eternally; thus it is explained (Rom. 14:13, 21), and is to be taken in the same sense as the phrase in Romans 14:20 "for meat destroy not the work of God"; not saints, as the workmanship of God; for as that is not of man's making, it is not of man's marring; nor the work of grace, which being begun, will be perfected; nor the work of faith, which will be performed with power; but the work of peace in individual persons, and in the church of God.

2. A similar passage, and to be understood in much the same manner, is in 1 Corinthians 8:12. "And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" which intends, not the perishing of his immortal soul; or of his perishing eternally in hell; which can never be the case of any for whom Christ died; for then the death of Christ would be so far in vain; and not be a security from condemnation; contrary to Romans 8:33 nor be a full satisfaction to justice; or God must be unjust, to punish twice for the same offence: but it intends, the perishing of his peace and comfort for a time; and is explained by "defiling" and "wounding"

his conscience, and making him to “offend”, through the imprudent use of Christian liberty, in those who had stronger faith and greater knowledge (1 Cor. 8:7, 12, 13), of which they should be careful, from this consideration; that a weak brother is as near and dear to Christ, since he died for him, as a stronger brother is.

3. Another passage urged for the same purpose, is in 2 Peter 2:1 which speaks of false teachers that should be among the saints, who would bring in “damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them; and bring upon themselves swift destruction”: from whence it is concluded, that such as are bought by Christ, may be destroyed; but Christ is not here spoken of, but God the Father; and of him the word *yesuys*; is always used, when applied to a divine Person, and not of Christ; nor is there anything in this text that obliges us to understand it of him; nor is there here anything said of Christ’s dying for any persons, in any sense whatever; nor of the redemption of any by his blood; and which is not intended by the word “bought”: where Christ’s redemption is spoken of, the price is usually mentioned; or some circumstance or another, which plainly determines the sense; (see Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rev. 5:9; 14:3, 4). Besides, if such as Christ has bought with his blood, should be left so to deny him, as to bring upon themselves eternal destruction, Christ’s purchase would be in vain, and the ransom price be paid for nought; which can never be true. The “buying”, spoken of in the text, respects temporal deliverance, particularly the redemption of Israel out of Egypt; who are therefore called, a “purchased” people (Ex. 15:16), the phrase is borrowed from Deuteronomy 32:6 where, to aggravate the ingratitude of the people of Israel, it is said, “Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?” And this is not the only place Peter refers to in this chapter; (see 1 Pet. 2:12, 13 compared with Deut. 32:5). Now the persons the apostle writes unto were Jews, scattered about in divers places; a people that in all ages valued themselves upon, and boasted of their being the Lord’s peculiar people, bought and purchased by him: wherefore the phrase is used here as by Moses, to aggravate the ingratitude and impiety of the false teachers among the Jews; that they should deny, in works at least, if not in words, that mighty Jehovah who had of old redeemed their fathers out of Egypt,

and had distinguished them with peculiar favours.

Of these various passages of scripture, see more at large, in my “Cause of God and Truth”, Part I and of the objections and answers to them, taken from reason, and the absurd consequences following the denial of universal redemption, as supposed; see the same Treatise, Part III.

From what has been observed concerning redemption, the nature and properties of it may be learnt. As,

1. That it is agreeable to all the perfections of God: it springs from his love, grace, and mercy, and glorifies them: it is planned and conducted by his infinite wisdom, which is illustriously displayed in it; and it is wrought out to declare his justice and honour; that all the perfections of God meet in it, mercy and truth, peace and righteousness: the glory of all his attributes is great, in the redemption and salvation of his people.

2. It is what a creature could never obtain; none but the Son of God: no man could have redeemed himself, or any other, nor given to God a ransom for either: a creature could never have redeemed himself, neither by power nor by price; not by power, he could not have loosed the fetters of sin, with which he was held; nor delivered himself out of the hands of Satan, the gaoler [jailer], stronger than he: nor by price; for the infinite justice of God being offended by sin, required an infinite satisfaction, an infinite price to be paid into its hands, for redemption and deliverance; and to which no price was adequate, but the precious blood of Christ.

3. The redemption obtained by Christ resides in him, as the subject of it, who is the author of it; “In him we have redemption, through his blood” (Eph. 1:7), and the benefits of it are communicated from him by the Father, through his gracious imputation and application of it, and of them to his people (1 Cor. 1:30).

4. It is special and particular; they are many, and not all that are ransomed and redeemed; they that are redeemed, are redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; they are the elect of God, and sheep of Christ; a peculiar people (Rev. 5:9).

5. It is a plenteous one, full and complete (Ps. 130:7), by it men are brought, not into a mere salvable state; but are actually, and to all

intents and purposes, saved by it; God, through it, is not made merely reconcilable to them; but the redeemed are actually reconciled to God, through the death of his Son. Salvation is obtained for them, not conditionally, but absolutely; Christ came to seek and save what was lost; even the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and he has found them in redemption, and saved them. Redemption includes the several blessings of grace; as justification, pardon of sin, adoption, and eternal life; and secures all to the redeemed ones.

6. It is eternal (Heb. 9:12), so called, in distinction from the typical and temporary expiation, by the blood of slain beasts, which could not take away sin; but there was an annual remembrance of them; but by the blood of Christ men are eternally redeemed from all iniquity: and in distinction from temporary redemption and salvation: as of the people of Israel out of Egypt and Babylon; which were types of this; and because it extends, as to ages past, and was a redemption of transgressions and of transgressors, that were under the first testament; so to ages to come; the benefits and blessings of which reach to the saints in all generations: the blessings of it are eternal; an everlasting righteousness for justification; pardon of sin is once and for ever; and once a child of God, always so, and the inheritance secured by it: redemption is eternal; and the redeemed ones shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation; none of them shall ever perish, but have everlasting life.

Chapter 5

OF THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST

Though the doctrine of satisfaction is not only closely connected with, but even included in, the doctrine of redemption, made by paying a satisfactory price into the hands of justice, and is a part of it; yet it is of such importance, that it requires it should be distinctly and separately treated of: it is the glory of the Christian religion, which distinguishes it from others; what gives it the preference to all others, and without which it would be of no value itself: and though the word “satisfaction” is not syllabically expressed in scripture, as used in the doctrine under consideration, the thing is abundantly declared in it; which yet Socinus denies; though he himself owns, that

a thing is not to be rejected, because not expressly found in scripture; for he says, it is enough with all lovers of truth, that the thing in question is confirmed by reason and testimony; though the words which are used in explaining the question are not found expressly written. What Christ has done and suffered, in the room and stead of sinners, with content, well pleasedness, and acceptance in the sight of God, is what may, with propriety, be called "satisfaction;" and this is plentifully spoken of in the word of God; as when God is said to be "well pleased for Christ's righteousness sake," and with it, it being answerable to the demands of law and justice; and is an honoring and magnifying of it; and when the sacrifice of Christ, and such his sufferings are, is said to be of a "sweet smelling savor to God;" because it has expiated sin, atoned for it; that is, made satisfaction for it, and taken it away; which the sacrifices under the law could not do; hence here was a remembrance of it every year (Isa. 42:21; Eph 5:2), and there are terms and phrases which are used of Christ, and of his work; as "propitiation, reconciliation, atonement," &c. which are equivalent and synonymous to satisfaction for sin, and expressive of it; concerning which may be observed the following things:

1. The necessity of satisfaction to be made for sin, in order to the salvation of sinners; for without satisfaction for sin, there can be no salvation from it; "for it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings;" that is, it became the all wise and all powerful Former and Maker of all things for himself; it was agreeable to his nature and perfections; it was fitting, and so necessary, that it should be done; that whereas it was his pleasure to bring many of the sons of men, even as many as are made the sons of God, to eternal glory and happiness by Christ; that the author of their salvation should perfectly and completely suffer, in their room and stead, all that the law and justice of God could require; without which not a sinner could be saved, nor a son brought to glory. If two things are granted, which surely must be easily granted, satisfaction for sin will appear necessary:

1. That men are sinners; and this must be owned, unless any can work themselves up into such a fancy, that they are an innocent sort

of beings, whose natures are not depraved, nor their actions wrong; neither offensive to God, nor injurious to their fellow creatures; and if so, indeed then a satisfaction for sin would be unnecessary; and one would think the opposers of Christ's satisfaction must have entertained such a conceit of themselves; but if they have, scripture, all experience, the consciences of men, and facts, are against them; all which declare men are sinners, are transgressors of the law, and pronounced guilty by it before God; and are subject to its curse, condemnation, and death, the sanction of it; and "every transgression" of it, and "disobedience" to it, has "received," does receive, or will receive, "a just recompence of reward;" that is, righteous judgment and punishment, either in the sinner himself, or in a surety for him (Heb 2:2). God never relaxes the sanction of the law; that is, the punishment for sin it threatens; though he favorably admits one to suffer it for the delinquent. By sin men are alienated from God, set at a distance from him, with respect to communion; and without reconciliation or satisfaction for sin, they never can be admitted to it; a sinner, not reconciled to God, can never enjoy nearness to him, and fellowship with him; and this, when ever had, is the fruit of Christ's sufferings and death; he suffered, in the room and stead of the unjust, to bring them to God; and it is by his blood making peace for them, that they that were afar off, with respect to communion, are made nigh, and favored with it (1 Pet. 3:18; Eph 2:13, 14), the satisfaction of Christ does not procure the love of God, being the effect of it; yet it opens the way to the embraces of his arms, stopped by sin. Moreover, men by sin, are declared rebels against God, and enemies to him; hence reconciliation, atonement, or satisfaction, became necessary; as they are enemies in their minds, by wicked works; yea, their carnal mind is enmity itself against God. And, on the other hand, on the part of God, there is a law enmity, which must be slain, and was slain, through the sufferings of Christ on the cross; "Having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:16), and so made peace and reconciliation; for this designs not any internal disposition in the mind of God's people, before conversion, which is overcome in it, by the love of God implanted in them; but the declared enmity of the moral law against them, broken by them; of which the ceremonial law was

a symbol, in the slain sacrifices of it, and stood as an handwriting against them; all which were necessary to be removed.

2. The other thing to be taken for granted is, that it is the will of God to save sinners, at least some of them; for if it was not his will to save any from sin, there would be no need of a satisfaction for, it. Now it is certain, that it is the will and resolution of God to save some; whom he appointed not to the wrath they deserve, but to salvation by Christ; whom he has ordained to eternal life, and are vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and for whose salvation a provision is made in the council and covenant of grace, in which it was consulted, contrived, and settled, and Christ appointed to be the author of it; and who, in the fulness of time, was sent and came about it, and has obtained it; and which is ascribed to his blood, his sufferings, and death, which were necessary for the accomplishment of it.

Some have affirmed that God could forgive sin, and save sinners, without a satisfaction; and this is said, not only by Socinians, but by some, as Twisse, Dr. Goodwin, Rutherford, &c. who own that a satisfaction is made, and the fitness and expedience of it: but then this is giving up the point; for if it is fitting and expedient to be done, it is necessary; for whatever is fitting to be done in the affair of salvation, God cannot but do it, or will it to be done. Besides, such a way of talking, as it tends to undermine and weaken the doctrine of satisfaction; so to encourage and strengthen the hands of the Socinians, the opposers of it; much the same arguments being used by the one as by the other. It is not indeed proper to limit the Holy One of Israel, or lay a restraint on his power, which is unlimited, boundless, and infinite; with whom nothing is impossible, and who is able to do more than we can conceive of; yet it is no ways derogatory to the glory of his power, nor is it any impeachment of it, nor argues any imperfection or weakness in him, to say there are some things he cannot do; for not to be able to do them is his glory; as that he cannot commit iniquity, which is contrary to the purity and holiness of his nature; he cannot do an act of injustice to any of his creatures, that is contrary to his justice and righteousness; he cannot lie, that is contrary to his veracity and truth; he cannot deny

himself, for that is against his nature and perfections; and for the same reason he cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction, because so to do, does not agree with the perfections of his nature. It is a vain thing to dispute about the power of God; what he can do, or what he cannot do, in any case where it is plain, what it is his will to do, as it is in the case before us; at the same time he declared himself a God gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; he has, in the strongest terms, affirmed, that he “will by no means clear the guilty;” (see Ex 34:6, 7; Jer 30:11; Nahum 1:3; Num. 14:18), or let him go unpunished; that is, without a satisfaction. Besides, if any other method could have been taken, consistent with the will of God, the prayer of Christ would have brought it out; “Father, if it be possible, let this cup of suffering death pass from me:” and then adds, “not my will, but thine be done!” what that will was, is obvious; (see Heb. 10:5-10). It may be said, this is to make God weaker than man, and to represent him as not able to do what man can do; one man can forgive another the debts that are owing to him; and in some cases he should, and is to be commended for it; and one may forgive another an offence committed against himself, and ought to do it; especially when the offender expresses repentance. But it should be observed, that sins are not pecuniary debts, and to be remitted as they are: they are not properly debts, only so called allusively: if they were proper debts, they might be paid in their kind, one sin by committing another, which is absurd; but they are called debts, because as debts oblige to payment, these oblige to punishment; which debt of punishment must be paid, either by the debtor, the sinner, or by a surety for him; sins are criminal debts, and can be remitted no other way. God, therefore, in this affair, is to be considered not merely as a creditor, but as the Judge of all the earth, who will do right; and as the Rector and Governor of the world; that great Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who will secure his own authority as such, do justice to himself, and honour to his law, and show a proper concern for the good of the community, or universe, of which he is the moral Governor. So though one man may forgive another a private offence, committed against himself, as it is an injury to him, yet he cannot forgive one, as it is an injury

to the commonwealth, of which he is a part; a private person, as he cannot execute vengeance and wrath, or inflict punishment on an offender; so neither can he, of right, let go unpunished one that has offended against the peace and good of the commonwealth; these are things that belong to the civil magistrate, to one in power and authority: and a judge that acts under another, and according to a law which he is obliged to regard, can neither inflict punishment, nor remit it, especially the latter, without the order of his superior. God indeed is not trader another; he is of himself, and can do what he pleases; he is the Maker and Judge of the law, but then he is a law to himself; his nature is his law, and he cannot act contrary to that; wherefore, as Joshua says, “he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins;” that is, without a satisfaction; and which comports with his own honour and glory; of which he is a jealous God. Sin is “*crimen laesae Majestatis;*” a crime committed against the majesty of God; it disturbs the universe, of which he is Governor, and tends to shake and overthrow his moral government of the world; to introduce atheism into it, and bring it into disorder and confusion, and to withdraw creatures from their dependence on God, and obedience to him, as the moral Governor of it; and therefore requires satisfaction, and an infinite one, as the object of it is; and cannot be made, but by an infinite Person, as Christ is; such a satisfaction the honour of the divine Being, and of his righteous law, transgressed by sin, requires. Which leads to observe,

That to forgive sin, without a satisfaction, does not accord with the perfections of God.

I. Not with his justice and holiness; God is naturally and essentially just and holy; all his ways and works proclaim him to be so; and his creatures own it, angels and men, good and bad; as he is righteous, he naturally loves righteousness; and naturally hates evil, and cannot but show his barred of it; and which is shown by punishing it. God is a consuming fire; and as fire naturally burns combustible matter, so it is natural to God to punish sin. Wherefore, punitive justice, though denied by Socinians, in order to subvert the satisfaction of Christ, is natural and essential to him; he cannot but

punish sin: it is a righteous thing with him to do it; the justice of God requires it; and there is no salvation without bearing it; and he is praised and applauded for it, by saints and holy angels; and to do otherwise, or not to punish sin, would be acting against himself and his own glory.

2. To forgive sin, without satisfaction for it, does not agree with his veracity, truth, and faithfulness, with respect to his holy and righteous law: it became him, as the Governor of the universe, to give a law to his creatures; for where there is no law, there is no transgression; men may sin with impunity, no charge can be brought against them; sin is not imputed, where there is no law; but God has given a law, which is holy, just, and good; and which shows what is his good and perfect will; and this law has a sanction annexed to it, as every law should have, or it will be of no force to oblige to an observance of it, and deter from disobedience to it; and the sanction of the law of God is nothing less than death, than death eternal; which is the just wages, and proper demerit of sin, and which God has declared he will inflict upon the transgressor; “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die:” now the veracity, truth, and faithfulness of God, are engaged to see this sanction established, and threatening executed; either upon the transgressor himself, or upon a surety for him; for the judgment of God is, that such a person is worthy of death; and his judgment is according to truth; and will and does most certainly take place.

3. The wisdom of God makes it necessary that sin should not be forgiven, without a satisfaction; for it is not the wisdom of any legislature, to suffer the law not to take place in a delinquent; it is always through weakness that it is admitted, either through fear, or through favour and affection; and this may be called tenderness, lenity, and clemency; but it is not justice: and it tends to weaken the authority of the legislator, to bring government under contempt, and to embolden transgressors of the law, in hope of impunity. The all wise Lawgiver can never be thought to act such a part: besides, the scheme of men’s peace and reconciliation by Christ, is represented as the highest act of wisdom, known to be wrought by God; for “herein he has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence:” but where

is the consummate wisdom of it, if it could have been in an easier way, at less expense, without the sufferings and death of his Son? had there been another and a better way, infinite wisdom would have found it out, and divine grace and mercy would have pursued it.

4. Nor does it seem so well to agree with the great love and affection of God, to his Son Jesus Christ, said to be his beloved Son, the dear Son of his love; to send him into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh~to be vilified and abused by the worst of men~to be buffeted, lashed, and tortured, by a set of miscreants and to put him to the most cruel and shameful death, to make reconciliation for sin, if sin could have been forgiven, and the sinner saved, without all this, by a hint, a nod, a word speaking; “Thy sins are forgiven thee,” and thou shall be saved! Nor does it so fully express the love of God to his saved ones; but tends to lessen and lower that love. God giving his Son to suffer and die, in the room and stead of sinners, and to be the propitiation for their sins, is always ascribed to the love of God, and represented as the strongest expression of it! But where is the greatness of this love, if salvation could have been done at an easier rate? and, indeed, if it could have been done in another way: the greatness of it appears, in that either the sinner must die, or Christ die for him; such was the love of God, that he chose the latter! To all this may be added, as evincing the necessity of a satisfaction for sin, that there is something of it appears by the very light of nature, in the heathens, who have nothing else to direct them; they are sensible by it, when sin is committed, deity is offended; else what mean those accusations of conscience upon sinning, and dreadful horrors and terrors of mind? witness also, the various, though foolish and fruitless methods they have taken, to appease the anger of God; as even to give their firstborn for their transgression, and the fruit of their body for the sin of their souls; which shows their sense of a necessity of making some sort of satisfaction for offences committed; and of appeasing justice, or vengeance, as they call their deity (Acts 28:4). The various sacrifices of the Jews, they were directed to under the former dispensation, plainly show the necessity of a satisfaction for sin; and plainly point out forgiveness of sin, as proceeding upon it; though they themselves could not really, only typically, expiate

sin, make atonement and satisfaction for it. But if God could forgive sin without any satisfaction at all, why not forgive it upon the foot of those sacrifices? The reason is plain, Because he could not, consistent with himself, do it without the sacrifice of his Son, typified by them. Therefore it may be strongly concluded, that a plenary satisfaction for sin, by what Christ has done and suffered, was absolutely necessary to the forgiveness of sin; “Without shedding of blood is no remission,” neither typical nor real; without it there never was, never will be, nor never could be, any forgiveness of sin (Heb. 9:22).

II. The ground and foundation of satisfaction for sin by Christ, and the cause and spring of it.

First, The ground and foundation on which it is laid, and upon which it proceeds, are the council and covenant of grace, and the suretyship engagements of Christ therein.

I. The scheme of making peace with God, or of appeasing divine justice, and of making reconciliation for sin, that is, satisfaction for it, was planned in the everlasting council; which, from thence is called, “the council of peace,” (Zech. 6:13). “God was” then “in Christ,” or with Christ, “reconciling the world,” the whole number of the elect, “to himself;” that is, they were consulting together to form the plan of their reconciliation and salvation; and the method they pitched upon was, “not imputing their trespasses to them;” not to reckon and place to their account, their sins and iniquities, and insist upon a satisfaction for them from themselves; for God knew, that if he made a demand of satisfaction for them on them, they could not answer him, one man of a thousand, no, not one at all; nor for one sin of a thousand, no, not for a single one; and that if he brought a charge of sin against them, they must be condemned; for they would not be able to give one reason, or say anything on their own behalf, why judgment should not proceed against them; wherefore, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” since God will not, whoever does, it will be of no avail against them; for “it is God that justifies” them: and happy are the persons interested in this glorious scheme, to whom the Lord “imputeth not iniquity:” and it was also further devised in this council, to impute the transgressions of the said persons to Christ, the Son of God; which, though not expressed

in the text referred to (2 Cor. 5:19), yet it is implied and understood, and in clear and full terms signified, in the verse following but one, in which the account of the scheme of reconciliation is continued; “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;” that is, the sinless Jesus, who was made sin, not inherently, by a transfusion of sin into him, which his holy nature would not admit of; but imputatively, by a transfer of the guilt of sin unto him, by placing it to his account, and making him answerable for it; which was done, not merely at the time of his sufferings and death, though then God openly and manifestly “laid upon him,” or made to meet on him, “the iniquity of us all,” of all the Lord’s people, when “the chastisement of their peace was on him;” or the punishment of their sin was inflicted on him, to make peace for them; but as early as the council of peace was held, and the above method was concerted and agreed to, or Christ became a Surety for his people, so early were their sins imputed to him, and he became responsible for them; and this laid the foundation of his making satisfaction for sin. For,

2. The scheme drawn in council, was settled in covenant; which, on that account, is called “the covenant of peace;” (Isa. 54:10; Mai. 2:5) in which covenant Christ was called to be a Priest; for Christ glorified not himself to be called one; but his father bestowed this honour on him, and consecrated, constituted, and ordained him a Priest with an oath (Ps. 110:4). Now the principal business of a priest, was to make reconciliation and atonement for sin; for the sake of this Christ was called to this office; and it was signified to him in covenant, that he should not offer such sacrifices and offerings as were offered up under the law, which could not take away sin, or atone for it; and though God would have these offered, as typical of Christ’s atoning sacrifice, from the beginning, throughout the former dispensation, to the coming of Christ; yet it was not his will that any of this sort should be offered by him; “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not:” and therefore, though Christ was a Priest, he never offered any legal sacrifice; but when anything of this kind was necessary to be done for persons he was concerned with, he always sent them to carry their offerings to a priest; as in the case of cleansing lepers (Matthew 8:4; Luke 17:14), a sacrifice of another

kind, and to answer a greater purpose, was to be offered by him, and which in covenant was provided; “A body hast thou prepared me,” which is put for the whole human nature; for not the body of Christ only, but his soul also, were made an offering for sin (Heb. 10:5, 10; Isa. 53:10), and this offering for sin was made by Christ’s suffering and dying in the room and stead of sinners, when he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their sins, and stricken for their iniquities; that is, to make satisfaction for them; this was what was enjoined in covenant; this commandment he received from his Father, and he was obedient to it, even to die the death of the cross; and this work was proposed and appointed to him in covenant, and declared in prophecy, in order to finish transgression, make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity; and this he did by the sacrifice of himself. Now as this whole scheme was drawn in council, and settled in covenant, it was proposed to Christ, and he readily agreed to it, and became the surety of the covenant, the better testament; and engaged to assume human nature, to do and suffer in it, all that the law and justice of God could require, and should demand of him, in the room and stead of sinners, in order to make full satisfaction for their sins, of which the above things are the ground and foundation. Now,

3. There is nothing in this whole transaction that is injurious to any person or thing, or that is chargeable with any unrighteousness; but all is agreeable to the rules of justice and judgment.

(1). No injury is done to Christ by his voluntary substitution in the room and stead of sinners, to make satisfaction for their sins; for as he was able, so he was willing to make it; he assuming human nature, was qualified to obey and suffer, he had somewhat to offer as a sacrifice; as man, he had blood to shed for the remission of sin, and a life to lay down for the ransom of sinners; and as God, he could support the human nature in union with him under the weight of sin laid on it; and bear the whole of the punishment due unto it with cheerfulness, courage, and strength: and as he was able, so he was willing; he said in covenant, when it was proposed to him, “Lo, I come to do thy will;” and at the fullness of time he readily came to do it, went about it as soon as possible, counted it his meat and drink to

perform it, and was constant at it; and what was most distressing and disagreeable to flesh and blood, he most earnestly wished for, even his bloody baptism, sufferings, and death; and “volenti non fit injuria”. Besides, he had a right to dispose of his own life; and therefore in laying it down did no injustice to any: the civil law will not admit that one man should die for another; the reason is, because no man has a right to dispose of his own life; but Christ had, “I have power,” says he, “to lay it down;” that is, his life (John 10:18), hence he is called, “The prince of life;” both with respect to his own life, and the life of others (Acts 3:15), and accordingly it was in his power to give it as a redemption price for his people; wherefore he says, he came “to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28), and which he did give; and he also had a power to take it up again: was a good man admitted by the civil law to die for a bad man, it would be a loss to the commonwealth, and is another reason why it is not allowed of; but Christ, as he laid down his life for sinners, so he could and did take it up again, and that quickly; he was delivered to death for the offences of men, to satisfy justice for them; and then he rose again for the justification of them; he died once, and continued a little while under the power of death, but it was not possible for him to be held long by it; when through it he had made satisfaction for sin, he rose from the dead, and will die no more, but will live for ever for the good of his people. Nor is the human nature of Christ a loser but a gainer by his sufferings and death; for having finished his work, he is glorified with the glory promised him in covenant before the world was; is crowned with glory and honour, highly exalted above every creature, has a place at the right hand of God, where angels have not; angels, authorities, and powers, being subject to him; nor has the human nature any reason to complain, nor did it ever complain of any loss sustained by suffering in the room and stead of sinners, and by working out their salvation.

(2). Nor is there any unjust thing done by God throughout this whole transaction; there is no unrighteousness in him, in his nature, nor in any of his ways and works; nor in this affair, which was done “to declare his righteousness, that he might be just,” appear to be just, “and be the justifier of him that believes in Jesus;” upon the foot of a

perfect righteousness, and full satisfaction made for sin. The person sent to do this work, and who was given up into the hands of justice, and not spared, was one God had a property in, he was his own Son, his only begotten Son; and it was with his own consent he delivered him up for all his people; and who being their surety, and having engaged to pay their debts, and to answer for any hurt, damage, or wrong done by them; and having voluntarily taken their sins upon him, and these being found on him by the justice of God; it could be no unrighteous thing to make a demand of satisfaction for them; and accordingly "it was exacted, and he answered," as the former part of Isaiah 53:7 may be rendered; that is, satisfaction was required of him, and he answered to the demand made upon him; and where is the unrighteousness of this? Christ's name was in the obligation, and that only; and therefore he was the only person that justice could lay hold upon, and get satisfaction from: besides, there was a conjunction, an union, a relation between Christ and his people, previous to his making satisfaction for them; which lay at the bottom of it, and showed a reason for it; as in all such cases where the sins of one have been punished on another; as when God has visited the iniquities of fathers upon the children, there is the relation of fathers and children; and the fathers are punished in the children, as being parts of them; thus Ham, the son of Noah, was the transgressor, but the curse was denounced and fell on Canaan his son, and Ham was punished in him; when David numbered the people, and so many thousands suffered for it, here was a relation of king and subjects, who were one in a civil sense, and the one were punished for the other. Thus Christ and his people are one, both in a natural sense, being of the same nature, and partakers of the same flesh and blood; and so satisfaction for sin was made in the same nature that sinned, as it was fit it should; and in a law sense, as a surety and debtor are one, so that if one pay the debt it is the same as if the other did it; and in a mystical sense, as head and members are one, as Christ and his people be head and members of the same body, so that if one suffer, the rest suffer with it; nor is it any unjust thing, if one part of the body sins another suffers for it; as, if the head commits the offence, and the back is punished: Christ and his people are one, as husband

and wife are, who are one flesh; and therefore there can be no impropriety, much less injustice, in Christ's giving himself a ransom price for his church, to redeem her from slavery; or an offering and sacrifice for her, to make atonement for her transgressions: and as there appears to be no unrighteousness in God through this whole affair, so far as he was concerned in it, so there is no injury done him through a satisfaction being made by another; for hereby all the divine perfections are glorified (Ps. 85:10).

(3). Nor is there any injury done to the law of God; it has the whole of its demands, no part remaining unsatisfied; for it is neither abrogated nor relaxed; there is a change of the person making satisfaction to it, which is favorably allowed by the lawgiver; but there is no change of the sanction of the law, of the punishment it requires; that is not abated. The law is so far from being a loser by the change of persons in giving it satisfaction, that it is a great gainer; the law is magnified and made honorable; more honorable by Christ's obedience to it, than by the obedience of the saints and angels in heaven; and is made more honorable by the sufferings of Christ, in bearing the penal sanction of it, than by all the sufferings of the damned in hell to all eternity (Isa. 42:21).

Secondly, The causes, spring, and source of satisfaction.

1. So far as God the Father was concerned in it, he may be said to be an efficient cause of it, and his love the moving cause; he was at the first of it, he began it, made the first motion, set it in motion; "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18), he called a council upon it, he contrived the scheme of it, he set forth Christ in his eternal purposes and decrees to be the propitiation for sin, to make satisfaction for it; and he sent him in the fullness of time for that purpose; he laid on him the iniquities of his people, and made him sin for them by imputation; he bruised him, and put him to grief, and made his soul an offering for sin; he spared him not, but delivered him into the hands of justice and death; and what moved him to this, was his great love to his people (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10).

2. In like manner Christ may be considered as an efficient cause, and his love as a moving cause in this affair; he came into the world

to die for sinners, and redeem them to God by his blood; he laid down his life for them; he gave himself for them an offering and a sacrifice unto God, a propitiatory, expiatory one; and what moved him to it, was his great love to them, and kindness for them; “Hereby perceive we the love of God,” that is, of God the Son, “because he laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16), and the love of Christ is frequently premised to his giving himself to die in the room of his people (Gal. 2:20; Eph 5:2, 25).

III. The matter of satisfaction, or what that is which gives satisfaction to the justice of God; so that a sinner upon it, or in consideration of it, is acquitted and discharged; and this is no other than Christ’s fulfilling the whole law, in the room and stead of sinners; this was what he undertook in covenant; hence he said, “Thy law is within my heart;” he was willing and ready to fulfil it; and when he came into the world, by his incarnation he was made under it voluntarily, and became subject to it, for he came not to destroy it, but to fulfil it; and he is become “the end of the law,” the fulfilling end of it, to everyone that believes: he has fulfilled it,

1. By obeying the precepts of it, and answering all that it requires. Does it require an holy nature? it has it in him, who is “holy, harmless, and undefiled;” does it require perfect and sinless obedience? it is found in him, who did no sin, never transgressed the law in one instance, but always did the things which pleased his Father; and who has declared himself “well pleased for his righteousness sake,” and with it; and that as wrought out for his people by his active obedience to the law, which is so approved of by God, that he imputes it without works for the justification of them (Rom. 4:6; 5:19). Nor is it any objection to this doctrine that Christ, as man, was obliged to yield obedience to the law for himself, which is true; but then it should be observed, that as he assumed human nature, or became man, for the sake of his people, “to us,” or for us, “a child is born;” so it was for their sake he yielded obedience to the law. Besides, though he was obliged to it as man, yet he was not obliged to yield it in such a state and condition as he did; in a state of humiliation, in a course of sorrow and affliction, in a suffering state throughout the whole of his life, even unto death; for the human nature of Christ, from

the moment of its union to the Son of God, was entitled to glory and happiness; so that its obedience to the law in such a low estate was quite voluntary, and what he was not obliged unto: nor is it to be argued from Christ's yielding obedience for his people, that then they are exempted from it; they are not; they are under the law to Christ, and under greater obligation to obey it; they are not obliged to obey it in like manner, or for such purposes that Christ obeyed it, even to justify them before God, and entitle them to eternal life.

2. Christ has fulfilled the law and satisfied it, by bearing the penalty of it in the room and stead of his people, which is death of every kind (Gen. 3:19; Rom. 6:23), corporal death, which includes all afflictions, griefs, sorrows, poverty, and disgrace, which Christ endured throughout his state of humiliation; for he took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses; and was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs all his days; and all that he suffered in his body, when he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; when he was buffeted and smitten with the palms of the hand in the palace of the high priest; and was whipped and scourged by the order of Pilate; his head crowned with thorns, and his hands and feet pierced with nails on the cross, where he hung for the space of three hours in great agonies and distress; and some have confined his satisfactory sufferings to what he underwent during that time, which though very great indeed, and none can tell what he endured in soul and body, in that space of time; yet these, exclusive of what he endured before and after, must not be considered as the only punishment he endured by way of satisfaction for the sins of men; the finishing and closing part of which was death, and what the law required; and hence making peace and reconciliation are ascribed to the bloodshed and death of Christ on the cross (Col. 1:20; Rom. 5:10), which death was a bloody, cruel, and painful one, as the thing itself speaks, and the description of it shows (Ps. 22:15, 16), and was also a very shameful and ignominious one, the death of slaves, and of the worst of malefactors; and was likewise an accursed one, and showed, that as Christ was made sin for his people, and had their sins charged upon him, so he was made a curse for them, and bore the whole curse of the law that was due unto them (Gal.

3:13). Moreover, Christ not only endured a corporal death, and all that was contained in it, and connected with it, or suffered in his body; but in his soul also, through the violent temptations of Satan, “he suffered, being tempted;” and through the reproaches that were cast upon him, which entered into his soul, and broke his heart; and through his agonies in the garden, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and especially through his sufferings on the cross, when his soul, as well as his body, was made an offering for sin; and when he sustained what was tantamount to an eternal death, which lies in a separation from God, and a sense of divine wrath; both which Christ then endured, when God deserted him, and hid his face from him; which made him say, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” and he a dreadful sense of divine wrath, on the account of the sins of his people laid upon him, the punishment of which he bore; when he said, “Thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wrath with thine anointed,” thy Messiah (Ps. 89:38), and thus by doing and suffering all that the law and justice of God could require, he made full and complete satisfaction thereunto for his people; it was not barely some thing, some little matter, which Christ gave, and with which God was content, and what is called “acceptilation;” but a proper, full, and adequate satisfaction, which he gave, so that nothing more in point of justice could be required of him.

IV. The form or manner in which satisfaction was made by Christ; which was by bearing the sins of his people, under an imputation of them to him, and by dying for their sins, and for sinners; that is, in their room and stead, as their substitute; these are the phrases by which it is expressed in scripture.

First, By bearing the sins of his people, which we first read of in Isaiah 53:11,12 where two words are made use of, both alike translated: “And he bare the sin of many;” he took, he lifted them up, he took them off of his people, and took them upon himself; and again, “He shall bear their iniquities,” ‘03*?, as a man bears and carries a burden upon his shoulders; and from hence is the use of the phrase in the New Testament: the author of the epistle to Hebrews in 9:28 observes, that “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of

many;” pointing at the time when he bore the sins of many; it was when he was offered up a sacrifice to make atonement for them; and the apostle Peter observes where he bore them; “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree!” (1 Pet. 2:24). “He bore them in his own body,” in the body of his flesh; when that was offered once for all; and “on the tree,” upon the cross, when he was crucified on it. Now his bearing sin, supposes it was upon him: there was no sin “in” him, inherently, in his nature and life; had there been any, he would not have been a fit person to take away sin, to expiate it, and make satisfaction for it; he was manifested to take away our sins; that is, by the sacrifice of himself; and in him is no sin (1 John 3:5), and so a fit sacrifice for it: but sin was upon him, it was “put” upon him, as the sins of Israel were “put upon” the scapegoat, by Aaron. Sin was put upon Christ by his divine Father; no creature could have done it, neither angel nor men; but “the Lord hath laid on him,” or “made to meet on him,” “the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6), not a single iniquity, but a whole mass and lump of sins collected together, and laid, as a common burden, upon him; even of us all, of all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles; for Christ became the propitiation, or made satisfaction, for the sins of both (1 John 2:2). This phrase, of laying sin on Christ, is expressive of the imputation of it to him; for as it was the will of God, not to impute the trespasses of his elect to themselves; it was his pleasure they should be imputed to Christ, which was done by an act of his own; “For he hath made him to be sin for us;” that is, by imputation, in which way we are “made the righteousness of God in him;” that being imputed to us by him, as our sins were to Christ: the sense is, a charge of sin was brought against him, as the surety of his people; “he was numbered with the transgressors;” bearing the sins of many, he was reckoned as if he had been one, sin being imputed to him; and was dealt with, by the justice of God, as such; sin being found on him, through imputation, a demand of satisfaction for sin was made; and he answered it to the full. All this was with his own consent; he agreed to have sin laid on him, and imputed to him, and a charge of it brought against him, to which he engaged to be responsible; yea, he himself took the sins of his people on him; so the evangelist Matthew has it: “Himself took

our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:17), as he took their nature, so he took their sins, which made his flesh to have “the likeness of sinful flesh,” though it really was not sinful.

What Christ bore, being laid on him, and imputed to him, were sins, all sorts of sin, original and actual; sins of every kind, open and secret, of heart, lip, and life; all acts of sin committed by his people; for he has redeemed them from all their iniquities; and God, for Christ’s sake, forgives all trespasses; his blood cleanses from all sin, and his righteousness justifies from all; all being imputed to him, as that is to them: all that is in sin, and belongs to sin, were bore by him; the turpitude and filth of sin, without being defiled by it, which cannot be separated from it; and the guilt of sin, which was transferred to him, and obliged to punishment; and particularly the punishment itself, sin is often put for the punishment of sin (Gen. 4:13; Lam. 5:7), and is greatly meant, and always included, when Christ is said to bear it; even all the punishment due to the sins of his people: and which is called, “the chastisement of our peace,” said to be “upon him” (Isa. 53:5), that is, the punishment inflicted on him, in order to make peace, reconciliation, and atonement for sin. Bearing sin, supposes it to be a burden; and, indeed, it is a burden too heavy to bear by a sensible sinner: when sin is charged home upon the conscience, and a saint groans, being burdened with it, what must that burden be, and how heavy the load Christ bore, consisting of all the sins of all the elect; from the beginning of the world to the end of it? and yet he sunk not, but stood up under it, failed not, nor was he discouraged, being the mighty God, and the Man of God’s right hand, made strong for himself: and he himself bore it; not any with him, to take any part with him, to help and assist him; his shoulders alone bore it, on which it was laid; and his own arm alone brought salvation to him. And he bore it, and bore it away; he removed the iniquity of his people in one day; and that as far as the East is from the West: and in this he was typified by the scapegoat, on whom were put all the iniquities, transgressions, and sins, of all the children of Israel, on the day of atonement, and which were all borne by the scapegoat to a land not inhabited (Lev. 16:21, 22). Aaron was also a type of Christ, in bearing the sins of the holy things of the people

of Israel, when he went into the holy place (Ex. 28:38). And the sin offering was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, which is said to bear the iniquities of the congregation, and to make atonement for them (Lev. 10:17).

Secondly, The form and manner in which Christ made satisfaction for sin, is expressed by “dying for sin,” that is, to make atonement for it; and “for sinners;” that is, in their room and stead, as their substitute.

1. By dying for the sins of his people; this the apostle represents as the first and principal article of the Christian faith, “that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3), according to the scriptures of the Old Testament, which speak of Christ being “cut off,” in a judicial way, by death, but not for himself, for any sin of his own; and of his being wounded, bruised, and stricken, but not for his own transgressions and iniquities; but as “wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and stricken for the transgressions of his people” (Dan. 9:26; Isa. 53:5, 8), that is, wounded and bruised unto death, and stricken with death; which death was inflicted on him as a punishment for the sins of his people, to expiate them, and make atonement for them, being laid on him, and bore by him: the meaning of the phrases is, that the sins of his people were the procuring and meritorious causes of his death; just as when the apostle says, “for which things sake;” that is, for sins before mentioned; “the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience” (Col. 3:6), the sense is, that sins are the procuring, meritorious causes of the wrath of God, being stirred up, and poured down upon disobedient sinners: so, in like manner, when Christ is said to be delivered into the hands of justice and death, “for our offences;” the sense is, that our offences were the meritorious cause why he was put to death, he bearing them, and standing in our room and stead; as his resurrection from the dead, having made satisfaction for sins, was the meritorious and procuring cause of our justification from them; as follows, “and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:25). The Socinians urge, and insist upon it, that the particle “for,” used in the above phrases, signifies not the procuring, meritorious cause, but the final cause of Christ’s death; which they say was this, to confirm the doctrines and

practices he taught, that men, by obedience to them, might have the forgiveness of their sins: which is a doctrine very false; for though Christ did, both by the example of his life, and by his sufferings and death, confirm the truths he taught, which is but what a martyr does; and that though through the grace of God, his people do obey from the heart the doctrines and ordinances delivered to them; yet it is not by their obedience of faith and duty, that they obtain the forgiveness of their sins; but through the blood of Christ, shed for many, for the remission of sins.

2. By dying for sinners, as their substitute, in their room; so the several Greek particles, $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$, $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$, $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$, used in this phrase, and others equivalent to it, signify a surrogation, a substitute of one for another; as in various passages in the New Testament; (see Matthew 2:21; 5:38) and in various writers, as has been observed by many, with full proof and evidence, and most dearly in the scriptures, where Christ's sufferings and death are spoken of as for others; thus Christ gave his life "a ransom for many," in the room and stead of many (Matthew 20:28), so he himself is said to be $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$ $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$, "a ransom for all," in the room and stead of "all" his people, Jews and Gentiles. The prophecy of Caiaphas was, "That one Man should die for the people," in the room and stead of them (John 11:50). "Christ died for the ungodly," in the room and stead of the ungodly; "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us," in our room and stead (Rom. 5:6-8). Again, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," in the room and stead of the unjust (1 Pet. 3:18). The Socinians say, that these phrases only mean, Christ died for the good of men: that Christ became a Surety for good to his people, and has obtained good for them, by performing his suretyship engagements, is certain; yet this good he has obtained by obeying, suffering, and dying, in their room and stead: thus that the blessing of Abraham, even all the spiritual blessings of the everlasting covenant, might come upon the Gentiles, through Christ, he was "made a curse for them," in their room; he bore the whole curse of the law for them, as their substitute, and so opened a way for their enjoyment of the blessings, or good things, in the covenant of grace; and that sinners might be made the righteousness of God in him, or have his righteousness imputed to

them for their justification; he was “made sin for them,” had their sins laid on him, and imputed to him, as their substitute; and was made a sacrifice for sin in their room and stead, to make atonement for it (see Gal. 3:13,14; 2 Cor. 5:21). This is the greatest instance of love among men, “that a man lay down his life” for, in the room and stead of, “his friend” (John 15:13), and such was the love of Christ to his church, “that he gave,” delivered “himself” to death for her, in her room and stead (Eph 5:25).

V. The effects of satisfaction made by Christ, or the ends that were to be, and have been answered by it.

1. The finishing and making an entire end of sin; this was Christ’s work assigned him in covenant, and asserted in prophecy; and which was done when he made reconciliation or atonement for sin (Dan. 9:24), not that the being of sin was removed thereby; for that remains in all the justified and sanctified ones, in this life, but the damning power of it; such for Christ has made satisfaction, shall never come into condemnation, nor be hurt by the second death, that shall have no power over them; sin is so done, and put away, and abolished, by the sacrifice of Christ for it, that no charge can ever be brought against his people for it; the curse of the law cannot reach them, nor light upon them; nor any sentence of condemnation and death can be executed on them; nor any punishment inflicted on them; they are secure from wrath to come. Sin is so finished and made an end of, by Christ’s satisfaction for it, that it will be seen no more by the eye of avenging Justice; it is so put away, and out of sight, that when it is sought for, it shall not be found; God, for Christ’s sake, has cast it behind his back, and into the depths of the sea.

2. In virtue of Christ’s satisfaction for sin, his people are brought into an open state of reconciliation with God; atonement being made for their sins, their persons are reconciled to God, and they are admitted into open favour with him; and he declares himself “pacified towards them, for all that they have done” (Ezek. 16:63).

3. Sin being atoned for, and made an end of, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, with which God is well pleased; because by it his law is magnified and made honorable; all its demands being fully answered, by Christ’s obeying its precepts, and bearing its

penalty; which righteousness God so approves of, that he imputes it to his people, without works; and so it is unto all, and upon all, them that believe, as their justifying righteousness; which acquits them from sin, and entitles them to eternal life.

4. Immunity from all evil; that is, from all penal evil, both in this life, and in that to come, is an effect of Christ's satisfaction for sin; since sin being removed by it, no evil can come nigh them; no curse attends their blessings; no wrath is in their afflictions; all things work together for their good; it is always well with them in life, in all the circumstances of it; at death, they die in the Lord, in union to him, in faith, and hope of being for ever with him; and at judgment, the Judge will be their Friend and Saviour, and it will be well with them to all eternity; they will be eternally delivered from wrath to come.

5. With respect to God, the effect of Christ's satisfaction is the glorifying of his justice; for, for that end was Christ "set forth to be the propitiation," or to make atonement for sin; to declare the righteousness of God, to show it in all its strictness, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus;" appear to be just in so doing; yea, all the divine perfections are glorified hereby; (see Rom. 3:25, 26; Ps 21:5).

There are many objections made by the Socinians, to this important doctrine, and article of faith; some of the principal of which are as follow:

1. It is suggested, as if the doctrine of satisfaction for sin to the justice of God, is inconsistent with the mercy of God, and leaves no room for that. But the attributes of mercy and justice, are not contrary to each other. They subsist and accord together, in the same divine nature; "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful" (Ps. 116:5), merciful, though righteous; and righteous, though gracious and merciful; (see Ex. 34:6, 7) and as they agree as perfections in the divine Being; so in the exercise of them, they do not clash with one another, no, not in this affair of satisfaction; justice being satisfied, a way is opened for mercy to display her stores (Ps. 85:10).

2. It is objected, that pardon of sin, upon the foot of a full satisfaction for it, cannot be said to be free; but eclipses the glory of

God's free grace in it: it is certain, that remission of sin is through the tender mercy of God, and is owing to the multitude of it; it is according to the riches of free grace, and yet through the blood of Christ: and both are expressed in one verse, as entirely agreeing together; "In whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph 1:7), the free grace of God is so far from being eclipsed, in the forgiveness of sin, through the satisfaction of Christ, that it shines the brighter for it; for consider, that it was the free grace of God which provided Christ to be a sacrifice for sin, to atone for it; as Abraham said to Isaac, when he asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering? My son," says he, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:7, 8), so God, of his rich grace and mercy, has provided Christ to be an offering for sin; and his grace appears more, in that it is his own Son, his only begotten Son, he provided to be the atoning sacrifice; it was grace that set forth Christ in purpose, proposed him in council and covenant, and sent him forth in time to be the propitiation for sin: it was grace to us that he spared him not, but delivered him up for us all: and it was grace in God to accept of the satisfaction made by Christ; for though it was so full and complete, as nothing could be more so; yet it would have been a refusable one, had he not allowed Christ's name to be put in the obligation: had it not been for the compact and covenant agreed to between them, God might have marked, in strict justice, our iniquities, and insisted on a satisfaction at our own hands; he might have declared, and stood by it, that the soul that sinned, that should die: it was therefore owing to the free grace and favour of God, to admit of a Surety in our room, to make satisfaction for us, and to accept of that satisfaction, as if made by ourselves. Moreover, though it cost Christ much, his blood, his life, and the sufferings of death, to make the satisfaction for sin, and to procure forgiveness by it; it cost us nothing; it is all of free grace to us. Besides, grace in scripture is only opposed to the works of men, and satisfaction by them, and not to the works of Christ, and to his satisfaction.

3. It is pretended, that this scheme of pardon, upon the foot of satisfaction, makes the love of Christ to men, to be greater than

the love of the Father; it represents the one as tenderly affectionate, compassionate, and kind to sinners; and the other as inexorable, not to be appeased, nor his wrath turned away without satisfaction to his justice; and so men are more beholden to the one than to the other: but the love of both is most strongly expressed in this business of Christ's satisfaction; and he must be a daring man that will take upon him to say, who of them showed the greatest love, the Father in giving his Son, or the Son in giving himself, to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; for as it is said of Christ, that he loved the people, and gave himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor to God (Eph. 5:2, 25; Gal. 2:20), so it is said of the Father, that he "so loved the world," that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer and die for men; and that herein his love was manifested; and that he commended it towards us, in sending Christ to be the propitiation for sin (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10; Rom. 5:8). Can there be greater love than this expressed by both? and which is greatest is not for us to say.

4. It is said, that if Christ is a divine Person, he must be a party offended by sin; and if he has made satisfaction for it, he must have made satisfaction to himself; which is represented as an absurdity. All this will be allowed, that Christ is God, and, as such, equally offended as his Father; and that he made satisfaction to the offended, and that, in some sense, to himself too; and yet no absurdity in it. Indeed, in case of private satisfaction, for a private loss, it would be quite absurd for one to make satisfaction to himself; but in case of public satisfaction, for a public offence to a community, of which he is a part, he may be said, by making satisfaction to the whole body, to make satisfaction to himself, without any absurdity. A member of parliament, having violated the rules and laws of the house, when he makes satisfaction for the same to it, may be said to make satisfaction to himself, being a member of it. It is possible for a lawgiver to make satisfaction to his own law broken, and so to himself, as the lawgiver: thus Zaleucus, a famous legislator, made a law which punished adultery with the loss of both eyes; his own son first broke this law, and in order that the law might have full satisfaction, and yet mercy shown to his son, he ordered one of his son's eyes, and one of his own, to be put out; and so he might be

said to satisfy his own law, and to make satisfaction to himself, the lawgiver. But in the case before us, the satisfaction made by Christ, is made to the justice of God, subsisting in the divine nature, common to all the three Persons; this perfection subsisting in the divine nature, as possessed by the first Person, is offended with sin, resents it, requires satisfaction for it; and it is given it by the second Person, in human nature, as God man: the same divine perfection subsisting in the divine nature, as possessed by the second Person, shows itself in like manner, loving righteousness, and hating iniquity; affronted by sin, and demanding satisfaction for it, it is given to it by him, as the God man and Mediator; who, though a Person offended, can mediate for the offender, and make satisfaction for him. And the same may be observed concerning the justice of God, as a perfection of the divine nature, possessed by the third Person, the Spirit of God; the satisfaction is made to the justice of God, as subsisting in the divine nature, common to the three Persons; and is not made to one Person only, singly and separately, and personally; but to God, essentially considered, in all his Persons; and to his justice, as equally possessed by them; and that as the Lord, Judge, and Governor of the whole world; who ought to maintain, and must and does maintain, the honour of his Majesty, and of his law.

5. Once more, it is said that this doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin, weakens men's obligation to duty, and opens a door to licentiousness. But this is so far from being true, that, on the contrary, it strengthens the obligation, and excites a greater regard to duty, in those who have reason to believe that Christ has made satisfaction for their sins; for the love of Christ in dying for them—in being made sin and a curse for them, to satisfy for their sins, constrains them, in the most pressing manner, to live to him, according to his will, and to his glory; being bought with the price of Christ's blood, and redeemed from a vain conversation by it; they are moved the more strongly to glorify God with their bodies and spirits, which are his, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear; the grace of God, which has appeared in God's gift of his Son, and in Christ's gift of himself to be their Redeemer and Saviour, to be their atoning sacrifice; teaches them most effectually to deny ungodliness

and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:17,18; Tit. 2:11,12)

Chapter 6

OF PROPITIATION, ATONEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION, AS ASCRIBED TO CHRIST

Having observed, that though the word “satisfaction” is not syllabically used in scripture, when the doctrine of Christ’s satisfaction is spoken of; yet that there are words and terms equivalent to it, and synonymous with it; as “propitiation, atonement”, and “reconciliation”: it may be proper to explain these terms, and give the sense of them; which may serve the more to clear and confirm the doctrine of satisfaction; and to begin,

First, with “Propitiation”: the first time we meet with this word, and as applied to Christ, is in Romans 3:25. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation”; either to be the author of propitiation; for whose sake, and on account of what he was to do and suffer, God would be propitious to men—his justice be appeased—and he be at peace with them; laying aside all marks of displeasure, anger, and resentment against them: for this was Christ’s work as Mediator; he drew nigh to God, and treated with him about terms of peace, and entered into measures of peace with him; interposed between justice and them, became a Mediator between God and man, to bring them together; hence he has the names of Shiloh, the Prince of peace, the Man the Peace, and Jesus our peace, who has made both one: or else to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; such hilastic, propitiatory, and expiatory sacrifices there were under the law; typical of the expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; and as God in them smelled a sweet savor of rest, as types of Christ; so his sacrifice was an offering of a sweet smelling savor to him; he was well pleased with it, it gave him content and satisfaction, because his justice was appeased by it, and the demands of his law were answered, yea, it was magnified and made honorable; the word used in the above text *iA,omt|piov*, is the same which the Greek version of Exodus 25:21 and which the apostle, in Hebrews 9:5 use of the mercy seat; which, with the cherubim upon it, and the ark, with the law therein under

it, to which it was a lid or cover, formed a seat for the divine Majesty; and which was an emblem of his mercy and justice shining in the atonement made by Christ, which this exhibited to view; and gave encouragement to draw nigh to this mercy seat, or throne of grace, in hope of finding grace and mercy, and enjoying communion with God: a glimpse of this the poor publican had, when he said, "God be merciful", *ia,OCTOT|Ti*, "propitious, to me a sinner!" or be merciful to me, through the propitiation of the Messiah. Now Christ was "set forth" to be the propitiation in the purposes and decrees of God, *7tpoe6ETO*, God "foreordained" him, as he was foreordained to be the Lamb slain, as the ransom price and propitiatory sacrifice; whose sufferings and death, which were the sacrifice, were according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (1 Pet. 1:19; Acts 2:23; 4:28), and he was set forth in the promises and prophecies spoken of by all the holy prophets that were from the beginning of the world; as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpents head, destroy him and his works, among which this is a principal one, making an end of sin, by a complete atonement for it; and he was set forth as such in the types and shadows of the law, the trespass offerings, and sin offerings, which are said to bear the sins of the congregation, and to make atonement for them; which were typical of Christ, who was made an offering for sin, bore the sins of many, and made atonement for them (Lev. 10:17), and he has been set forth, in the fulness of time, in the exhibition of him, in human nature, in which he was manifested to take away sin; and he has put it away, and even abolished it, by the propitiatory sacrifice of himself; and he is still set forth in the gospel, as the sin bearing and sin atoning Saviour who has satisfied law and justice, and made peace by the blood of his cross; and therefore it is called the word of reconciliation, the gospel of peace, and the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

There are two other places where Christ is spoken of as , t h e "propitiation"; and these are in the first epistle of the apostle John; in one of them (1 John 4:10), it is said, "God sent his Son to be the propitiation of our sins"; that is, sent him in human nature, to offer up soul and body as a sacrifice, and thereby make expiation of sin,

and full atonement for it; and in the other it is said (1 John 2:9). “And he is the propitiation for our sins”, the sins both of Jews and Gentiles; for which he is become a propitiatory sacrifice; upon which God is “merciful”, ikeox,, “propitious” to his people, notwithstanding all their “unrighteousness, sins, and transgressions”, or is “pacified towards them for all that they have done” (Heb. 8:12; Ezek. 16:63).

2. Secondly, the word atonement, though often used in the Old Testament, of typical sacrifices, making expiation of sin; as in Leviticus 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 16:6, 10, 11, 16-18, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11 where the word rpk is used, which signifies to “cover”; and Christ, by his sacrifice, the antitype of these, is a covering to his people, from the curses of the law they have broken—from the wrath of God they have deserved—and from avenging justice their sins exposed them to. Yet it is but once used in the New Testament (Rom. 5:11). “By whom we have received the atonement” made for them by Christ their surety, head, and representative; that is, the benefit of it, the application of it by the Spirit of God, who takes the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and applies to his people, and shows them their interest therein; the effect of which is joy, peace, and comfort. The word used properly signifies “reconciliation”; and so it is elsewhere translated; and the Hebrew word isa is sometimes rendered to “reconcile” (Lev. 6:30), atonement and reconciliation for sin, design the same thing, and both satisfaction for it. Which leads to observe,

Thirdly, that the word “reconciliation” is frequently used with respect to this doctrine. Reconciliation began with God himself; “All things are of God”, originally, in nature, providence, and grace; particularly this, “Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 5:18). It began in the thoughts of his heart, which were thoughts of peace; it was brought into council and settled in covenant, called the council and covenant of peace. It was carried into execution by Christ, who is frequently represented as the author of it, by his death, and the blood of his cross (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20-22), and it was made unto God, against whom sin is committed, whose law is broken, and his justice offended; and who is the Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy (Rom. 5:10;

Eph. 2:16), and it is a reconciliation for sin, to make atonement for it (Dan. 9:24; Heb 2:17), and of sinners and enemies in their minds to God (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21), which may be further illustrated,

First, by observing the character of the persons reconciled; which will show the cause, reason, and necessity of a reconciliation to be made; they are “enemies”; and in one of the texts referred to, they are said to be “enemies in their minds by wicked works”: which is expressive,

1. Of the internal enmity there is in their minds and hearts; the carnal mind, as every man’s mind is naturally carnal, is not only an enemy, but “enmity” itself, “against God” (Rom. 8:7), to the Being of God—wishing there was no God—to the nature and perfections of God, denying some of them, misrepresenting others, and framing him in their minds, as altogether such an one as themselves—to the purposes and decrees of God, which they cannot bear, and to which they insolently reply; and to the providences of God, they charge with inequality and unrighteousness: and they are inwardly and secretly enemies to Christ, to his person and offices; particularly his kingly office, being unwilling that he should reign over them; and to his gospel, and the special doctrines of it; and to his ordinances, they care not to be subject unto: and so they are to the Spirit, to his Person, whom they know not, nor can receive; to his operations, which they deride and ridicule; the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to them: and they are enemies to the people of God, there is an old and implacable enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; the saints are hated by the world, because chosen and called out of the world; God’s elect themselves, while in a state of nature, are hateful, and hating one another; Paul, a chosen vessel of salvation, was, while unregenerate, exceeding mad against the saints. But

2. There is an external enmity, which appears by wicked works and sinful actions openly committed: which are acts of hostility against God, are contrary to his nature and will are abominable in his sight provoke the eyes of his glory, excite his wrath, and cause it to be revealed from heaven, and for which it comes on the children of disobedience; and all are deserving of it: sins are breaches of the

law of God, render men liable to the curses of it, and to death itself, the sanction of it; they not only all with enmity to God, and show it to him, but set men at a distance from him; so that they have no communion with him, are far off, are without him, and separate from him. But,

3. Men are not only enemies internally, and externally to God, but there is an enmity on the part of God to them; there is a law enmity, or an enmity declared in the law against them; they are declared by the law of God as enemies; traitors, and rebels to him; and as such God's elect were considered, when Christ died to make reconciliation for them; for it is said, "while they were sinners Christ died for them, and when they were enemies they were reconciled to God, the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:8, 10). Now the far greater part of those for whom Christ died, were not then in an actual sinful state, nor in actual rebellion and enmity against God; for then they were not in actual being; but they were considered as in their apostate head, as sinners in him, and so as rebels and traitors; as such they were deemed by the law, and proceeded against, proclaimed guilty, judgment came upon them to condemnation; they were, in the eye of the law, and in the sight of justice, viewed as enemies, and declared such: and this law enmity is what was slain by Christ, and removed at his death; and not that enmity that was in their minds; that was not removed by and at the death of Christ; that is removed at conversion, when the arrows of the word become sharp in these enemies, which bring them to fall under, and be subject to Christ; when they are made willing in the day of his power, to be saved by him, to submit to his righteousness, and to have him to reign over them: this is the work of the Spirit of Christ: there is a two fold reconciliation, one of which is the work of Christ, and was made at his death: the other the work of his Spirit, at conversion; when, by his grace, men are reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ; and both may be seen in one text (Rom. 5:10). If there had been no other enmity than what is in the hearts of men against God, there would have been no need of the sufferings and death of Christ to make reconciliation; but there was a law enmity on the part of God, and his justice, which required the death of Christ to take it away. Not that there was any enmity

in the heart of God to his elect; that would be inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love, which appeared strongly towards them at the time Christ died for them, reconciled them, and became the propitiation for their sins (Rom. 5:8,10; Titus 3:3, 4; 1 John 4:10). But they were, according to the law, and in the view of justice, deemed and declared as the enemies of God. So when the subjects of a king rise up in rebellion against him, there may be no enmity in his heart to them; yet they are, according to law, proclaimed rebels, and enemies to him, and may be treated as such, and proceeded against in due form of law; and yet, after all, be pardoned by him. There was, in some sense, a reciprocal enmity between God and men, which made a reconciliation necessary; and which was brought about by the bloodshed, sufferings, and death of Christ, when he slew the enmity of the law, and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that were against sinners, so making peace (Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 2:14). Which will further appear,

2dly, By observing what reconciliation signifies and imports: there is something similar and analogous in a case when it is made between man and man, though not altogether the same; and some caution must be taken, lest we go into mistakes: reconciliation between man and man, supposes a former state of friendship subsisting between them, a breach of that friendship, and a renewing and restoration of it: and there is something like it in reconciliation between God and man; man, in his primeval state, was in strict friendship with God, not only Adam personally being made after the image, and in the likeness of God, having dominion over all the creatures, made for his use, and which were brought to him, to be named by him; and having an habitation in a most delightful garden, where he was allowed to eat of all kind of fruit in it, but one; and where he enjoyed communion with God: in all this honour he was; and not he only, but all his posterity, considered in him, as their head and representative, were in a state of friendship with God; hence the covenant made with him, in which he was their federal head, is rightly called by divines, “*foedus amicitiae*”, a covenant of friendship: but man abode not long in this state; sin, that whisperer and agitator, soon separated chief friends; alienated man from the life of God,

caused him to apostatize from him, and to become a traitor to him; filled him with enmity to him, and set him at a distance from him; and in this state of alienation and enmity, all his posterity naturally are; with respect to the elect of God among them, Christ has interposed, appeased justice, satisfied the law, and made reconciliation for them, and brought them into an open state of friendship with God; so that they are considered, in consequence of this, as Abraham was, the friends of God, and are treated as such (Jas. 2:23; Song of Sol. 5:1; John 15:15), have the blessings of divine favour bestowed upon them, and rich communications of grace made unto them.

But here we must proceed warily, and observe some things to prevent mistakes and misrepresentations; for perhaps there is not one thing in the whole scheme of evangelical truths more difficult rightly to fix than this. It should be considered, that properly speaking there are no passions nor perturbations of mind in God, who is a spirit, simple and uncompounded, and not capable of such things; when therefore displeasure, anger, provocation, resentment, &c. are ascribed to him, it must be understood after the manner of men; that he says something in his word, and does something in his providence, and the outward dispensations of it, which is somewhat similar to what men say and do, when the above is the case with them; otherwise we are not to conceive that God is in a passion, and is ruffled, and his mind disturbed, as they are. Nor are we to imagine there is any change in God, as in men, who are sometimes friends, then enemies, and then friends again; he changes not, there is no variableness nor shadow of turning in him; he may change his voice to his people, and speak comfortably to them in his gospel, who before spoke terribly to them in his law; he may change his outward conduct and behavior towards them, and carry it friendly to them, when before as at a distance: but he never changes his mind, counsel and affections to them; his love is everlasting and invariable; he ever rested in it, and nothing can separate from it; his love is never changed to enmity, and from enmity to love again; his special secret favour, as it is never lost, needed no recovery; nor did Christ, by making satisfaction and reconciliation for sin, procure the love and favour of God to his people; for Christ's being sent to be the propitiation,

his sufferings and death, sacrifice and satisfaction, were the fruit and effect of the love of God, and not the cause of it (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10). The reconciliation made by Christ was not to the love of God, which was never lost, but to the justice of God, offended by sin; the flaming sword, which turned every way and threatened vengeance, was plunged into the heart of Christ, the surety of his people, which was done to declare the righteousness and satisfy the justice of God; and to open a way for mercy to display itself, and turn its hand upon the little ones; and thus justice and mercy happily met together, and were reconciled to one another in their different pleas and demands (Zech. 13:7; Rom. 3:25, 26; Ps. 85:10). The reconciliation made by Christ is for sin, to make satisfaction for it (Dan. 9:24; Heb. 2:17), and on that account it is a reconciliation of sinners to God, he being thereby pacified towards them for all that they have done; being well pleased with what Christ has done and suffered for them; he is well pleased with him, and with all that are considered in him, who are accepted in him the beloved, and are admitted into an open state of favour; which is meant by their having access through Christ into the grace wherein they stand (Matthew 3:17; Eph. 1:6; Rom. 5:2), for though the love of God to his elect is invariable and unchangeable in itself, yet the manifestation of it is different; and it may be distinguished into secret and open love; there are obstructions by sin thrown in the way of love, which must be removed, in order to enjoy open favour and the blessings of it, and which are removed by Christ; thus Christ was made under the law, to redeem his people, that they might receive the adoption of children; and was made a curse for them, that the blessings of grace love had provided in covenant for them, might come upon them; and he was made sin, and a sin offering for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; and be brought into a state of open fellowship and communion with him, who before were kept at a distance. Thus David, though he most affectionately loved his son Absalom, and longed for him, when for an offence he fled; and though through the mediation of Joab he was allowed to return to Jerusalem, yet the king would not suffer him to see his face for the space of full two years; when by the mediation of the same person he

was admitted into the king's presence, taken into open favour, and kissed by him (2 Sam. 13:39; 14:1, 21, 24, 33).

Thirdly, the means by which this reconciliation is made, are the bloodshed and death of Christ; he only is the reconciler and peace maker; a sinner cannot make peace with God or reconciliation, that is, satisfaction for his sins; not by his works of righteousness, which are impure and imperfect; nor by repentance, which the law does not admit of, nor is it any satisfaction to it; nor by faith, for that does not make, only receives the atonement made by Christ; there is nothing a sinner can do, will make peace and reconciliation for him; and what will, he cannot do; which is no less than fulfilling the whole law, and answering all the demands of law and justice (Rom. 8:3, 4), death being the sanction of the law, and the wages of sin, there is no reconciliation to be made but by death; not by the death of slain beasts, which could not take away sin; nor by the death of the sinner himself: the Jews having lost the true notion of the atonement by the Messiah, fancy that a man's death atones for his sins; but it is a false notion, there is no other way of peace, reconciliation, and atonement being made, but by the death of the Son of God; who being God as well as man, could and did give virtue and efficacy to his blood, sufferings, and death in human nature united to his person, as to make them adequate to the said purposes.

Chapter 7

OF THE PARDON OF SIN

The doctrine of pardon properly follows the doctrine of satisfaction; for pardon of sin proceeds upon satisfactory made for it. Forgiveness of sin, under the law, followed upon typical atonement for it: four times, in one chapter, it is said, the priest shall make atonement for sin, and it shall be forgiven (Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35), and as often in the next chapter (Lev. 5:10, 13, 16, 18), and in other places. This doctrine is of pure revelation; it is not to be known by the light of nature; "as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law" (Rom. 2:12), for anything the light of nature suggests, concerning the pardon of it; men may fancy, from the goodness and mercy of God, that he will forgive their sins; but they cannot be

certain of it that he will, since he is just as well as merciful; and how to reconcile justice and mercy in the pardon of sin the light of nature leaves men in the dark; they may conjecture, that because one man forgives another, upon repentance, God will do the same; but they cannot be sure of it: besides, grace must be given to a man to repent, as well as remission of sins, or else he never will repent. Nor is this a doctrine of the law, which gives not the least hint of pardon, nor any encouragement to expect it; “as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law”, condemned without any hope of pardon (Rom. 2:12). “Every transgression and disobedience” of the law, or word spoken by angels, “received a just recompense of reward”; that is, proper and righteous punishment (Heb. 2:2). Nor does the law regard a man’s repentance, nor admit of any; “he that despised Moses’ law died without mercy!” (Heb. 10:28). But the doctrine of pardon is a pure doctrine of the gospel, which Christ gave in commission to his disciples to preach, and which they preached in his name, and to which all the evangelic prophets bore witness (Luke 24:47; Acts 13:38; 10:43). Concerning which may be observed,

1. First, The proof that may be given of it, that there is such a thing as pardon of sin: this is asserted in express words by David; “There is forgiveness with thee” (Ps. 130:4), and by Daniel, “To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses”, full and free pardon of sin (Dan. 9:9). It is a blessing provided and promised in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things, which, without this, it would not be; this is a principal blessing in it; the promise of which runs thus; “I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 8:12). It is in the gracious proclamation the Lord has made of his name, and makes a considerable part of it as “the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin!” (Ex. 34:7). Christ was “set forth”, in the purposes of God, to be “a propitiation, through faith in his blood, for the remission of sins”; and he was sent forth, in the fullness of time, to shed his blood for it; and his blood has been “shed for many for the remission of sins!” and it is procured by it; or otherwise his bloodshed and death would be in vain (Rom. 3:25; Matthew 26:28; Eph. 1:7), and it is in his hands to bestow it;

having ascended on high, he has received gifts for men, “even for the rebellious”; and among the gifts for them pardon of sin is one; Christ is “exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31), and it is by his orders, published in the gospel, as before observed; to which may be added, the numerous instances of it, both under the Old and under the New Testament; as of the Israelites, who, as they often sinned, God had compassion on them, and forgave their iniquities; even though he took vengeance on their inventions, (Ps. 78:38; 99:8) and of David, Manasseh, and others, and of Saul the blasphemer, the persecutor, and injurious person; and of other notorious sinners (Ps 32:5; 1 Tim. 1:13; Luke 7:37, 47). It is in this way God would have his people comforted, when burdened and distressed with the guilt of sin, (Isa. 40:1, 2 Mt 9:2 and they are, at times, favored with a comfortable experience of it, and peace of soul from it (Ps. 85:1-3; Rom. 5:11), they are directed to pray for it, and do pray for it; to which there would be no encouragement if there was no such thing (Ps 32:5; 51:1, 2, 7-9; Dan. 9:19; Matthew 6:12). To add no more, forgiveness of sin is included in complete salvation, and is a part of it, and without which it would not be complete; nay, without it there could be no salvation; forgiveness of sin is a branch of redemption by the blood of Christ, which is explained by it (Eph. 1:7).

Secondly, The phrases by which the pardon of sin is expressed, and which will serve to lead into the nature of it.

1. By lifting it up, and taking it away; “Blessed he whose transgression is forgiven”, J7W (ywvn) is “lifted up”, taken off from him, and carried away (Ps 32:1). Sin lies upon the sinner, and lays him under obligation to punishment, unless it is taken off; and the sins of God’s elect are taken off of them, and laid on Christ, and bore by him, and removed from them, as far as the East is from the West; so that when sought for they shall not be found, God having pardoned those he has reserved for himself: and sin lies upon the conscience of an awakened sinner as a burden too heavy for him to bear; which is taken away by the application of the blood of Christ; and who gives orders to take away the filthy garments of his people, and clothe them with change of raiment, and puts away their sins,

that they shall not die.

2. By the covering of it; “Blessed is he whose sin is covered” (Ps. 32:1). “Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin” (Ps. 85:2). Sin is something impure, nauseous, and abominable, in the sight of God, and provoking to the eyes of his glory, and must be covered out of sight; and this cannot be done by anything of man’s; not by his righteousness, which is but rags, a covering too narrow to be wrapped in, and can no more hide his nakedness than Adam’s fig leaves could hide his; nay, it is no better than a spider’s web; and of which it may be said, “Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works” (Isa.. 59:6), sin is only covered by Christ, who is the antitype of the mercy seat which was a lid or cover to the ark of the same dimensions with it, in which was the law, and prefigured Christ, as the covering of the transgressions of it by his people, from the sight of avenging Justice; and whose blood is the purple covering in the chariot of the covenant of grace, under which his people ride safe to glory; all their iniquities being out of sight; and whose righteousness is unto and upon all that believe; a garment that reaches to the feet, that white raiment with which being clothed, the shame of their nakedness does not appear; yea, being clothed with this robe of righteousness and garments of salvation, are as ornamented as the bridegroom and bride on the wedding day; hereby their sins are covered, so as not to be seen any more, and they appear unblameable and irreproveable in the sight of God.

3. By a non-imputation of it; “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity” (Ps. 32:2), does not reckon it, or place it to his account, or bring any charge against him for it, or punishes for it; but acquits him from it, having imputed it to Christ, placed it to his account, charged him with it, laid the chastisement of it on him, or the punishment of it on him, and received satisfaction from him for it.

4. By a blotting of it out: in such language David prays for the forgiveness of sin; “Blot out my transgressions, and blot out all mine iniquities” (Ps 51:1, 9), and in the same way God declares his will to forgive the sins of his people; “I, even I, am he that blotteth out

thy transgressions” (Isa. 43:25), which language is used, either in allusion to the crossing of debt books, drawing a line over them; or to the blotting out a man’s handwriting to a bond or note, obliging to payment of money; hence the phrase of “blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us” (Col. 2:14). Sins are debts, and these are numerous, and sinners poor, and unable to pay them; wherefore God, for Christ’s sake, freely forgives, and draws the line of Christ’s blood over them, and cancels the obligation to payment: or else to the dissipation of a cloud, by the sun rising or breaking out through it; “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions; and as a cloud thy sins” (Isa. 44:22). Sins may be compared to clouds for their quantity, their number being many; for their quality, being exhaled out of the earth and sea, and mount up to heaven, cause darkness, and intercept light; sin rises out of the earthly minds of men, who mind earthly things, and who are like the troubled sea which cannot rest; and the sins of some, like those of Babylon, reach up to heaven, and call for wrath and vengeance to come down from thence; sin causes the darkness of unregeneracy, and is often the reason of darkness to such who have been made light in the Lord; it intercepts the light of his countenance, and of Christ, the Sun of righteousness: now as a cloud is dispersed and dissipated by the breaking forth of the sun, which, overcoming the cloud, scatters it, so as it is seen no more: in like manner, through the rising of the Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings, an application of pardoning grace is made for his sake; upon which darkness is dispersed, light and joy introduced, a serene heaven of peace and comfort follow: and as a cloud is so dispersed that it is seen no more, so sin is pardoned, in such sort as not to be seen any more, or to be set in the light of God’s countenance unto condemnation; and though as fresh clouds may arise, so new sins may be committed, which yet are removed and cleansed from, by the blood of Christ, and the efficacy of it, for the continual pardon of it, through the repeated application of that blood.

5. By a non-remembrance of it; “And their iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 8:12; Isa. 43:25). God forgives and forgets; having once forgiven them, he thinks of them no more; they are out of sight and out of mind; his thoughts are thoughts of peace, and not

of evil; he remembers not former iniquities, but his tender mercies, which have been ever of old.

6. By making sin, or rather sinners, “white as snow”: so David prays, “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Ps. 51:7). So the Lord promises; “Thy sins shall be as white as snow” (Isa. 1:18). “Her Nazarites are purer than snow” (Lam. 4:7). Being justified by the righteousness of Christ, clothed with that fine linen, clean and white, washed in his blood, and their garments made white therein, and all their sins forgiven for his sake, and so all fair without spot or blemish.

Thirdly, What sins are pardoned; sins both with respect to quality and quantity.

Ist, For quality; they are called “trespasses”. Sin is a walking on forbidden ground, for which a man must suffer, unless forgiven: and “transgressions” of the law of God; a passing over and going beyond the bounds and limits prescribed by it: and “iniquities”, which are contrary to the rules of justice and equity; and sins, errors, aberrations, strayings from the rule of God’s word: when God is said to forgive “iniquity, transgression”, and “sin”, it takes in every kind and sort of sin; every sin is against God, though some are more immediately against him than others; they are contrary to his nature, which is pure and holy; whereas, nothing is more impure and unholy than sin is; and therefore it is abominable to him, and hated by him; and hence sins are called abominations; not that they are so to sinners, for they delight in them; but to God, to whom they are so very disagreeable: there is an enmity in sin, and in every sinner’s heart, to God; every sin is an act of hostility against him, it is a stretching out the hand against God, and a strengthening a man’s self against the Almighty; it strikes at his Deity, and is a contempt of his authority; and yet he forgives it: it being committed against him, an infinite Being, it is objectively infinite, and requires an infinite satisfaction; and without it is punished “ad infinitum”. Sin is defined, “a transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4), a breach, a violation of it; which accuses of it, pronounces guilty for it, and curses and condemns; and is only forgiven by the Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Sins are sometimes represented as “debts”; because,

being committed, they oblige to the debt of punishment, which God remits; the sinner owing more than ten thousand talents, and not able to pay, he frankly forgives all for Christ's sake; of which the year of release from debts under the law was typical: sins, with respect to men, are called diseases, and they are incurable, but by the grace of God and blood of Christ; and pardon of sin is expressed by healing them; "who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps. 103:3; Isa. 33:24; Mai. 4:2).

Secondly, for quantity; all trespasses, sins, and transgressions are forgiven (Col. 2:13; Ps. 103:3). Original sin, the sin of the first man, and the sin of all men in him, by which all are made, constituted, and accounted sinners; which is the source and fountain of all sin, and is the iniquity of us all, which was laid on Christ, and he satisfied for, and is forgiven for his sake; of all sin, it cannot be thought this should be left unforgiven: all actual sins which spring from thence; the works of the flesh, which are many and manifest; some are more secret, some more open, some lesser, others greater, more daring and presumptuous; some sins of commission, others sins of omission; but all are forgiven; see (Isa. 43:22-25 and not only daily failings and infirmities, but all backslidings, revolts, and partial apostasies, (Jer 3:12-14,22 Ho 14:4 and, indeed, every sin, excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost (Matthew 12:31, 32), and why that is unpardonable has been observed, (see Gill on "Matthew 12:31" and on "Matthew 12:32").

Fourthly, The causes of the pardon of sin.

1st The efficient cause is God, and not any creature, angels or men.

I. It is not in the power of men to forgive sin; one man may forgive another an offence, as committed against himself, but not as committed against God; saints ought to forgive one another's offences that arise among them; as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them, (Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13). Ministers can remit sin ministerially and declaratively, but not authoritatively; no man that goes under the name of a priest, or a minister of the word, has a power of absolution, or has authority to absolve men from their sins: all that a true and faithful preacher of the gospel can do is to preach remission of sins

in the name of Christ; and to declare, that whoever repent of their sins, and believe in Christ, shall receive the forgiveness of them; and which declaration of theirs God abides by and confirms; and whose sins, in this sense, they remit, they are remitted (John 20:23). To assume a power to forgive sin, and absolve from it, is the height of antichristianism; it is with respect to this that antichrist is said to sit in the temple of God, “showing himself that he is god”, by taking that to himself which belongs to God only; namely, to forgive sin; this is one of the blasphemies, and a principal one, which his mouth is opened to utter, to dispense with sin, grant indulgences of it, and pardons for it (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 6), the highest angel in heaven cannot forgive, nor procure the forgiveness, of one sin; they could not for those of their own kind that sinned; nor can they for any of the sons of men.

2. There is nothing a man has, or can do, by which he can procure the pardon of sin, either for himself or for others: no man, by his riches, and the multitude of his wealth, can give to God a ransom for himself, or his brother, make atonement and satisfaction for sin, and obtain the pardon of it; “riches profit not in the day of wrath”: when God comes to deal with men for their sins, and pour out his wrath upon them for them, bags of gold and silver will be of no avail. Nor is pardon of sin to be obtained by works of righteousness; could it, it would not be of grace; for grace and works are opposed to each other; men would be saved by works, contrary to the scriptures, since pardon is included in salvation, and that is by grace, and not works: besides the blood of Christ would be shed in vain; for as if righteousness, or justification, came by the law, then Christ died in vain; so if pardon of sin came by the works of the law, and obedience to it; in like manner Christ must have died in vain. Once more, the best works of men are due to God; he has a prior right unto them, and therefore cannot be meritorious of pardon; nor is there any just proportion between them and pardon, and eternal life; one debt cannot be paid by another, or the debt of punishment be remitted by the debt of obedience. Nor is pardon procured by repentance; they are both gifts of grace; and though given to the same persons, the one is not the cause of the other; at least, repentance is not the

cause of remission; for true, evangelical repentance, flows from, and in the exercise of it is influenced by the discovery and application of pardoning grace; (see Ezek. 16:63). Brinish tears will not wash away sin, notwithstanding these, it will remain marked before God; the tears the woman, a sinner, shed, and with which she washed Christ's feet, were not shed to procure the pardon of her sins; but flowed from a sense of pardoning love manifested to her (Luke 7:37, 47). Nor is pardon procured by faith, as the cause of it; faith does not obtain it by any virtue of its own, but receives it as obtained by the blood of Christ (Acts 10:43; 26:18). Nor is it procured by a submission to the ordinance of water baptism; baptism neither takes away original sin, nor actual sin; not as to the guilt thereof, as the case of Simon Magus shows; for though the three thousand are directed to be "baptized in the name of Christ, for the remission of sins"; and Saul was advised by Ananias, to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away his sins" (Acts 2:38; 22:16), yet the meaning is not, as if remission of sins was to be obtained by baptism, or sinners to be cleansed from them by it; but that by means of this ordinance, they might be led to the sufferings, death, and bloodshed of Christ, represented in it; for whose name's sake remission of sins is granted, and whose blood was shed for it, and cleanses from it.

3. God only can forgive sin; it is his sole prerogative; it belongs to him, and to no other (Mark 2:7; Isa. 43:25; Dan. 9:9). And this appears from the nature of sin itself; it is committed against God; and none but he against whom it is committed can forgive it; it is a breach of his righteous law; and none but the Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, can remit it, or free from obligation to punishment for it. Besides, if there was any other that could forgive sin, then there would be one equal to God; whereas, "Who is a God like unto him that pardoneth iniquity?" (Micah 7:18), and it may be observed, that saints in all ages, under the Old and under the New Testament, never made their application to any other but to God for the forgiveness of sin; nor are they ever directed to any other for it (Ps. 51:1; Dan. 9:19; Matthew 6:9,12; Acts 8:22).

4. Yet all the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, have a concern in it. God the Father made an early provision of this blessing of

pardon in his heart, in his purposes, in his council and covenant; and sent his Son to be the propitiation for it, and for the remission of it, through faith in his blood; and does bestow it for his sake; in which he shows, not only his grace, but his justice and faithfulness; for upon the bloodshed of his Son for it, he is “just and faithful to forgive sin”; just, in that the blood of Christ is a sufficient atonement for it; and faithful to his counsels, covenant, and promises, concerning it. Christ, as God, and the Son of God, has power to forgive sin, even as Immanuel, God with us. God in our nature, and when he was here on earth; of which he gave proof, by another act of his divine power, bidding a lame man take up his bed and walk (Matthew 9:2, 6). As God man and Mediator, his blood was shed for the remission of sin; and by it was obtained; as the Advocate of his people he calls for it, and demands and requires the application of it when it is wanted; and as the exalted Savior he gives it, and in his name it is preached, according to his orders, by the ministers of the gospel. The Holy Spirit of God has also a concern in it: he convinces men of sin, and of their need of the pardon of it; he makes it manifest; he takes the blood of Christ, and applies it to the conscience, which speaks peace and pardon; he pronounces the sentence of it in the conscience of a sinner; he is the Holy Spirit of promise, and he seals up the pardon of sin in a promise; and witnesses to the spirits of God’s people that they are pardoned ones.

2dly. The impulsive moving cause of pardon, is not neither man’s misery nor his merits; not any works of righteousness done by him; nor even any of the graces of the Spirit in him; but the sovereign grace and mercy of God, through Christ, (Eph 1:7; Ps. 51:1; Luke 1:77, 78).

3dly, The procuring meritorious cause of it, is the blood of Christ, which was shed for it, has obtained it, and for the sake of which God forgives sin; which virtue it has from the human nature being in union with the divine Person of the Son of God; see (Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:7).

Fifthly, The effects of pardon, that is, when applied; for the effects of it are not sensibly perceived unless applied; which are,

1. Peace of conscience; when sin is charged upon the conscience,

and there is no sight and sense of pardon, there is no peace; but no sooner is there a view of interest in justification, by the righteousness of Christ, and pardon by his blood, but there is peace, which that blood speaks and gives; and which the world cannot take away; a peace that passeth all understanding, and is better experienced than expressed.

2. Cheerfulness of spirit: when sin lies as an heavy burden, without a view of pardon, the mind is depressed; it is filled with gloominess, and melancholy apprehensions of things, if not with despair, as in the case of Cain: a spirit, wounded with a sense of sin, and without a view of pardon, who can bear? But when the Lord says, "Son", or "daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee!" cheerfulness takes place; the spirits, that were sunk, are raised; the head, that was bowed down, is lifted up; that countenance, that looked dejected, smiles; the soul is caused to hear joy and gladness; and the bones that were broken are made to rejoice.

3. Comfort of soul: while a gracious soul, under a sense of sin, apprehends that God is angry with him, he has no comfort; but when he manifests his pardoning grace, then he concludes his anger is turned away, and he is comforted: and this is one of the ways and means in which God would have his people comforted by his ministers; "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; cry unto her, that her iniquity is pardoned" (Isa. 40:1, 2), and when their ministry is accompanied by the Spirit of God, comfort is enjoyed.

4. Access to God with boldness and confidence: a soul, under the weight and pressure of the guilt of sin, moves heavily to the throne of grace; and when it comes there cannot lift up his eyes, but looking downward, and smiting on his breast, says, "God be merciful", or propitious, "to me, a sinner!" but when it has a view of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, it comes with liberty, boldness, and confidence; particularly when it has a clear and comfortable sight of the pardon of sin, through the blood of Jesus, it has boldness to enter into the holiest of all, and come up to the seat of God, and claims interest in him.

5. Attendance on divine worship with pleasure and delight: this flows from a sense of forgiveness of sin, and is one end of it; "there is

forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared”, that is, worshipped; for fear is put for worship, both inward and outward; and especially denotes, serving the Lord with reverence and godly fear. And to have the conscience purged from dead works by the blood of Christ, both puts a soul into the best capacity, and into the most suitable frame to serve the living God, (Ps. 130:4; Heb. 12:28; 9:14).

6. Love to God and Christ is raised, promoted, and increased, by an application of pardon; which, as it is an evidence of the love of God to a sinner, it produces love again; the poor woman in the gospel, the notorious sinner as she had been, loved much, many sins having been forgiven her (Luke 7:47).

7. Evangelical repentance, and the exercise of it, are much influenced by pardon of sin being applied: the tears of repentance, shed by the poor woman before mentioned, flowed from a sense of pardoning grace and mercy; sin never appears more odious than in the glass of forgiving love; shame, confusion of face, and silence, are never more manifest, than when a soul knows that God is pacified towards it for all that it has done; this produces a godly sorrow, a sorrow after a godly sort, for sin committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy; faith first looks to Christ, and beholds pardon through him; and then evangelical mourning and repentance follow upon it (Ezek. 16:63; (Zech. 12:10).

8. Thankfulness of soul for such a mercy; than which there cannot be a greater: if a man is truly impressed with a sense of it, he will call upon his soul, and all within him, to bless and praise the Lord for all his benefits; and particularly for this, “who forgiveth all thine iniquities” (Ps. 103:2, 3). Think with what gratitude and thankfulness a condemned malefactor, and just ready to be executed, receives his pardon from the king! with that, and much more, souls sensible of sin, the demerit of it, and danger by it, receive pardon of all their sins, through the blood of Christ, from the King of kings.

Sixthly, The properties of pardon.

1. It is an act of God’s free grace; it is according to the “riches” of it; that is, the plenty of it, which is abundantly displayed in it; and according to the “multitude of his tender mercies”, mercy being richly shown forth in it, (Eph 1:7 Ps 51:1. It is an act of the Father’s

grace, who has found the ransom; and, upon it, delivered men from going down to the pit of corruption; has set forth Christ to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, for the remission of sins, and does, for his sake, freely forgive them: and it is an act of the Son's grace, in shedding his blood for the remission of it: and it is an act of the Spirit's grace, to lead to the blood of Jesus, which speaks peace and pardon; to that fountain opened to wash in for sin and uncleanness; to take of the things of Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and show interest in them, and make application of them. Pardon of sin is one of the things freely given of God, which the Spirit gives knowledge of; and it is an act of sovereign, unmerited, and distinguishing grace. God bestows it on whom he pleases, according to his sovereign will, and on persons altogether undeserving of it, who have been guilty of all manner of sin, of sins of omission and commission; and yet to such he says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake" (Isa. 43:25), and it is bestowed on some, and not others, who are equally as bad as the others; and on men, and not angels; for to the angels that sinned no sparing pardoning mercy is extended; only to rebellious, sinful men.

2. It is a point of justice; God is just, while he pardons those that repent of their sins, confess them, and believe in Christ; "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9), just on account of the blood of his Son being shed for the remission of sin, and faithful to his counsel, covenant, and promises, to grant it upon that footing; and hence also Christ, as an advocate, calls for it, and demands it in right of justice; that it be applied to his people, for whom he shed his blood; and became the propitiatory sacrifice for their sins; which he powerfully and effectually pleads on their behalf, (1jo 2:1,2).

3. It is a complete act; it is a forgiveness of all the sins and trespasses of God's people, not one is left unforgiven; and it is done "simul" and "semel", together and at once; though the manifestation and application may be made at different times, as wanted by believers; yet in the mind of God it passed at once; even a full as well as free forgiveness of all sins, past, present, and to come. Nor is it

any objection to this, that then sins must be forgiven before they are committed; so they are, in virtue of Christ's suretyship engagements, and the performance of them.

4. It is an act that will never be repealed; it is one of those gifts of grace which are without repentance, and will never be revoked; it is a blessing God has given in covenant, and in and with his Son Jesus Christ, and it is irreversible; it is one of those things which God does, which are for ever; sins once pardoned are always so; when sought for they shall not be found; they are removed from the pardoned sinner as far as the east is from the west; God has cast them behind his back, and will never set them more in the light of his countenance; he has cast them into the depths of the sea, and will never fetch them up again.

5. It is one of the chief articles of faith, and blessings of grace; it stands the first of those benefits, on account of which the Psalmist called upon his soul to bless God for, (Ps 103:2,3 next to eternal election, it is reckoned among the spiritual blessings saints are blessed with in Christ; being a branch of redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:3, 4, 7), and happy is the man that has an interest in it; he has peace and comfort now, and may rejoice in hope of the glory of God hereafter!

Seventhly, answer some questions relating to pardon of sin; which do not so naturally fall under any of the above points.

Q1. Whether any sin is venial or pardonable in its own nature, and does not deserve eternal death? The reason of this question is, the distinction the Papists make between venial and mortal sins; some sins, they say, are in their own nature venial, pardonable, or not deserving of eternal death, only some lesser chastisement, while others are mortal, and deserving of death: but there is no room nor reason for such a distinction; no sin is venial or pardonable in itself but mortal, and deserving of death; though every kind of sin is venial or pardonable, or rather is pardoned through the grace of God and blood of Christ, excepting one. There is a difference in sins, some are greater, others lesser; (see John 19:11) some are breaches of the more weightier matters, or precepts of the law, as those against the first table of it; others of the lesser matters, or precepts of it, as those

against the second table; some are attended with more aggravated circumstances than others, being committed against light and knowledge, and under the enjoyment of great blessings and privileges (Luke 12:47, 48; Matthew 11:22, 24) while others are done ignorantly without knowledge of the Lord's will, and not favored with means that others have; yet every sin is mortal, or deserving of death: death was threatened to sin before it was committed, in case it should: and the first sin brought death into the world with it, and the end of all other sins is death; death is the wages and just demerit of sin; every sin is committed against God, and is objectively infinite, and deserving of infinite and everlasting punishment; it is a breach of his law, and every disobedience to that has a just recompense of reward annexed to it; righteous punishment, or the wrath of God it reveals and works; the breach of the least of the commands of it is liable to divine resentment; and he that offends in one point is guilty of all; the least sin leaves a stain which what is done or used by the sinner cannot remove; and such pollution excludes from the kingdom of God; the least sin, even every sin of thought, word, and deed, will be brought into judgment, and must be accounted for: though all manner of sin is venial, or pardonable, or is pardoned through the grace of God and blood of Christ; God forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin, which include all sorts of sin; sins of the greatest magnitude, and of the deepest dye, are blotted out for Christ's sake; such as are like crimson and scarlet become through him as white as wool, as white as snow; his blood cleanses from sin; every sin is forgiven, but the sin against the Holy Ghost (Matthew 12:31,32)

Q2. Whether any sin will be forgiven in the world to come? The reason of this question is, because it is said of the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it shall "not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come"; which seems to imply, that though that sin shall not then be forgiven, others may: but the meaning of the expression is, that it shall never be forgiven; it is a phrase expressive of endless duration, that that sin shall always remain unpardonable, and does not suppose anything concerning other sins; and therefore the answer to be returned to the question is, that there will be no forgiveness of any sin at all in the other world. As for the sins of

God's people, the remission of them is perfect; all of them have been laid on Christ, and bore by him; and he has finished and made an end of them all; and has made perfect reconciliation and satisfaction for them; and God, Christ's sake, has forgiven all trespasses, and no new sins will be committed by them; the will of God will be done by them with the same perfection as by the angels; there will be no sin in them, and done by them, to be pardoned; there will be indeed a general declaration of pardon, and of their being blessed with that and all other blessings comprehended in Christ's address to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father"; and they will live under a continual sense of pardoning grace, and in admiration of it, and thankfulness for it; but no particular act of pardon will be passed by God, nor applied to them for any particular sin: and as for others, the door will be shut upon them at the day judgment; the door of the ministry of the word; repentance and remission of sins will be no more preached in the name of Christ; after this there will be no repentance of sin in sinners, nor faith to believe in Christ for the remission of sins; these graces will not be bestowed on any in the other world, the door of mercy will be shut, and never opened to men any more.

Q3. Whether the sins of pardoned ones will be made known and exposed to others in the day of judgment! I think not; my reasons are, because none but their good works are taken notice of in Matthew 25:1-46 because it does not seem consistent with the nature of pardon: pardon of sin is expressed by a covering of it; when God forgives sins he covers them, and he will never uncover them, or take off the blood and righteousness of his Son; and if he does not uncover them, who can? neither angels, nor men, nor devils: it is a blotting them as a cloud; and when a cloud is broke to pieces and scattered, it can never be collected together any more; sins are cast behind the hack of God, and into the depths of the sea; and are removed as far as the east is from the west, and can never, though sought for, be found more. Nor does it consist with the state and condition of the pardoned ones that their sins should be exposed; Christ, who has taken so much pains to sanctify and cleanse his church, that he might present her to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, will never suffer their sins ever more to appear; the church

will now descend from heaven as a bride adorned and prepared for her husband, having the glory of God upon her, and clothed with the shining robes of immortality and glory, as well as with the fine linen, clean and white, the righteousness of her Lord; it will now be her open consummate marriage with the Lamb; and it seems quite out of all character, that he should suffer her faults, failings, sins, and transgressions, to be exposed on her wedding day; and which would, one would think, cause shame and blushing, which seems not consistent with that state of happiness.

Q4. Whether it is now the duty of saints to pray for the pardon of sin? Prayer itself is a moral duty, and incumbent on all; and the light of nature will direct persons in distress to pray to God for relief; and when they suppose they have offended. Deity by sin, and he is angry with them, and his judgments are, or they fear will come upon them; it is natural to them to pray unto him to forgive them, and deliver them out of present troubles, or what they fear are coming upon them; as may be observed in Jonah's mariners, who were heathens; and the apostle directed Simon Magus, an unregenerate man, and known by him to be so, to "pray" to God if perhaps "the thought of his heart" might be "forgiven" him (Acts 8:22). But this comes not up to the question, which is, Whether pardoned sinners should pray for the pardon of sin? to which it may be answered, That either these pardoned ones have a comfortable sense and perception of the pardon of their sins, or they have not; if they have, they have no need, at present at least, to pray even for the manifestation of it to them, since they have it already; if they have not a comfortable view of it, which is sometimes the case of pardoned ones, as it was of the church, when she said, "We have transgressed and rebelled, thou hast not pardoned" (Lam. 3:42), they will then see it both their duty, and privilege, and interest, to pray for a comfortable view and fresh manifestation of it: and whereas saints are daily sinning in thought, word, or deed, Christ has directed to make a daily petition of it, that when we pray that God would give us "day by day our daily bread", that he would also "forgive us our sins" (Luke 11:3, 4), and it appears to have been the practice of saints in all ages to pray for the pardon of sin in some sense, and as it seems in the sense suggested; so Moses

prayed when the people of Israel had sinned at Sinai, "Pardon our iniquity and our sin" (Ex. 34:9), so David prayed, "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great" (Ps. 25:11). A strange plea this! a reason, one would think, why it should not be pardoned, than why it should be pardoned; and it was so great in his apprehension, that if he had not a discovery and application of pardon made to him, he could not bear up under it; and as he prayed thus, and with success, he observes it for the encouragement of other saints to do so likewise; "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord", and so he did; "and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin; for this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found" (Ps. 32:5, 6), that is, for the pardon of their sins, and the evidence of it, when they stood in need thereof; so Daniel prayed for himself and others, "O Lord hear, O Lord forgive" (Dan. 9:19), and so New Testament saints are directed by Christ to pray, as has been observed: but then it must be understood in an explained sense, consistent with the nature of pardon, as procured by Christ, and passed by God; it cannot be supposed that saints should pray that Christ's blood may be shed again to procure fresh pardon for them; nor that any fresh act of pardon should be passed in the divine mind, since God has forgiven all trespasses through the blood of his Son, shed once for all; but that they might have fresh manifestations, discoveries, and application of pardon, as they stand in need of them, being continually sinning against God: in no other sense can I understand that pardon of sin can be prayed for by the saints.

There are several other questions that might be put, but they are superseded by what has been already said concerning them; as, Why the sin against the Holy Ghost is said to be unpardonable? the reason of which is given (see on "Of Actual Sins &c"). And whether one man can forgive another? and in what sense? to which the answer is, He may, and in some cases, ought; as it is an injury and offence to himself: and whether sins against God can be forgiven by himself without a satisfaction to his justice? and whether if, upon a satisfaction, how can pardon be free, or of free grace? The answer to these questions may be found in a preceding chapter.

Chapter 8

OF JUSTIFICATION

Pardon of sin, and justification from it, are very closely connected; the one follows upon the other; according to the position of them in some passages of scripture, pardon is first, and justification next; (as in Acts 13:38, 39; 26:18), though they are not, the one, in reality, prior to the other; they are both together in the divine mind, and in the application of them to the conscience of a sinner; indeed, according to the order of causes, justification by the righteousness of Christ, imputed, may be considered as before pardon; since God forgives sin for Christ's sake; that is, for the sake of his righteousness imputed. Now that for the sake of which a thing is, must be before that for which it is, as the cause is before the effect. Some take them to be the same, and that justification lies solely in the remission of sins; and others more rightly make the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and forgiveness of sins, the two parts of justification, distinct ones; while others think they are not two integral parts, really distinct, but only one act, respecting two terms, "a quo et ad quern"; just as by one and the same act darkness is expelled from the air, and light is introduced; so by one and the same act of justification, the sinner is absolved from guilt, and pronounced righteous; hence they suppose such express the whole of justification, who say, it consists in the remission of sins, and those that say it consists in the imputation of righteousness; because when God forgives men their sins, he pronounces them righteous, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them; and when he pronounces them righteous, by that he forgives them their sins; remission of sin supposes the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and the imputation of Christ's righteousness infers the remission of sin. But though these are not to be separated, yet they are to be distinguished; and I should choose to consider them, not as distinct parts of the same thing, but as distinct blessings of grace; for though pardon and justification agree in some things, in others they differ. In some things they agree.

1. In their efficient cause, God: as God only can and does forgive sin, it is his prerogative, it is peculiar to him; so it is God that

justifies the sinner, and he only; “there is one God, who justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith”; that is, that justifies both Jews and Gentiles, who believe in Christ (Mark 2:7; Rom. 3:30).

2. In their moving cause, the free grace of God: pardon of sin is owing to the riches of God’s grace, and the multitude of his tender mercy; and justification is ascribed to the grace of God, and is said to be freely by his grace (Eph 1:7; Ps. 51:1; Titus 3:7; Rom. 3:24).

3. In their procuring cause, the blood of Christ: the blood of Christ was shed to procure the remission of sins, and it is by it; and so likewise justification is by the same blood (Matthew 26:28; Rom. 5:9).

4. In the objects of it: the same persons that are pardoned are justified, and the same that are justified are pardoned; to whom God imputes the righteousness of Christ, to their justification, to them he gives the remission of sin; and to whom he does not impute sin, but forgives it, he imputes righteousness without works (Rom. 4:6-8).

5. In their commencement and completion: pardon and justification commence together, and both are finished at once, “simul” and “semel”; and are not carried on in a gradual and progressive way, as sanctification is (Col. 2:13; Acts 13:39).

6. In the manner of actual enjoying them, which is in a way of receiving, and that by faith; it is by faith men receive the forgiveness of sins; and by it they receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness to justification of life; and, this is what the Scriptures call justification by faith (Acts 26:18; Rom. 5:1, 17, 18). But though they agree in these things, in others they differ.

1. Pardon is of men that are sinners, and who remain such, and may be called so, though pardoned sinners; but justification is a pronouncing persons righteous, as if they had never sinned; it is one thing for a man to be arraigned at the bar as a criminal, and be tried, cast, and condemned, and after that be pardoned; and another thing for a man to be tried by law, and to be found and declared righteous by it, as though he had not transgressed it.

2. Pardon takes away sin from the sinner, but does not give him a righteousness, as justification does; pardon takes away the filthy

garments; but it is justification that clothes with change of raiment, with the robe of Christ's righteousness; these are two distinct things (Zech. 3:4).

3. Pardon frees from punishment, and an obligation to it, as it takes away guilt; "the Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Sam. 12:13), but does not entitle to everlasting life, happiness, and glory: that justification does, and therefore is called "justification of life"; and in consequence of which men are made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life (Rom. 5:18; Titus 3:7). When a king pardons a criminal, he does not by that act entitle him to an estate, much less to his crown and kingdom; but if he will, when he has pardoned him, take him to court, and make him his son and heir, it must be by another distinct act of royal favour.

4. More is required for justification than for pardon; the blood of Christ was, sufficient to procure pardon, and did procure it: but to the justification of a sinner, the holiness of the human nature of Christ, the perfect obedience of his life, and his bloodshed, and sufferings of death, are and must be imputed.

5. The righteousness of Christ, by which men are justified, is the fulfilling of the law; Christ came to fulfil it in the room of his people; and he is the fulfilling end of it to them, for righteousness; which is inherent in him, the author of it: not so pardon; that does not fulfill the law, gives no righteousness; nor does it reside in Christ, as righteousness does (Rom. 10:4; Isa. 45:24).

6. Pardon lies in the non-imputation of sin; justification in the imputation of righteousness: righteousness is imputed, but pardon is not (Rom. 4:6,7).

7. Justification passed on Christ, as the head and representative of his people; but not pardon: Christ having had the sins of his people imputed to him, and having made satisfaction to the justice of God for them, he was acquitted, discharged, and justified; but not pardoned: we may truly say, Christ was justified, and that God justified him, because the Scriptures say so; but not that he was pardoned; such an expression would sound harsh, and be very unwarrantable; see (Isa 50:8, 9; 1 Tim. 3:16).

8. An innocent person, falsely charged, may be acquitted and

justified, when he cannot be said to be pardoned; yea, such who need no pardon, as Adam did not in his state of innocence, and the elect angels in heaven; yet may be said to be justified, that is declared to be just and righteous: so men, in the present state, could they perfectly fulfil the law, as they cannot, would be justified by it; for “the doers of the law are justified; he that does these things shall live by them” (Rom. 2:13; 10:5). Moreover, if justification and pardon are to be considered as cause and effect, as before observed, they must be distinct, and are not to be confounded.

The doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ is a doctrine of great importance; the apostle speaks of it as if the essence of the gospel lay in it; and calls the opposite to it, justification by the works of the law, another gospel; (see Gal. 1:6,7; 3:8), it is a fundamental article of the gospel; some have called it, the “basis” of Christianity; it was the great doctrine of the reformation; what our first reformers made their chief study; and by it cut the sinews of “popery”, the antichristian doctrines of penance and purgatory, of pardons and indulgences, of the merit of good works, works of supererogation, &c. Luther used to call it, “articulus stantis vel cedentis ecclesiae” the article of the church, by which it stands or falls; as this is, the church is; if this obtains, the church is in a well settled and prosperous state; but if this loses ground, and is rejected, it is in a ruinous one: if this is a rule to judge by, it may be easily discerned, in what case the church, and interest of religion, now are. This doctrine is the ground and foundation of all solid joy, peace, and comfort, in this life, and hope of eternal glory hereafter.

I have, in a former part of this work, see “Justification”, treated of justification, as an immanent and eternal act in God; and so it may be said to be from eternity, and before faith; and in what sense it is so, with a removal of objections, has been shown in the place referred to; and therefore shall only now discourse concerning justification, as it terminates in the conscience of a believer; and which the scriptures style justification by faith. I shall,

I. Consider the act of justification, and in what sense the word is to be taken. And,

1. It is not to be understood of instructing men in the scheme

and method of justification, whether in a legal or evangelical way (Acts 15:1; 1 Tim. 1:7; Dan.

12:3).

2. Nor is it to be understood of making men righteous, by infusing righteousness into them; for this is to confound justification and sanctification together, which are two distinct things (1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11), this is sanctification: the righteousness by which men are justified, is imputed to them; but the righteousness of sanctification is inherent in them; that by which men are justified, are the obedience and blood of Christ; but infused holiness is neither of these.

The word “justify” is never used in a physical sense, for producing any real internal change in men; but in a forensic sense, and stands opposed, not to a state of impurity and unholiness, but to a state of condemnation; it is a law term, and used of judicial affairs, transacted in a court of judicature; (see Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Isa. 5:22; Matthew 12:37), where justification stands opposed to condemnation; and this is the sense of the word whenever it is used in the doctrine under consideration; so in Job 9:2, 3 and 25:4 so by David (Ps. 143:2), and in all Paul’s epistles, where the doctrine of justification is treated of, respect is had to courts of judicature, and to a judicial process in them; men are represented as sinners, charged with sin, and pronounced guilty before God, and subject to condemnation and death; when, according to this evangelic doctrine, they are justified by the obedience and blood of Christ, cleared of all charges, acquitted and absolved, and freed from condemnation and death, and condemned to eternal life; (see Rom. 3:9,19; 5:9,16,18,19; 8:1, 33, 34; Gal. 2:16,17; Titus 3:7).

3. Justification is to be understood in this doctrine, not of justification before men, before whom men may appear righteous (Matthew 23:28), but in the sight of God, in whose sight they cannot be justified by the works of the law (Rom. 3:20). Nor of the justification of a man’s cause; or of his vindication from the calumnies of men (1 Sam. 12:5, 6; Ps. 7:8; Job 13:18). Nor of the justification of a man’s faith by his works; thereby proving the genuineness and sincerity of it: so the faith of Abraham, and of Rahab, was justified by their works; or their faith in the promises made unto them, was proved to be

genuine and sincere; the one by offering up his Son; and the other by hiding the spies (Jas. 2:21-25). But of the justification of the persons of men before God; and this is either legal or evangelical: legal, on condition of a person's fulfilling the whole law, or yielding perfect obedience to it; which, in man's present state and circumstances, is impossible (Rom. 2:13; 10:5; 8:3, 4). Evangelical; which is an act of God's grace, accounting and pronouncing a person righteous, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and received by faith; so "by the obedience of one many are made righteous"; and, Christ is of God, "made righteousness to them"; and they are "made the righteousness of God in him"; are reckoned perfectly righteous through him, and so stand justified and accepted in the sight of God (Rom. 5:19; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21), and this is the justification we are treating of; concerning which further observe,

II. The causes of it. The "moving cause" is the grace of God; it was the sovereign grace, favour, and goodwill of God, which put him upon forming the scheme and method of justification; which moved him to appoint and send his Son, to work out, and bring in a righteousness for the justification of his people; and then to accept of it as their justifying righteousness, and to impute it freely to them, without works: the procuring, meritorious, or material cause of justification, is the righteousness of Christ imputed, which will be treated of more largely, when we come to consider the matter of justification; or what that is, for the sake of which, any of the sons of men are justified before God. At present I shall only attend to the efficient cause of justification, who is God; "It is God that justifies" (Rom. 8:33; 3:26, 30; Gal. 3:8), which is marvelous; since,

I. He is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right, and will by no means clear the guilty. Judges among men, by his orders and instructions, and as they would forfeit his displeasure, were not to justify the wicked; and yet he, who is Judge himself in the earth, "justifies the ungodly": but then it should be observed, that he does not justify them without a righteousness, but upon the foot of Christ's righteousness; so that though he justifies the ungodly, yet not as ungodly, but as righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; hence it is, that it is one of the privileges of such persons, that

they can “come to God, the Judge of all”, without fear and dread, appearing before him perfectly righteous in Christ the Mediator (Heb. 12:23, 24).

2. Whose law is the rule by which he judges, and that law broken by men, and yet he justifies them. The law is holy, just, and good, and requires perfect, sinless obedience of men, but is broken by them in ten thousand instances; and he that offends in one point, is guilty of all, and the law pronounces him guilty, and curses and condemns him; and yet God, who judges according to this law, justifies them (Rom. 2:12), but then it should be observed, that Christ has fulfilled the law, in the room and stead of these persons; so that “the righteousness of the law” is said to be “fulfilled in them”; and it is considered as if it was fulfilled by them; and on this account they are legally acquitted, discharged, and justified, according to this law; its demands being fully satisfied by Christ.

3. Sin, the breach of the law of God, is committed against him, and is hateful to him, and yet he justifies from it; every sin, being a transgression of the law, is against God, the Lawgiver, and cannot but be resented by him, and be an abomination to him; he hates it, and the workers of it; well then might Bildad say, “How then can man be justified with God?” (Job 25:4), and yet he is.

4. It is that God that justifies, who will not admit of an imperfect righteousness, in the room of a perfect one: man’s righteousness is imperfect, and cannot be reckoned as a perfect one by him, whose judgment is according to truth; nor will it stand in judgment, nor answer for the sinner at the bar of God, and justify in his sight; and yet God justifies; but then it is through the perfect righteousness of Christ, who is “the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes” (Rom. 10:4).

5. That God, who is the Lawgiver, and is able to save and to destroy, who has power to destroy both body and soul in hell, and would be just in so doing, and into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, yet he justifies. Now this act of justification, as ascribed to God, belongs to all the three Persons in the Godhead; they are all concerned in it, Father, Son, and Spirit.

First, God the Father; who, in many places where he is spoken

of as a justifier, is distinguished from Christ; as where it is said, “It is God that justifieth—who shall condemn? It is Christ that died!” Again, God is said to “be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 8:34; 3:25, 26), the same that justifies the head, justifies the members; now it is the Father that justified Christ, the head of his elect, of whom Christ says, He is near that justifieth me (Isa. 50:8).

1. God the Father contrived the scheme and method of justification; it would have been a puzzling question to angels and men, had not he resolved it; “How should man”, sinful man, “be just with God?” But God, in his infinite wisdom, “found a ransom”, a Ransomer, a Redeemer of his people, to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, and thereby acquit and discharge them, and “deliver them from going down to the pit” of ruin and destruction; “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself”; was, with him, forming the scheme of their peace and reconciliation, of their redemption, justification, and salvation; “not imputing their trespasses”, but the righteousness of his Son unto them (Job 33:24; 2 Cor. 5:19).

2. He sent his Son, in the fullness of time, to execute this scheme; he sent him in human nature, “made under the law”, subject to it, in the room and stead of his people, and to yield a perfect obedience to it; and he sent him “in the likeness of sinful flesh”, with their sins imputed to him; and by making him a sacrifice for sin, through his sufferings and death, he bore the penalty of the law, that so the whole “righteousness of the law”, or all it could demand, both with respect to precept and penalty, “might be fulfilled in” them; they being represented by him (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3,4).

3. A perfect righteousness being wrought out by Christ, agreeable to the requirements of law and justice, by which the law is magnified and made honourable, and justice satisfied; God the Father approves of it, is well pleased with it, and accepts of it as the justifying righteousness of them that believe in Christ.

4. He imputes this righteousness to believers as their own: this is the Father’s act of grace (Rom. 4:6). “Of Him”, that is, of God the Father, “are ye in Christ Jesus”, chosen in him, and united to him; “who, of God” (the Father) “is made unto us righteousness”; which is done by his act of imputation (Rom. 4:6; 1 Co 1:30).

Secondly, God the Son, the second Person, is concerned in the justification of men; “By his knowledge”, says Jehovah the Father, “shall my righteous Servant justify many” (Isa. 53:11).

1. Christ, as a divine Person, as he has power to forgive sin, so to absolve and justify from it; of which we have some instances, even when he was here on earth, in human nature, as to the man sick of the palsy he said, “Thy sins are forgiven thee!” and to the woman taken in adultery, “Neither do I condemn thee!” which was a full acquittal and discharge; and to his apostles he said, “Ye are clean”, every whit clean, free from sin, and fully absolved from it, “Through the word I have spoken to you”; the sentence of justification by his blood and righteousness he had pronounced upon them (Matthew 9:2; John 8:11; 15:3; 13:10).

2. As Mediator, Christ is the author of that righteousness by which sinners are justified; as he was to bring in an everlasting righteousness, he has brought in one; hence he is called, The Lord our Righteousness, the Son of righteousness, and the end of the law for righteousness; and men are made righteous by his obedience, and justified by his blood (Jer. 23:6; Mal. 4:2; Rom. 10:4; 5:9,19)

3. As the head and representative of his people, they are justified in him; as Adam’s natural posterity, sinning in him, were condemned in him, judgment came upon them all unto condemnation: so all Christ’s spiritual seed and offspring are justified in him; for “in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory”; as he was “delivered” into the hands of justice and death “for their offences”, to make satisfaction for them, so he was “raised again for their justification”; and when he was raised, he was justified, acquitted, and discharged himself from all the sins of his people, imputed to him, having satisfied for them; and then they were justified in him (Isa. 45:25; Rom. 4:25; 1 Tim. 3:16).

4. As Christ has wrought out a righteousness for his people, so he actually puts it upon them, clothes them with it: says the church, “He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness”: he is that Angel of the Lord before whom Joshua was brought, and accused Satan; and to whom he himself said, “I will clothe with change of raiment” (Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:4).

5. As it is to faith the righteousness of Christ is revealed, and by faith it is received, hence believers are said to be justified by faith; so this faith, as well as righteousness, is of Christ; as he is the object of it, “Ye believe in God, believe also in me”; so he is the “author” and “finisher” of it (John 14:1; Heb. 12:2).

Thirdly, The Holy Spirit of God, the third Person, has also a concern in the justification of sinners.

1. He convinces men of righteousness, of their want of righteousness; of the weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency of their own righteousness, that they have none that can be called a righteousness; and that unless they have a better righteousness than that, they will never enter into the kingdom of heaven (John 16:8).

2. He brings near the righteousness of Christ; not only externally, in the ministry of the word; but internally, by the illumination of his grace; this is one of the things of Christ he takes and shows to souls enlightened by him; he shows them the fulness, glory, and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ, how perfect it is, how adequate to all the demands of law and justice, and how suitable to them; to cover their naked souls, to secure them from condemnation and death, to justify them before God, and render them acceptable in his sight, and entitle them to eternal life.

3. He works faith in convinced and enlightened persons, to look at the righteousness of Christ, and take a view of its glories and excellencies; to approve of it, desire it, and to lay hold on it, and receive it as their justifying righteousness. Such a faith is of the operation of God, of the Spirit of God; it is what he works in the saints, and enables them to exercise it; hence he is called, “the Spirit of faith” (Col. 2:13; 2 Cor. 4:13).

4. He bears witness to their spirits, that they are interested in the righteousness of Christ, and are justified by it; and he pronounces the sentence of justification in their consciences, or declares them justified, in the name of Christ, and on account of his righteousness; and which is the meaning of their being justified “in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

III. The objects of justification; and they are the elect; “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth!”

that is, the elect (Rom. 8:33), for who else can be meant?

1. Elect men, and not elect angels; for though there are elect angels, and these are holy, just, and righteous; and so may be declared to be what they are, just and righteous, and in that sense justified; yet, since they never laboured under the suspicion of a crime, nor were ever chargeable with any, they cannot, in a strict sense, be said to be justified. But elect men, who are sinners in Adam, as chosen in Christ their Head, are reckoned righteous; for justification is a branch of election, in which the elect are reckoned as righteous, through the righteousness of Christ: and these being the objects of justification, show the eternity of that act, since election was from the beginning, and before the foundation, of the world; and the specialty of it, since the elect are a special and peculiar people; and the security of it, for it is certain, being closely connected with predestination, whom God predestinates, he calls and justifies; and its being a security from wrath and condemnation; for whom he justifies he glorifies, (Rom. 8:30).

2. Redeemed ones are the objects of justification; all that are chosen are redeemed; and all that are redeemed are justified; justification proceeds upon redemption; "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24), by which they are redeemed from all their iniquities, and from all the curses of the law due unto them, and so are acquitted and discharged.

3. Pardoned ones; for all that are chosen and redeemed are pardoned, and those are justified: the chosen are pardoned; for the Lord says, "I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jer. 50:20), that is, whom he has reserved for himself by the act of election: and the redeemed are pardoned; for forgiveness of sin is a branch of redemption; "In whom we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sin" (Eph 1:7), and whose sins are forgiven, they are justified, (Rom. 4:6, 7).

4. Hence it appears, that the objects of justification are not all men; for all men are not chosen; they are only a remnant, according to the election of grace: nor are all men redeemed; for those that are redeemed, are redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: nor are all pardoned; for there

are some whose sins go beforehand to judgment, and are never forgiven: nor do all men believe; faith is peculiar to God's elect: nor are all men saved from wrath, as they would be, if justified by the blood of Christ; some will go into everlasting punishment, when the righteous shall go into everlasting life: and so all are not justified; though there is an all that are justified, even all the seed and offspring of Christ, the seed of Israel on whom the gift of righteousness comes to justification of life (Isa. 45:25; Rom. 5:18).

5. Yet they are many (Isa. 53:11; Rom. 5:19), for whom Christ gave his life a ransom; and whose blood was shed for the remission of their sins; those are said to be many (Matthew 20:28; 26:28).

6. The objects of justification are described as sinners, and ungodly: "sinners" (Gal. 2:17), "ungodly" (Rom. 4:5). So they are, in their unregenerate state: but when converted, they are described as believers in Christ; for the righteousness of Christ is "unto all, and upon all them that believe"; it is applied unto them, and put upon them; and they have a comfortable sense and perception of their justification by it; they "believe in Jesus Christ, that they might be justified by the faith of Christ"; by Christ, the object of faith, and through believing in him, have a comfortable view of their justification before God, and acceptance with him; hence it is said, that "by him all that believe are justified", openly and manifestatively, and have the testimony and comfort of it within themselves; and these may be said to be "justified by faith"; by Christ, and his righteousness received by faith, (Rom. 5:1 3:22 Gal. 2:16 Acts 13:39) and such are not nominal believers, who only have a notional, historical faith, or who only profess to believe, as Simon Magus did; but who, "with the heart, believe unto righteousness"; who truly and heartily believe in the righteousness of Christ for their justification before God; and such shall never come into condemnation, (Rom. 10:10 John 5:24).

IV. The charges, or sins, such are justified from. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth", (Rom. 8:33) from all charges, all that may be truly brought against them, all criminal charges they are chargeable with.

1. They are chargeable with original sin, the sin of the first man; they were, seminally, in his loins, when he eat the forbidden fruit; as

Levi was in the loins of Abraham, when he paid tithes to Melchizedek: they were federally in him, as their covenant head and representative, and sinning in him, they became chargeable therewith; and judgment so far proceeded against them, as to bring them under the sentence of condemnation and death; but God justifies and acquits them from that offence, through the gift of his Son's righteousness, which comes unto them to justification of life; and he frees them from the charge of that disobedience by which they were made sinners, through the imputation of Christ's obedience to them,

(Rom. 5:12,18,19)

2. They are chargeable with impurity of nature, and a want of original righteousness; which Adam, by sinning, lost, and all his posterity are without it; they are conceived in sin, and bring an impure nature into the world with them; which is the case of all, even of God's elect. The law requires purity and holiness of nature, and charges with the want of it; but God justifies from this charge, through the imputation of the holiness of Christ; human nature to them, which is a branch of their justification; and is thought, by some divines, to be "the law of the Spirit, of life" in him, which "frees from the law of sin and death"; and who is made, to his people, "sanctification" and righteousness; and was typified by the high priest, having an inscription on his forehead, "Holiness to the Lord" (Rom. 8:21; Cor. 1:30; Ex. 28:36).

3. They are chargeable with actual sins, before conversion, and those many, and some very heinous; and yet God justifies from them all; as Saul was chargeable with blasphemy, persecution, and doing injury to others; but obtained pardoning mercy, and a justifying righteousness: the Corinthians were guilty of some of the blackest crimes, and most enormous sins, yet were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God: the apostles, and others, before conversion, were disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; and yet were justified, by the grace of God, and made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life (1 Tim. 1:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Titus 3:3, 7).

4. They are chargeable with a multitude of sins, after conversion; with many revoltings, and sometimes with great backslidings; their

failings and infirmities, errors and mistakes, are innumerable; yet all are forgiven, and they are cleansed and justified from them (Jas. 3:2; Ps. 19:12; Hosea 14:4).

5. They are justified from all their sins, of whatsoever kind, that they can be charged with; for they that believe in Christ, “are justified from all things”, from all sins, from all criminal charges; God forgives all their trespasses, for Christ’s sake, and his blood cleanses from all sin (Acts 13:39; Col. 2:13; 1 John 1:7).

6. They are justified by the righteousness of Christ, “from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses”; for there were some sins which the law made no provision of sacrifice for, as adultery and murder; such therefore that despised Moses’ law, by breaking it in such instances, “died without mercy”; but God justifies from all such sins, as well as others, through the righteousness of Christ (Acts 13:39; Heb. 10:28; 9:15, 26).

7. God justifies his elect from all charges brought against them, from what quarter soever, and whether true or false; do they bring charges against themselves, as they often do? conscience, which is as a thousand witnesses, accuses and condemns them; but though their hearts and consciences condemn them, God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things; what provisions he has made for them in covenant, what a righteousness his Son has wrought out for their justification; and though as on one hand, if a good man knows nothing by himself, yet he is not hereby justified; so on the other, though he knows much by himself and against himself, yet God clears him from all. Do saints bring chargers one against another, sore crimes rightly, and sometimes wrongly, whether privately or publicly: and do not forgive one another, as they should do, since God, for Christ’s sake, forgives them? yet God forgives all, and clears from all charges, true or false. Does the world bring charges against them, as they frequently do, even speak all manner of evil of them falsely, for Christ’s sake, as Tertullius the orator, against the apostle Paul? yet every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them God will condemn; for their “righteousness is of me, saith the Lord”; plainly suggesting, that he would justify and acquit them from all (Isa. 54:17). Does Satan go about the earth to pick up charges against

the people of God, and then accuse them to him, as he did Job, whence he is called, “the accuser of the brethren?” Jehovah repels his charges, and rebukes him for them; an instance of this we have in the vision of Zechariah (Zech. 3:1-4). In a word, whatever charges the law of God brings against the elect, which is broken by them, and for which it accuses, pronounces guilty, curses and condemns, and whatever charges the justice of God can produce against them, the mouth of the one, and of the other, is stopped by the righteousness of Christ; by which the one is honoured and magnified; and the other is satisfied and well pleased; and so a full justification from all charges takes place, and God is Just while he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

5. The matter and form of justification, the righteousness of Christ imputed: the matter of justification, or that for the sake of which a sinner is justified, is the righteousness of Christ; the form and manner in which it is made over to such an one, and becomes his, is by imputation.

First, The matter of justification, the righteousness of Christ; and everything else must be removed from it, and denied of it. As,

1. First, a man’s own righteousness, or his obedience to the law; this is expressly denied to be that by which a sinner can be justified; “By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight”, in the sight of God; that is, by works done in obedience to the law; and which is meant, not of the ceremonial, but the moral law; that law by which is the knowledge of sin, and which pronounces a man guilty of it before God, and stops his mouth, as the context shows; and is opposed to grace, which the ceremonial law is not, being of grace, given to relieve, under a sense of sin, by pointing to the Saviour, and his propitiatory sacrifice; and hence this conclusion is drawn, “Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith”; by Christ and his righteousness, the object of faith; “without the works of the law”; being joined to Christ, and his righteousness, or considered as any part of a justifying righteousness, (Rom. 3:20,28). And to the same purpose are the words of the apostle, in Galatians 2:16. The reasons why a man’s own righteousness cannot be the matter of his justification before God, are,

1. Because it is imperfect, and the law will not admit of an imperfect righteousness for justification; it requires perfect, sinless obedience; and not anything short of that will it allow to be a righteousness; “It shall be our righteousness”, says Moses, “if we observe to do all these commandments, before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us” (Deut. 6:25), so that if there is any failure, either in the matter or manner of obedience, it is no righteousness; and such obedience and righteousness, men, since the fall, were never capable of; the people of Israel, in general, followed after the law of righteousness; but did not attain to it, seeking it not by faith in Christ, in whom it is only found; but, as it were, by the works of the law, in which there is a deficiency, and so no righteousness: And those among them who made the largest pretensions to righteousness, fell short of it, as the Scribes and Pharisees; insomuch, that if a man’s righteousness does not exceed theirs, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; nay, even the works of the truly just and good, are not perfect; “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not” (Eccl. 7:20), hence good men, sensible of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, decline and deprecate entering into judgment with God upon that foot, acknowledging the impurity and imperfection of their obedience; on account of which, they know they could not be just with God (Job 9:2, 3, 20, 32; Ps. 143:2; Isa. 64:6).

2. If justification was by the works of men, it could not be by grace; for grace and works are opposed, and cannot consist together in the business of justification; for if it is of grace, then not of works; but justification is by grace, and therefore not by works; “Being justified freely by his grace” (Rom. 3:24), not only by grace, but freely by it; or by grace that is altogether free; and, indeed, as Austin says, it would not be grace if it was not so, or was any ways clogged with the works of men.

3. If justification was by man’s obedience, it would not be by a righteousness without works, and that imputed, as it is; if it is by a man’s own righteousness, then not by a righteousness without works, for that consists entirely of works; and if a man’s own, then not imputed; whereas, the blessedness of justification, lies in the imputation of a righteousness without works, (Rom. 4:6).

4. If justification could be by men's obedience to the law, then there would have been no need of the righteousness of Christ, nor of his coming into the world to work out one; it would have been an unnecessary thing for God to send his Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, by him, if we could have fulfilled it ourselves; and not only his life, and the obedience of it, would have been useless, but his death also; for, as the apostle argues, "If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

5. If justification was by the works of men, boasting would be encouraged; whereas, God's design in the whole scheme of salvation, and so in this branch of it, is to prevent it, lest any man should boast; "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith"; that is, not by the doctrine of justification, by the works of men, that would establish boasting; but by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, which leaves no room for it, (Rom. 3:27).

Secondly, Nor is man's obedience to the gospel, as to a new and milder law, the matter of his justification before God. It was a notion, that some years ago obtained, that a relaxation of the law, and the severity of it, has been obtained by Christ; and a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms, has been introduced by him, which is the gospel; the terms of which are, faith, repentance, and new obedience; and though these are imperfect, yet being sincere, they are accepted of by God, in the room of a perfect righteousness. But every article of this scheme is wrong; for,

1. The law is not relaxed, nor any of its severity abated; there is no alteration made in it; neither with respect to its precepts, nor its penalty; it requires the same holy, just, and good things, it ever did; Christ came not to destroy it, but to fulfil it: nor is the sanction of it removed; though it is not made for, or does not lie against, a righteous man; yet it is made for, and lies against, the sinner and transgressor; and as it has the same commanding, so the same condemning power, to them that are under it; it accuses, pronounces guilty, condemns, and curses, even such who continue not in all things to observe it.

2. Nor is the gospel a new law; there is nothing in it that looks

like a law; it has no commands in it, but all promises; it is a pure declaration of grace and salvation by Christ; therefore called, the gospel of the grace of God, and the gospel of our salvation.

3. Nor are faith, repentance, and new obedience, the terms of it, and required by it, as conditions of men's acceptance with God; faith and repentance, as doctrines, are gospel doctrines, and parts of the gospel ministry; and as graces, are not terms and conditions required in it, to be performed by men of themselves; they are blessings of grace, declared in it, and are gifts of grace bestowed on men; faith is the gift of God, and repentance is a grant from him; and both they, and new and spiritual obedience, are provided for in the covenant of grace (Ezek. 36:26, 27).

4. If these were terms and conditions, required of men, in the gospel, to be performed by them, in order to their acceptance with God, the gospel would not be a remedial law; nor these milder terms than those of the old law; for it was easier for Adam, in a state of innocence, to have kept the whole law, than it is for man, in his fallen state, to repent and believe in Christ, and perform new and spiritual obedience of himself; till God takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, and gives grace, as well as time and space, to repent, men never will nor can repent of their sins: and faith is not of a man's self; no man can come to Christ, that is, believe in him, unless it be given to him, and the Father draws him; and without Christ, his Spirit and grace, a man cannot do any good thing.

5. Nor is it true, that God will accept of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one: nor can any thing more highly reflect upon the justice and truth of God, who is the Judge of all the earth, and will do right, and whose judgment is according to truth, and can never account that a righteousness which is not one.

5a3. Thirdly, nor is a profession of religion, even of the best religion, the Christian religion, the matter of justification before God; men may have a form of godliness without the power of it; they may submit to the ordinances of Christ, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and attend every duty of religion, and yet be far from righteousness: and even if a profession of religion was taken up upon right principles, on a good foundation, and held and maintained in

an honorable manner, and even though a man may be ever so sincere in it, it is not the matter of his justification. For,

4thly, sincerity itself, in any religion, even in the best religion, is not a justifying righteousness. There may be sincerity in a bad religion, as well as in a good one; a man may be sincerely wrong, as well as sincerely right; may be a sincere Pagan, a sincere Papist, and a sincere Mohammedan, as well as a sincere Christian; yea, a man may be a sincere blasphemer of Christ, and a sincere persecutor of his followers, as the apostle Paul was, before conversion, and as the persecutors of Christ's disciples (Acts 26:9; John 16:2), and taking sincerity in the best sense, as a grace of the Spirit of God, which accompanies all other graces, and denominates faith unfeigned, hope without hypocrisy, and love without dissimulation; it belongs to sanctification, and not justification; and is not the whole, nor any part of justifying righteousness.

Fifthly, nor faith, the "to credere", or act of believing; this is, by some, said to be imputed for righteousness; but is not so; for,

1. Faith, as a man's act, is his own; and is called "his" faith, "thy" faith, and "my" faith (Hab. 2:5; Matthew 9:22; 15:28; Jas. 2:18), whereas, the righteousness by which a man is justified, is not his own, but another's, and therefore not faith.

2. Faith is imperfect; it is so in the greatest believers; the disciples of Christ saw need to pray, Lord, "increase our faith!" whereas, a righteousness to justify must be perfect; nothing else can be accounted a righteousness.

3. Faith is not everlasting; as to its use; is only for the present life; it will be changed into vision: but the righteousness by which sinners are justified before God, and which was brought in by Christ for that purpose, is "everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24).

4. Faith and righteousness are manifestly distinguished; "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith"; and therefore faith cannot be that righteousness. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness"; and therefore righteousness must be a distinct thing from faith; which "righteousness is unto all, and upon all them that believe"; and therefore must be different from that faith with which they believe, (Rom. 1:17; 10:10; 3:22).

5. Something else, and not faith, is said to be that by which men are made righteous, and justified; as “the obedience of one”, Jesus Christ, by which “many are made righteous”; and the blood of Christ; “being justified by his blood” (Rom. 5:9, 19). Now faith is neither the one nor the other; and though men are said to be “justified by faith”, yet not as an act of men; for then they would be justified by works, contrary to express scripture; nor by it as a grace of the Spirit in men; for this would confound justification and sanctification together; but by the object of it, Christ, and his righteousness, apprehended, received, and embraced by faith. And though believers are said to be justified by faith, yet faith is never said to justify them.

6. The passages produced to establish this notion, that faith is a man’s righteousness, are insufficient; “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” (Rom. 4:3). And again (Rom. 4:5), “His faith is counted for righteousness”. And in (Rom. 4:9), “We say, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness”. Now this can not be understood of the act of Abraham’s faith; but of the object of it, or that which he believed in, the righteousness of Christ, which God imputes, without works (Rom. 4:6), and that this must be the sense is clear, from this one single consideration, that the same “it” which was imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to all those who believe in God, who raised up Christ from the dead (Rom. 4:22-24). Now supposing Abraham’s faith was imputed to him for a justifying righteousness; it cannot reasonably be thought that it should be imputed also for righteousness to all that believe in all succeeding ages.

Sixthly, Nor is the whole of sanctification the matter of justification; these two are distinct things, and not to be confounded; the one is a work of grace within men, the other an act of God’s grace towards and upon men; the one is imperfect, the other perfect; the one is carried on gradually, the other done at once. But the sole matter of justification, or that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God, is the righteousness of Christ; and which is,

1. Not his essential righteousness, as God; the righteousness by which men are justified is the righteousness of God, which was wrought out by Christ, who is God as well as man; but it is

not that righteousness which is essential to him as God; he that is their righteousness is Jehovah, but the righteousness by which he is Jehovah, or which belongs to him as such, is not their righteousness, as Osiander dreamed; for this would be to deify them.

2. Nor his righteousness, integrity, and fidelity, which he exercised in the discharge of his mediatorial office; that was personal and respected himself, and not relative to others; he was faithful to him that appointed him to that office, and he did his work in so upright a manner, that he obtained the character of God's "righteous servant" (Isa. 11:5; 53:11), but though it is a righteousness he wrought out as mediator, which is imputed for justification, yet it is not his mediatorial righteousness, or the righteousness of his office, or that by which he showed the discharge of it.

3. Nor does it consist of all the actions and works he did here on earth, nor of what he is doing in heaven; it wholly consists of those he wrought in his state of humiliation here on earth, yet not all of these; not his extraordinary and miraculous works, these were proofs of his Deity, and of his Messiahship; they were done and recorded to engage men to believe in him, and in his righteousness; but were no ingredients, as one observes, in that righteousness on which they were to believe. Nor is his work in heaven, appearing for his people there, interceding for them, and preparing mansions of glory for them, any part of the righteousness wrought out for them, and imputed to them. But,

4. What he did and suffered in their nature on earth, and in their room and stead, and as their substitute and representative, commonly called his active and passive obedience; to which may be added the purity and holiness of his nature, and which altogether made up the (*vouoi*), "the righteousness of the law", which was "fulfilled" by him, as their head and representative (Rom. 8:4), for whatever the law required is necessary to a sinner's justification before God; and that requires of sinners more than it did of man in innocence. Man was created with a pure and holy nature, conformable to the pure and holy law of God; and it was incumbent on him to continue so, and to yield in it perfect and sinless obedience; and in failure thereof he was threatened with death; and now having sinned, whereby his nature

is vitiated and corrupted, and his obedience become faulty and imperfect, suffering the penalty of the law is required; and all this is requisite to the justification of a sinner, purity of nature, perfection of obedience, and sufferings of death; all which meet in Christ, the representative of his people, in whom they are justified.

(1). Holiness of nature: some consider this only as a qualification for his office, and the due performance of it in human nature; whereby he was capable of yielding sinless obedience to the law, and was qualified as an high priest to offer himself a spotless sacrifice, and to be a proper advocate for sinners, being Jesus Christ the righteous; but this not only fitted him for his work, but made him suitable to us, "Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless"; the law required an holy nature in conformity to it; it is wanting in us, it is found in Christ, "who is of God made to us sanctification"; see more of this under the "fourth head".

(2). The obedience of Christ's life, commonly called his active obedience, which was sinless and perfect; his whole life was in perfect conformity to the law, and was a continued series of holiness and obedience; the holiness of his nature appeared in all his actions, throughout his whole state of humiliation, from his birth to his death; in all which he was the representative of his people; what he did, he did in their room and stead, and therefore was reckoned as if done by them, and is imputed to them as their righteousness: there are some divines who exclude the active obedience of Christ from being any part of the righteousness by which men are justified; they allow it is a condition requisite in him as mediator, qualifying him for his office; but deny that it is the matter of justification, or that it is imputed and reckoned for righteousness to men. They suppose that Christ was obliged to this obedience for himself as a creature, and that it is unnecessary to his people, because his sufferings and death are sufficient for their justification. But,

1. Though the human nature of Christ being a creature, and so considered, was subject to a law and obliged to obedience; yet it was not obliged to a course of obedience in such a low, mean, and suffering state, being entitled to glory and happiness from the moment of its union to the Son of God; this was voluntary: besides,

the human nature being taken into personal union with the Son of God, the person of Christ, who was not subject to the law, but was above it, and Lord of it; it was an act of his will to submit to it, and a wonderful instance of his condescension it was; moreover, as Christ being made of a woman, and was made under the law, he was made both for the sake of his people; he became man for their sake, “to us or for us a child is born” (Isa. 9:6), and for their sake he became subject to the law, that he might yield obedience to it in their room and stead, and that he might redeem them from the curse of it; and this was the kind and gracious design of his divine Father in sending him in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might both obey and suffer for them, that so the whole righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3, 4).

2. Without the active obedience of Christ the law would not be satisfied, the language of which is “Do and live”; and unless its precepts are obeyed, as well as its penalty endured, it cannot be satisfied; and unless it is satisfied, there can be no justification by it; Christ, as a surety, in the room and stead of his people, must both obey the precepts of the law and bear its penalty; his submitting to the one, without conforming to the other, is not sufficient; one debt is not paid by another; his paying off the debt of punishment did not exempt from obedience, as the paying off the debt of obedience did not exempt from punishment: Christ did not satisfy the whole law by either of them separately, but by both conjunctly [joined together]; by his sufferings and death he satisfied the threatenings, the sanction of the law, but not the precepts of it thereby; and by his active obedience he satisfied the preceptive part of the law, but not the penal part; but by both he satisfied the whole of the law and made it honorable.

3. It is by a righteousness that men are justified, and that is the righteousness of Christ; now righteousness, strictly speaking lies in doing, in actual obedience to the commands of the law, “This shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do”, &c. (Deut. 6:25). Christ’s righteousness lay in doing, not in suffering; “all righteousness, as one says, is either an habit or an act; but sufferings are neither, and therefore not righteousness; no man is righteous because he is

punished; if so, the devils and damned in hell would be righteous in proportion to their punishment; the more severe their punishment, and the more grievous their torments, the greater their righteousness must be; if there is any righteousness in punishment, it must be in the punisher, and not in the punished.”

If therefore men are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, it must be by his active obedience, and not merely by his sufferings and death; because these, though they free from death, yet, strictly speaking, do not make men righteous.

4. It is expressly said, that “by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19), which cannot be meant of the sufferings and death of Christ; because, properly speaking, they are not his obedience, but the effect of it; besides, the antithesis in the text determines the sense of the words; for if by one man’s actual disobedience, which was the case, many were made sinners, so by the rule of opposition, by one man’s actual obedience, which is Christ’s, many are made righteous, or justified.

5. The reward of life is not promised to suffering, but to doing; the law says, “Do this and live”; it promises life, not to him that suffers the penalty, but to him that obeys the precept; “there never was a law, as an excellent divine observes, even among men, either promising or declaring a reward due to the criminal, because he had undergone the punishment of his crimes.”

Christ’s sufferings and death being satisfactory to the comminatory [a formal denunciation] or threatening part of the law, are reckoned to us for justification, that so we may be freed and discharged from the curse of it, and from hell and wrath to come; but as they do not constitute us righteous, they do not entitle us to eternal life; but the active obedience or righteousness of Christ being imputed to us, is “unto justification of life”, or is what gives the title to eternal life.

(3). Nevertheless the sufferings and death of Christ, or what is commonly called his passive obedience, are requisite to our justification before God. Passive obedience is a phrase that may be objected to as not accurate, being a seeming contradiction in terms; suffering and obedience convey different ideas, and belong

to different classes; suffering belongs to the predicament or class of passion, obedience to that of action; yet as Christ's sufferings flow from his obedience, and were the effect of his submission to his Father's will, with respect to which he said, "Not my will but thine be done"; and as he was obedient throughout his life, in all the actions and in all the sufferings of it, even to the moment of his death; and was also obedient in death, laying down his life at the command received from his Father; "For though a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered"; and was even active in his sufferings; he laid down his life of himself, he poured out his soul unto death, and gave himself an offering, and a sacrifice for sin; considering these things, the phrase, passive obedience, may be admitted of; especially as it is well known what is meant by it, the voluntary sufferings and death of Christ, which are most certainly ingredients in the justification of a sinner.

It may be asked, if Christ was the representative of his people in his active obedience, which constitutes them just or righteous, and is their justification of life, or what entitles to eternal life, what need was there of his sufferings and death? to which it may be answered, that it was necessary that Christ, as the surety and representative of his people, should satisfy the law in everything it could require of them, both as creatures, and as sinful creatures. As creatures, the law could require of them purity of nature, and perfect obedience to it, which were in their first parents, but were lost by them, and are wanting in them; as sinful creatures, it could require of them to endure the penalty of it. Christ now as the surety of his people, represented them as creatures, in the purity of his nature and in the perfection of his life, or in his active obedience; and presented that to the law for them which it could require of them as creatures: and as it is certain he represented them in his sufferings and death, hence he is said to die for them, that is, in their room and stead, and they to be crucified and buried with him; in these he represented them as sinful creatures, and bore the penalty or curse of the law; and in both obediences he satisfied the whole of it; and as by the one they are freed from death the sanction of the law, so by the other they are entitled to life, and by both Christ is the fulfilling end of the law

for righteousness unto them. For that the sufferings and death of Christ, as well as his active obedience, are requisite to the complete justification of a sinner, appears,

1. That without these the law would not be satisfied, and all its demands answered; and unless it is satisfied; there can be no justification by it; and it cannot be satisfied unless its penalty is endured; for,

2. The law, in case of disobedience to it, threatened with death, and death is the just wages and due demerit of sin; and therefore this must be endured, either by the sinner or a surety for him, or else he cannot be discharged by the law.

3. The justification of a sinner is expressly ascribed to the blood of Christ, which is put for the whole of his sufferings and death, (Rom. 5:9).

4. Justification proceeds upon redemption, “being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”, (Rom. 3:24) now redemption is by the blood of Christ, and through his sufferings and death (Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 3:18,19; Rev. 5:9).

5. It is upon the foot of Christ’s satisfaction that justification takes place, and satisfaction is made by Christ’s doing and suffering all the law requires; and so as by his obedience, likewise by his blood and death, to which it is more frequently ascribed, peace is made by his blood, reconciliation by his death, atonement and expiation by his sacrifice, which is of a sweet smelling savor to God (Col. 1:20; Rom. 5:10; Heb. 9:26; Eph. 5:2).

5. The complete justification of a sinner, does not seem to be finished by Christ until his resurrection, after his obedience and sufferings of death; for he “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:25). In short, the righteousness by which we are justified, as Dr. Ames says, is not to be sought for in different operations of Christ, but arises from his whole obedience, both active and passive; which is both satisfactory and meritorious, and frees from condemnation and death, and adjudges and entitles to eternal life; even as one and the same disobedience of Adam, stripped us of original righteousness, and rendered us obnoxious to condemnation. So much for the matter of justification.

Secondly, The form of it, is imputation; or the manner in which the righteousness of Christ is made over to a sinner, and it becomes his, is by imputing it to him; “Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works” (Rom. 4:6). The words used both in Hebrew and Greek, *ma* and *Axyi£ou. ai, eA,A,oyeco, &c.* signify, to reckon, repute, estimate, attribute, and place something to the account of another: as when the apostle said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus, “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account”, *TOOHO euoi EAAoyBi,* let it be reckoned, or imputed to me. So when God is said to impute the righteousness of Christ to any, the sense is, that he reckons it as theirs, being wrought out for them, and accounts them righteous by it, as though they had performed it in their own persons: and that it is by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to his people, that they are justified, is clear, when it is observed,

1. That those whom God justifies, are, in themselves, ungodly; for God “justifieth the ungodly” (Rom. 4:5), if ungodly, then without a righteousness; and if without a righteousness, then, if they are justified, it must be by a righteousness imputed to them, or placed to their account; which can be no other than the righteousness of Christ.

2. They that are justified, are justified either by an inherent, or by an imputed righteousness: not by an inherent one, for that is imperfect, and so not justifying; and if not by an inherent righteousness, then it must be by one imputed to them, for there remains no other.

3. The righteousness by which any are justified, is the righteousness of another, and not their own, even the righteousness of Christ; “Not having on mine own righteousness”, says the apostle (Phil. 3:9). Now the righteousness of another, cannot be made a man’s, or he is justified by it, any other way than by an imputation of it to him.

4. The same way that Adam’s sin, became the sin of his posterity, or they were made sinners by it, the same way Christ’s righteousness becomes his people’s, or they are made righteous by it. Now the former is by imputation; and so the latter; “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners”; that is, by the imputation of it to them; “so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”; that is,

by placing it to their account, (Rom. 5:19).

5. The same way that the sins of Christ's people became his, his righteousness becomes theirs. Now their sins became Christ's by imputation only; the Father hid them on him, or made them to meet upon him, imputed them to him, placed them to his account; and he took them upon him, and looked upon himself as answerable to justice for them; and so, in the same way, his righteousness is made over to, and put upon his people; "For he who knew no sin, was made sin for us", by imputation, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"; accounted righteous in him, through his righteousness imputed (2 Cor. 5:21). Now there are several things which are said of this imputed righteousness of Christ, which serve greatly to recommend it, and set forth the excellency of it; as,

(1). That it is called "the righteousness of God" (Rom. 1:17; 3:22), being wrought by Christ, who is God as well as man; approved and accepted of by God, and freely imputed by him to believers, as their justifying righteousness.

(2). It is called, "the righteousness of One" (Rom. 5:18), of one of the Persons in the Trinity, the Son of God; of him, who, though he has two natures united in him, is but one Person, and who is the one common Head to all his seed; and though his obedience, or righteousness, serves for many, it is "the obedience of One" (Rom. 5:19), and therefore they are justified, not partly by their own obedience, and partly by Christ's, but by his only.

3. It is called, "the righteousness of the law" (Rom. 8:4), being wrought by Christ in conformity to the law; so that this righteousness is a legal righteousness, as performed by Christ, being every way commensurate to the demands of it; though evangelical, as made over to his people, and revealed in the gospel; for it is manifested without the law, though witnessed to by law and prophets.

4. It is called, "the righteousness of faith" (Rom. 4:13), not that faith is righteousness, or imputed for it, or is the matter of a justifying righteousness, or any part of it; but because the righteousness of Christ is revealed to faith, and that lays hold on it, receives it, rejoices in it, and boasts of it.

5. It is called, "the gift of righteousness", and "the free gift", and

“the gift by grace” (Rom. 5:15-17), because freely wrought out by Christ, and freely imputed by God the Father; and faith is freely given to receive and embrace it.

6. It is called, “a robe of righteousness”, a garment down to the feet, which covers the whole mystical body of Christ (Isa. 61:10; Rev. 1:13), it is signified by gold of Ophir, of wrought gold, and raiment of needle work; setting forth the preciousness of it (Ps. 45:9, 13, 14). It is said to be change of raiment, and the wedding garment (Zech. 3:4; Matthew 22:12), yea, the “best robe” (Luke 15:22), a better robe than Adam had in Eden, or the angels in heaven; theirs, at best, being but the righteousness of a creature, and that loseable, as the event showed; but Christ’s righteousness is the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one; it may rendered, the “first robe”, being first in designation, and in the provision of the covenant of grace; though Adam’s robe of righteousness was first in wear and use.

VI. The effects of justification by the righteousness of Christ may be next considered, which are as follow.

1. An entire freedom from all penal evils, in this life and in that which is to come. Justified ones are not freed from all evils; they have their evil things now, as Lazarus had, but they are not brought upon them by way of punishment; afflictions are evils in themselves, being not joyous but grievous; but then they are not penal ones; they are fatherly chastisements, they are fruits and evidences of the love of God to them, and not of his vindictive wrath, (Rev. 3:19; 1 Cor. 11:32), death was threatened as a punishment for sin, and is the just demerit of it, and as such is inflicted on unrighteous ones, but is no penal evil to justified ones; it is their privilege and not their punishment (1 Cor. 3:22; Rev. 14:13), and therefore their death is desirable, even by wicked men, as it was by Balaam: nor will any penal evil befall the justified ones after death; for “being now justified” by his (Christ’s) blood, they “shall be saved from wrath through him”; from wrath to come, the vengeance of eternal fire: should any penal evil be inflicted on them here or hereafter, it would highly reflect upon the justice of God, in punishing twice for the same offences, once in their surety, and again in themselves; since the chastisement, or punishment of their sins has been laid on Christ, and he has endured it; and therefore

it would be a lessening of the value of Christ's satisfaction, as if it was not made to full content, should punishment be inflicted in any degree upon those for whom it is made; and it would be contrary to the gospel declaration, that they that believe in Christ are justified, and shall not enter into condemnation.

2. Peace with God is another fruit and effect of justification; being "justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1), peace with God is made by the blood of Christ, and reconciliation by his death; and besides that, there is a peace of conscience which is had in a way of believing, and through a comfortable sense and perception of an interest in the righteousness of Christ, the effect of which is peace and quietness (Isa. 32:17).

3. Access to God through Christ; for having a comfortable view by faith of interest in the righteousness of Christ unto justification, it follows, "by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Rom. 5:2), access to God as the God of grace, to him as on a throne of grace, to all the blessings of grace which come from God through Christ; and through the blood and righteousness of Christ justified ones have great freedom, boldness and confidence, to go to God, and present their supplication to him for what they want; not for their righteousness sake, but in their requests making mention of the righteousness of Christ, and only pleading the worth and virtue of that.

4. Acceptance with God through Christ follows upon justification by his righteousness; there can be no acceptance with God upon the foot of a man's own righteousness, which cannot render him acceptable to God; but through the righteousness of Christ there is an acceptance both of persons and services; first of persons and then of services; as God had respect to Abel, and so to his offering, and accepted it; so he has respect to the persons of his justified ones, as considered in Christ; he has respect to him, and is well pleased with him, and with all that are in him; they are accepted of God in the beloved, being clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and the garments of his salvation; and their services being done in the strength of Christ, and through faith in him, and to the glory of God by him, and their spiritual sacrifices being offered up by him their

great high-priest, they become acceptable to God through him.

5. The well being of God's people here and hereafter depends upon their justification, and is a consequent of it; "Say ye to the righteous", one that is justified by the righteousness of Christ, "that it shall be well with him" (Isa. 3:10), it is well with the justified ones in life; be it with them as it may, all is well with them and for the best; all things work together for their good, adversity and prosperity; what they have of worldly things, though but little (Ps. 37:16; Prov. 15:16,17), are blessings to them: it is well with such an one at death, he has hope in it, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God; peace is the end of the perfect and upright man, who is perfectly righteous through the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and it is well with him at judgment, he has a righteousness that will answer for him in that time to come; and he shall have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be well with him to all eternity; he that is righteous will then be righteous still, and ever continue so, and shall go into everlasting life.

6. Glorifying, or boasting, is another effect of justification; not in a man's self, in his own righteousness; not of his duties, services, and performance; nor of blessings of goodness enjoyed through his own merit; nor of heaven and happiness, as his own acquisition; all such boasting is excluded, by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; but such as are justified in Christ glory of him, in whom they are justified; and glory in this, that he is "of God, made to them righteousness" (Isa. 45:25; 1 Cor. 1:30).

7. Justified ones have an undoubted title to eternal life; hence justification by Christ's righteousness is called, "justification of life", because it entitles to it; and such are "made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life"; are heirs of the inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and reserved in the heavens, and shall be possessed of it, (Rom. 5:18; Titus 3:7). For,

8. Certainty of salvation may be concluded from justification; such as are justified, shall most assuredly be "saved from wrath"; there is an inseparable connection between justification and glorification; "Whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 5:9; 8:30).

VII. The properties of justification.

1. It is an act of God's grace, of pure grace, without any consideration of merit, worthiness, and works of men; grace is the moving cause of it, as has been already observed; it was according to the purpose and grace of God, that he resolved upon the justification of any of the sons of men; "The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith" (Gal. 3:8), the scripture foresaw, or predicted, the justification of them; because God, of his sovereign grace and good will, determined on it; grace set wisdom at work to find out a proper way and method of making men just with God, which could never have been found out by men or angels; and having found a way to impute their sins, not to themselves but to Christ, and to impute his righteousness to them; he was "gracious, and said, Deliver them from going down to the pit". Grace put him on calling Christ to be their surety, to bring in an everlasting righteousness for them; and it was grace in Christ to accept the call, and say, "Lo, I come to do thy will!" one part of which was, to work out a righteousness for his people; and it was grace in God to send his Son to obey, suffer, and die for them, in their nature, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them; and it was grace in him to accept of that righteousness as if done by them, and to impute it to them freely without works, and to give them faith to lay hold upon it for themselves; and it appears the more to be an act of grace, in that they are "ungodly" whom God justifies, sinners, even some, the chief of sinners, (Rom. 4:5; 1 Cor. 6:11).

2. It is an act of justice, as well as of grace: God is righteous in all his ways and works, and so in this; the law being perfectly fulfilled by Christ, the surety, both with respect to precept and penalty; justice is fully satisfied, and so God is "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus", (Rom. 3:26).

3. It is universal, as to persons, sins, and punishment: as to persons, all the seed of Israel are justified; that is, all the elect of God and seed of Christ; as there was an "all" on whom judgment came to condemnation, through the offence of the first Adam, even all his natural posterity; so there is an all on whom the free gift by the righteousness of Christ comes, to the justification of life; even all the children of God, and offspring of Christ, the second Adam,

whose righteousness is “unto all”, and “upon all” them that believe (Isa. 45:25; Rom. 5:18; 3:22). And with respect to sins, they that are justified, are justified from all sins whatever; Christ has redeemed his people from all their iniquities; all are forgiven for his sake; his blood cleanses from all, and his righteousness clears and acquits them of all: and as to punishment, they are entirely secure from it, even to the least degree; they are saved from wrath; they are secure from all condemnation; they are delivered from the curse of the law; nor shall they be hurt by the second death, the wages of sin; it shall not have any power at all over them: the whole righteousness of Christ is imputed to them; a whole Christ is made to them righteousness; and in such a manner, that they are made the righteousness of God in him; and they are complete in him, are perfectly comely through his comeliness put upon them, a perfection of beauty, all fair, and without spot.

4. It is an individual act, done at once, and admits of no degrees; the sins of God’s elect were altogether and at once laid on Christ, and satisfaction for them was made by him at once; he removed the iniquity of his people in one day, and by one sacrifice put away sin for ever; all sins were pardoned at once, upon this sacrifice offered, and satisfaction made; and the righteousness of Christ was accepted of, and imputed to his people at once. The sense of justification, indeed, admits of degrees; “The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith”; from one degree of faith to another; from a lesser, and lower degree of it, to an higher; it is gradually that faith rises to a full assurance of interest in it, so that a man knows with certainty, that he is and shall be justified; the manifestations of it are various and different, at different times; but the act itself, as in God, is always the same, perfect and complete. Indeed, there are fresh declarations and repetitions of the sentence of it was first conceived in the divine mind from all eternity; it was virtually pronounced on the elect in Christ, their representative, at his resurrection from the dead; and it is afresh pronounced in the conscience of a believer, by the Spirit, and he bearing testimony to it; and it will be again notified at the general judgment, before angels and men; but justification, as an act of God, is but one, and done at once, and admits of no degrees; and

is not carried on in a gradual, progressive way, as sanctification is.

5. It is equal to all, or all are alike justified, that are justified; the price of redemption, on which justification proceeds, is the same, the precious blood of Christ; even as the ransom price, and atonement money paid for the children of Israel, was the same, an half shekel for the rich and for the poor: and it is the same righteousness of Christ that is imputed to one as to another; it is a garment down to the feet, and covers the whole mystical body, the lowest and meanest members of it, as well as the more principal; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe; there is no difference, they have all the same righteousness, and the same precious faith, though not to the same degree; yet the weakest believer is as much justified, as the strongest believer; and so the greatest, as well as the smallest sinner, though one may be justified from more sins than another, having committed more: yet one is not more justified than the other; though one man may have more faith, and more sanctifying grace than another, yet no man has more righteousness, or a more justifying righteousness than another.

6. It is irreversible, and an unalterable act; it is according to the immutable purpose and grace of God, which can never be frustrated; it is part of that grace given, and one of those spiritual blessings wherewith the elect were blessed in Christ before the world began; it is one of those things which God does, and are for ever. Neither the righteousness by which they are justified, nor the faith by which they receive the justifying righteousness from the Lord, ever fail. The righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; and faith fails not; Christ is the author and finisher of it. Though a righteous man falls, he never falls from his righteousness: a man that is only seemingly and outwardly righteous, may turn away from his own righteousness, and go into a course of sin, and die; but one that is truly righteous, through the righteousness of Christ, can never turn and fall from that, nor shall ever enter into condemnation; but shall be eternally saved and glorified.

7. Though by the act of justification, persons are freed from sin, and from obligation to punishment for it, sin is not thereby taken out of them. They are, indeed, so freed from it, that God sees no iniquity

in them, to condemn them for it; he sees all the sins of his people in the article of providence, and chastises for them; but in the article of justification he sees none in them; they are acquitted, discharged, and justified from all; yet sin dwells in them, as it did in the apostle Paul, who, undoubtedly, was a justified person; yea, “There is not a just man upon earth”; one that is truly righteous, in an evangelic sense, “that doth good and sinneth not” (Eccl. 7:20).

8. Through justification by the righteousness of Christ, neither the law is made void and of none effect, nor is the performance of good works discouraged. The Law is not made void; “Do we make void the law through faith?” that is, through the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; “God forbid! yea, we establish the law”; by presenting to it a righteousness every way commensurate to its demands, by which it is magnified and made honourable: nor does this doctrine discourage duty, but animates to it; and is to be constantly preached for this end, “That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works” (Titus 3:7, 8).

Chapter 9

OF ADOPTION

Some think that adoption is a part and branch of justification, and included in it; since that part of justification which lies in the imputation of the righteousness of Christ entitles to eternal life, hence called, “the justification of life”, as adoption does; so that the children of God may be said to have a twofold title to eternal life; the one by the free grace of God making them sons, which entitles them to it; the other by justification in a legal way, and confirms the former, and opens a way for it; or that it may appear to be founded on justice as well as grace: the learned Dr. Ames seems to have a respect to both these. And such that are justified by the grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, are “heirs” of it, as adopted ones be; “if children, then heirs” (Rom. 5:18; Titus 3:7; Rom. 8:17). Some consider adoption as the effect of justification; and Junius calls it, “via adoptionis”, the way to adoption: it is certain, they have a close connection with each other, and agree in their author, causes, and

objects; the “white stone” of absolution, or justification, and the “new name” of adoption, go together in the gift of Christ to the overcomer (Rev. 2:17). Though I am of opinion they are distinct blessings of grace, and so to be considered: adoption is a distinct thing from either justification or pardon. A subject may be acquitted by his sovereign from charges laid against him; and a criminal, convicted and condemned, may be pardoned, yet does not become his son; if adopted, and taken into his family, it must be by a distinct and fresh act of royal favour.

I have treated already, see on Adoption in vil. book ii. chapter 5 of adoption as an immanent act of the divine will, which was in God from eternity; hence the elect of God were not only predestinated to the adoption of children, to the blessing itself, openly and actually to enjoy it in time, and to the inheritance adopted to; but this blessing itself was provided and bestowed in the everlasting covenant of grace, in which the elect of God had not only the promise of this relation, but were in it given to Christ under this relation and character (Eph 1:5; 2 Cor. 6:18; Heb. 2:13), hence they are spoken of as the children of God and Christ, previous to the incarnation of Christ, and to his sufferings and death; as well as to the mission of the Spirit into their hearts, as the Spirit of regeneration and adoption (Heb. 2:14; John 11:52; Gal. 4:6). I shall therefore now consider it as openly bestowed upon believing in Christ, and as manifested, applied, and evidenced by the Spirit of God. And,

I. Shall consider, in what sense believers are the sons of God; which is by adoption, and the nature of that: they are not the sons of God in so high a sense as Christ is, who is God’s own Son, his proper Son, his only begotten Son; which cannot be said either of angels or men; for as “to which of the angels”, so to which of the sons of men “said God at any time, Thou art son, this day have I begotten thee?” Nor in the sense that their fellow creatures are, whether angels or men, who are the sons of God by creation, as the former, so the latter; for they are all “his offspring”: nor in the sense that magistrates be, who are so by office, and, on that account, called “the children of the most High”, being his representatives: nor as professors of religion, who are called the sons of God, in distinction from the children of men;

but by adoption; hence we read of the adoption of children, these are predestinated unto, and which they receive, through redemption by Christ, and of which the Spirit of God is the witness; hence called the Spirit of “adoption”: and even the inheritance to which they are entitled, bears the name of “adoption” (Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:5; Rom. 8:15, 23). There is a civil and a religious adoption. A civil adoption, and which obtained among all nations; among the Egyptians, so Moses was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter; and among the Hebrews, so Esther by Mordecai; and it obtained much among the Romans, to which, as used by them, the allusion is in the New Testament, in a religious sense; it is sometimes used of the whole people of the Jews, to whom belonged “the adoption” (Rom. 9:4) and at other times, of some special and particular persons, both among Jews and Gentiles; for of the former all were “not the children of God”; and of the latter, if they were believers in Christ, they were Abraham’s spiritual seed, “and heirs according to the promise”, (Rom. 9:7, 8; Gal. 3:26, 29). Between civil and spiritual adoption, in some things there is an agreement, and in some things a difference.

First, In some things they agree.

1. In the name and thing, vioseoioc, a putting among the children; so spiritual adoption is called (Jer 3:19), or putting, or taking, one for a son, who was not so by nature and birth; which is the case of adoption by special grace; it is of such who are, “by nature, children of wrath”, and “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”; and taking these from the family of the world, to which they originally belonged, into the family of God, and household of faith (Eph. 2:3,12,19)

2. As civil adoption is of one to an inheritance who has no legal right to it; so is special and spiritual adoption. None, in a civil sense, are adopted, but to an inheritance of which they are made heirs; and so such who are adopted in sense are adopted to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and eternal; and as the one are adopted to an inheritance they had no natural right unto, nor any legal claim upon; so the other are such who have sinned, and come short of the eternal inheritance, and can make no legal pretension to it by works of the law, (Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:18).

3. Civil adoption is the voluntary act of the adopter. Among the

Romans, when a man adopted one for his son, they both appeared before a proper magistrate, and the adopter declared his will and pleasure to adopt the person presented, he consenting to it. Special and spiritual adoption is an act of the sovereign goodwill and pleasure of God, who has predestinated his to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the “good pleasure of his will”; it is a pure act of his grace to make them his sons and heirs, and to give them the kingdom, the inheritance, even eternal life, which is the free gift of God, through Christ (Eph. 1:5; Luke 12:32; Rom. 6:23).

4. In civil adoption the adopted took and bore the name of the adopter: so the adopted sons of God have a new name, which the mouth of the Lord their God names, a new, famous, and excellent name, which no man knoweth, saving he that receives it; a name better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest earthly potentate; a name by which they are called the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty (Isa. 62:2; 56:5; Rev. 2:17; 1 John 3:1).

5. Such who are adopted in a civil sense are taken into the family of the adopter, and make a part of it; and stand in the relation, not of servants, but sons; so those who are adopted of God, are taken into that family, which is named of him in heaven and in earth, and are of his household; in which they are not as servants, nor merely as friends, but as the children of God and household of faith (Eph. 3:15, 19; John 15:15,16; Gal. 3:26; 6:10).

6. Persons adopted in a civil sense, as they are considered as children, they are provided for as such: provision is made for their education, their food, their clothing, their protection, and attendance, and for an inheritance and portion for them: all the children of God, his adopted ones, they are taught of God, by his Spirit, his ministers, his word and ordinances; they are trained up in the school of the church, and under the ministry of the word, and are instructed by the preaching of the gospel, and by precepts, promises, and providences; as for food, they are continually supplied with what is suitable for them, the sincere milk of the word for babes, and meat for strong men; they are fed with hidden manna, with marrow and fatness, with the finest of the wheat, with the richest dainties of the gospel feast: as for their clothing, it is change of raiment, clothing of wrought gold,

raiment of needlework, a robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation; fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints: for their protection, they have angels to wait upon them and guard them, who encamp about them, to preserve them from their enemies, and have the care and charge of them, to keep them in their ways; yea, they are kept by the Lord himself, as the apple of his eye, being his dear sons and pleasant children: and the inheritance he has prepared for them, of which they are heirs, is among the saints in light; is incorruptible, undefiled, never fading, and eternal, and is even a kingdom and glory.

7. Such as are adopted by men, come under the power, and are at the command of the adopter, and are under obligation to perform all the duties of a son to a parent; as to honour, reverence, and obey, and be subject to his will in all things. All which are due from the adopted sons of God, to him, their heavenly Father; honour is what God claims as his due from his children; “a son honoureth his father; if I then be a father, where is mine honour?” (Mai, 1:60, obedience to all his commands highly becomes, and is obligatory on them; they ought to be obedient children, and imitate God in all his immutable perfections, particularly in holiness, benevolence, kindness, and goodness; and even should be subject to his corrections and chastisements, which are not merely for his pleasure, but for their profit and good (1

Pet. 1:14-16; Eph. 5:1; Matthew 5:45, 48; Luke 6:35, 36; Heb. 12:9,10)

Secondly, In some things civil and spiritual adoption differ.

1. Civil adoption could not be done without the consent of the adopted, his will was necessary to it. Among the Romans the adopter, and the person to be adopted, came before a proper magistrate, and in his presence the adopter asked the person to be adopted, whether he was willing to be his son; and he answered, I am willing; and so the thing was agreed and finished. But in spiritual adoption, though the believer, when he comes to be acquainted with the privilege of adoption he is favored with, and is highly delighted and pleased with it, and admires and adores the grace that has brought him into the relation; yet his will and consent were not necessary to the

constitution of the act of adoption; it may be said of that as of every other blessing of grace, that “it is not of him that willeth”; such was the grace of God that he did not wait for the will of the creature to complete this act, but previous to it put him among the children; and such is his sovereign power, that he had an uncontrollable right to take whom he would, and make his sons and daughters; and such the influence and efficacy of his grace, as to make them willing in the day of his power to acknowledge the relation with the greatest wonder and thankfulness, and to behave according to it.

2. Civil adoption was allowed of, and provided for the relief and comfort of such who had no children, and to supply that defect in nature; but in spiritual adoption this reason does not appear: God did not adopt any of the sons of men for want of a son and heir; he had one, and in a higher class of sonship than creatures can be; more excellent and divine, and suitable to the divine nature; his own proper Son, begotten of him, was as one brought up with him, and his daily delight; the dear Son of his love, in whom he was well pleased; and who always did the things that were pleasing to him, and who inherited all his perfections and glory.

3. In civil adoption there are generally some causes and reasons in the adopted which influence and move the adopter to take the step he does. There are two instances of adoption in scripture, the one of Moses, the other of Esther; in both there were some things that wrought upon the adopters to do what they did. Moses was a goodly child, exceeding fair, and lovely to look upon, which, with other things, moved the daughter of Pharaoh to take him up out of the water, to take care of him, and adopt him for her son; Esther was also a fair and beautiful maid, and besides was related to Mordecai, which were the reasons why he took her to be his daughter: but in divine adoption, there is nothing in the adopted that could move the adopter to bestow such a favour; no worth nor worthiness, no love nor loveliness, nothing attracting in them; children of wrath by nature, as others; transgressors from the womb, and rebels against God. There were so many objections to their adoption, and so many arguments against it, and none for it in themselves, that the Lord is represented as making a difficulty of it, and saying, “How shall I

put them among the children?" (Jer. 3:19), such blackamoors and Ethiopians as these are? so abominable and so disobedient, enemies in their minds by wicked works, hateful and hating one another?

4. In civil adoption, the adopter, though he takes one into his family, and makes him his son and heir, and gives him the name and title of a son, and a right to an inheritance designed for him; he cannot give him the nature of a son, nor qualifications fitting him for the use and enjoyment of the estate he is adopted to; he cannot give him a suitable disposition and temper of mind, nor communicate goodness, wisdom, and prudence for the management of it; he may turn out a fool, or a prodigal: but the divine adopter makes his sons partakers of the divine nature, and makes them meet for the inheritance with the saints in light.

5. Persons adopted in a civil sense cannot enjoy the inheritance while the adoptive father is living, not till after his death: but in spiritual adoption the adopted enjoy the inheritance, though their father is the everlasting and ever living God; and Christ, the firstborn, lives for ever, with whom they are joint heirs.

6. In some cases civil adoption might be made null and void; as among the Romans, when against the right of the pontifex, and without the decree of the college; but spiritual adoption is never made void on any account.

There is a difference also between adoption and regeneration, though, divines usually confound these two together. They both have the same author; the same God and Father adopts and regenerates; they flow from the same love and grace; and the same persons that are adopted are regenerated; and they are adopted and begotten again unto the same inheritance: but adoption is before regeneration; the one is an act of God's will in eternity, the other is an act and work of his grace in time; the one is the cause, the other the effect; men are not adopted because regenerated, which would seem unnecessary; but they are regenerated because adopted; "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts"; to regenerate, to sanctify, and testify their adoption (Gal. 4:6), regeneration is the fruit and effect of adoption, and the evidence of it (John 1:12, 13), adoption gives the name of sons, and a title to the inheritance;

and regeneration gives the nature of sons, and a meetness for the inheritance.

II. The causes of adoption.

First, The efficient cause, God; none can adopt any into the family of God but God himself; none can put any among the children of God but he himself; none but he can do it, who says, "I will be his God, and he shall be my Son" (Rev. 21:7). God, Father, Son, and Spirit, are concerned in the affair of adoption.

1. God the Father; "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us"; the Father of Christ, the one God and Father of us all; "that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:2). The God and Father of Christ, who blessed and chose his people in him, he predestinated them to the adoption of children by him; both to the grace of adoption, and to the inheritance they are adopted to, and obtain in Christ, in virtue thereof (Eph. 1:3-5, 11), he also predestinated them "to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"; he set him up as the pattern of their sonship, that as he partook of their nature, they should be partakers of the divine nature; and that as he was a Son and Heir of all things, they should be likewise; and which will more manifestly be seen when they shall appear to be what they are, as sons, and be like unto him (Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2). Besides, God the Father has not only determined upon their adoption, and all things relative to it; but he has provided this blessing in covenant for them, and secured it there; this is one of the "all things" in which "it is ordered" and sure; it is one of the spiritual blessings of the covenant, which he has blessed his people with in Christ; which covenant runs thus; "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:18), yea, the act of adoption itself, or putting among the children, is his act; for though he says, "How shall I put thee among the children?" there being no difference between them and others by nature, they are as bad and as black as others; yet he did do it.

2. The Son of God has a concern in adoption; and there are several connections and relations he stands in to his people, which serve greatly to illustrate and confirm it. There is an union between

them, a very near and mysterious one (1 John 17:21), and from this union flow all the blessings of grace to the saints; they are first of God in Christ, and then he is everything to them, and they have everything through him to make them comfortable and happy; and particularly, he and they being one, his God is their God, and his Father is their Father; he is a Son, and they are sons; he is an heir, and they are joint heirs with him. There is a marriage relation between Christ and his people; he has betrothed them to himself in righteousness, and that for ever; he is their husband, and they are his spouse and bride; and as when a man marries a king's daughter, he is his son-in-law, as David was to Saul; so one that marries a king's son becomes his daughter: and thus the church being married to Christ, the Son of God, becomes the King's daughter (Ps. 45:13), through the incarnation of Christ, he not only became the "Goel", the near kinsman, but even a brother to those whose flesh and blood he partook of; and because he and they are "of one", of one and the same nature, "he is not ashamed to call them brethren"; and if his brethren, then, as he is the Son of God, they must be sons of God too: and through the redemption wrought out by him, they come "to receive the adoption" of children, the blessing before prepared for them, in the purpose and covenant of God; yea, the actual donation of the blessing of adoption is bestowed by Christ; for "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). It is "the Son who makes free"; that is, by making them children; for the children only are free; not servants (John 8:36).

3. The Spirit of God has also a concern in adoption; he is the author of regeneration; which, though it is not adoption, it is the evidence of it; the sons of God are described as "born of God" (John 1:13) and this spiritual birth, which makes men appear to be the sons of God, is owing to the Spirit of God; for "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit", that is, of the grace of the Spirit, comparable to water, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). It is by faith in Christ that men receive the adoption of children; hence believers are said to be "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"; this receives and claims the privilege and blessing; which faith is of the operation of the Spirit of God, who is therefore called "the

Spirit of faith” (Gal. 3:26; 2 Cor 4:13). Moreover, it is the Spirit who witnesses the truth of adoption; he bears witness to the spirits of believers that they are the children of God; they receiving him as the Spirit of adoption, who is sent into their hearts for that purpose; “for because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:15, 16; Gal. 4:6), to all which may be added, that the several operations of the Spirit on the souls of men, such as his leadings and teachings, confirm unto them the truth of their sonship; “for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. 8:14), who are led out of themselves, and off of themselves, to Christ and his righteousness; who are led into all truth as it is in Jesus, and to the fulness of Christ; and who are led through him, the Mediator, by the Spirit, unto God, as their Father; and which Spirit is given, and abides, as an earnest in their hearts; even “the earnest of the inheritance” they are adopted to, “until the redemption of the purchased possession” (2 Cor. 5:5; Eph 1:14).

Secondly, The moving cause of adoption, is the love, grace, free favour, and goodwill of God. There was nothing in the creature that could move him to it; no agreeable disposition in them, no amiableness in their persons, nor anything engaging in their conduct and behavior; but all the reverse, as before observed: wherefore, considering these things, the apostle breaks forth in this pathetic expression, “What manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God” (1 John 3:1), in which he points out the source and spring of this blessing of grace, the amazing love of God.

III. The objects of adoption. And they are such who are the objects of the love of God; for since adoption flows from the love of God, such who are the children of God must be interested in it; and they are “dear children”, strongly interested in his affections, like Ephraim, dear sons and pleasant children, whom God loves dearly, and loves with a love of complacency and delight; they are the chosen of God; for such that are chosen of God in Christ, they are predestinated to the adoption of children by him; hence sons before calling. They are also redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people,

and nation, being the children of God scattered abroad, Christ came to gather together; and who, through redemption by him, receive the adoption of children, previously provided for them; though, in their natural state, they are rebellious children, children that are corrupt, and that are corrupters; children of wrath by nature, as others, and in no wise better than others; but are only openly and manifestly the children of God, when they commence believers in Christ: till then they cannot be called the children of God by themselves, or by others; till then they have no claim to the blessing, nor have they the power, the privilege, the dignity, and honour, to become the sons of God. These are the characters of the adopted ones, both secretly and openly.

IV. The nature and excellency of this privilege.

1. It is an act of surprising and distinguishing grace; it is an act of God's free grace to predestinate to the adoption of children; it is part of the grace of the covenant, and of the grace given in Christ before the world began; it is owing to the grace of God that Christ was sent to redeem any of the sons of men, that they might receive the adoption of children: it is an instance of grace in God to send his Spirit to manifest it, and bear witness of it; and everyone that has seen his own sinfulness and vileness by nature, must say, that if he is a child of God, it is by the grace of God: and it is an act of marvelous grace (1 John 3:1), considering all things; and it will appear so, when the adopter and the adopted are put in a contrast; the adopter is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the most high God; hence these his children are called, "the children of the Highest"; and they are, by nature, in the lowest and meanest circumstances that can be imagined; lost and undone, poor and miserable, beggars and bankrupts, the foolish things of this world, and things that are not; and yet such God is pleased to adopt and take into his family: and it is an act of distinguishing grace, both with respect to angels and men; for they are men, the posterity of fallen Adam, that become the sons of God; and not angels, who are ministering spirits, or servants, but not sons; and of men, not all, only some, are the children of God; who are distinguished from the world who are not so, and who know not them that are the children of God (1 John 3:1).

2. It is a blessing of grace, which exceeds other blessings; as redemption, pardon, justification, and sanctification; a man may be redeemed out of a state of slavery by a king's ransom, may be pardoned by his prince, though he has been a rebel and traitor to him, and may be acquitted from high crimes laid to his charge, and yet not be a king's son; if adopted, and taken into his family, it must be by another and distinct act of royal favour and it is more to be a son than to be a saint, as Zanchy [3] observes; who thinks, that to be predestinated to the adoption of children is something over and above, and what exceeds being chosen to be holy, and without blame: to which may be added, that angels are saints, or holy ones, even perfectly holy; "he came with ten thousands of his saints" (Deut. 33:2), but they are not sons, at least in the sense that some of the sons of men are.

3. It is a blessing of grace, which makes men exceeding honorable. David observed, that it was "no light thing to be a king's son-in-law"; it certainly cannot be, to be a son of the King of kings; the name of a son of God is a new name, a renowned and excellent one; a name which no man knows the grandeur and dignity of but he that receives it; it makes a man more honorable than Adam was in his state of honour, and than the angels are in their high estate in heaven; since, though these are sons, yet only by creation, not by adoption, as saints are.

4. It brings men into the highest connections, alliances, relations, and offices; such are not only the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; but they are the brethren of Christ, the Son of God, are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; yea, they become kings and priests unto God.

5. The inheritance they are adopted to exceeds all others: it is a most comprehensive one, it includes all things; "he that overcometh shall inherit all things"; the ground and foundation of which, lies in the relation between God and such persons, as follows; "and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7), all things are theirs, civil, ecclesiastic, spiritual, and eternal; they are heirs of the grace of life, and possess the blessings of it; and they are heirs of everlasting salvation, and shall certainly enjoy it (1 Cor. 3:22, 23; 1 Pet. 3:7;

Heb. 1:14), yea, they are heirs “of God” himself; he is their portion, and their exceeding great reward, both in this life and that to come; they, in some sort or other, enjoy the benefit of all the perfections of God, and of his purposes, promises, and providences; the heavenly state, particularly, is their inheritance, which is sometimes called “glory, substance”, and the “inheritance of the saints in light” (Prov. 3:35; 8:21; Col. 1:12), and has such epithets given it, as show it to be superior to all other inheritances (1 Pet. 1:4).

6. All other inheritances are subject to corruption, and have pollution written upon them, are fading things, and liable to be lost, and often are; but this is an incorruptible crown, a crown of glory, that fadeth not away; a crown of righteousness laid up in heaven, in the covenant of grace, and in the hands of Christ, the Surety of it; and who is the saints feoffee in trust, and so it is sure to all the seed.

7. Adoption is a blessing and privilege that always continues. The love of God, which is the source of it, always remains; predestination, which gives birth to it, is the purpose of God, that stands sure, which is never revoked nor repented of; and therefore adoption is one of those gifts of grace of his which are without repentance; the covenant of grace, in which it is secured, is sure, can never be broken, nor will ever be removed: union with Christ is indissoluble, the bond of which is everlasting love; the marriage knot can never be untied; saints are members of his body, and one spirit with him; and the relation between them as husband and wife, as children and brethren, will ever remain. The Spirit, as a spirit of adoption, abides for ever; and he is the never failing earnest of the heavenly inheritance, and by whom the saints are sealed up to the day of redemption: the children of God may be corrected for their faults, and chastised by their heavenly Father; but never turned out of doors, nor disinherited, much less disowned, which is impossible; the son abides in the house for ever; and such that are sons are never more servants; once a child of God and always so (John 8:35; Gal. 4:7), such who are the sons of God may judge themselves unworthy of the relation, as the prodigal did; and who proposed within himself to desire his father to make him one of his hired servants; but he was not suffered to ask it, because it was what could not be done (Luke 15:19, 21), yea, they may conclude

they are not the sons of God; because they may imagine their spots are not the spots of God's children, and yet they are in such a relation in which they shall always continue.

V. The effects of adoption.

1. A share in the pity, compassion, and care of God, their heavenly Father; who, as a father pities his children, so he pities them that fear him, and reverence him as their Father; in all their afflictions he is afflicted, and sympathizes with them, and delivers them out of all their troubles; when they are in want of whatsoever kind, and particularly of food, he supplies them, and for which they are encouraged to ask it of him, as children of their parents; so our Lord reasons, "If a son", &c. (Luke 11:11-13).

2. Access to God with boldness; they can come to him as children to a father, use freedom with him, tell him all their complaints and wants, and come boldly to the throne of grace, and ask grace and mercy to help them in their times of need.

3. Conformity to the image of Christ, the firstborn among many brethren; which is begun in this life, and will be perfected in that to come; when the sons of God shall be like him, and see him as he is.

4. The Spirit of adoption, given to testify their sonship to them; for "because they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6).

5. Heirship; for "if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17), heirs of the grace of life, heirs of a kingdom, of an inheritance most glorious, to which they are entitled, and for which they are made meet by the grace of God.

Chapter 10

OF THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD

Among the several effects, or privileges of adoption, liberty is one, and a principal one; and requires to be treated of particularly and distinctly. "Then are the children free", as our Lord says in another case; such are so, who are made free by him; "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). And as it is the Son that makes free, they are sons only who are made free. Freedom is the fruit and effect of sonship, and follows upon it; "Wherefore

thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God, through Christ” (Gal. 4:6, 7), sonship and servitude, a son and a servant, are opposed to each other, and a spirit of adoption and a spirit of bondage; where the one is, the other is not (John 8:35; Rom. 8:15), hence this liberty is called, “the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21), being proper and peculiar to them; and is twofold, a liberty of grace, and a liberty of glory; the one is enjoyed in this life, and the other in that to come.

First, The liberty of grace; which lies,

I. In a freedom from sin, Satan, and the law.

(1). From sin; it is a liberty not to sin, but from it; liberty to sin is licentiousness, and cannot be that liberty wherewith Christ makes free; for it is contrary to his nature, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity; to his gospel, the truth of which makes free, for that is a doctrine according to godliness; and contrary to the Spirit of Christ, who, as he is a free Spirit, so he is the Spirit of holiness; and contrary to the principle of grace in the saints, and is confuted and condemned by the holy lives of the children of God in all ages: but it is a freedom from sin; not from the being of it; for the most eminent saints that have been in the world, have not been free from the indwelling of sin, and acts of it; but from the guilt of it, through the blood and righteousness of Christ applied to them; and from condemnation by it, as well as from the dominion of it, through the grace of God in conversion; when, though sin has reigned in them, in a very powerful and tyrannical manner; yet shall no more have dominion over them, because not under the law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14,

17,18)

(2). From the power of Satan, who has usurped a dominion over the sons of men, and leads them captive at his will, until the Spirit of God comes and dispossesses him, and turns men from the power of Satan to God, and translates them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; when they are no more slaves and vassals to him, nor do his works and lusts; but the will of their heavenly Father: though they are not freed from his temptations, which the best of men have been beset with; yet they are not overcome by them,

nor shall be destroyed through them.

(3). From the law, and the bondage of it. From the moral law, as a covenant of works, obliging to work for life; but not from it as a rule of life, walk, and conversation; from it as the ministration of Moses; but not from it as in the hands of Christ: from it, so as not to be obliged to seek for justification by it, which is not to be had by the works of it; and from the curses and condemnation of it, Christ being made a curse for them; and from the rigorous exaction of it, requiring perfect and sinless obedience; and from that bondage of spirit, which, for want of it, it leads into: and from the ceremonial law, as a sign of guilt, that handwriting of ordinances being taken away, and nailed to the cross of Christ; and as a type of Christ, and its ordinances, as shadows of good things to come; which are all done away, Christ, the substance, being come; and as a severe, rigid schoolmaster, as it was, till Christ, the object of faith, came; and as a partition wall between Jew and Gentile, which is now broken down, and all are one in Christ: and from the judicial law, so far as any of the statutes of it were peculiar to the Jewish nation; but such as are founded on nature, reason, justice, and equity, are still binding. Nor are the sons of God, by their Christian liberty, freed from the laws of nations, which are not contrary to religion and conscience; subjection to civil magistrates is not inconsistent with Christian liberty; and which is inculcated by the apostles, in their epistles to the churches, and others (Rom. 13:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13,14)

2. Christian liberty consists in a freedom from all traditions of men; such as those of the Pharisees, among the Jews, which were before the times of Christ, and were risen to a very great bulk in his time; and which were imposed as a heavy burden on the consciences of men, and by which the word and commandments of God were transgressed, and made of none effect (Matthew 15:1-6), and such as among heathens, heretics, and false teachers, which the apostle exhorts to beware of, and not conform unto; which he calls philosophy and vain deceit, the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world; ordinances and commandments of men, which forbid the touching, tasting, and handling of some things (Col. 2:8, 20-23) and such as the unwritten traditions of the Papists, respecting their hierarchy,

doctrines, and practices, which have no foundation in the word of God; as the several orders, offices, and sacraments, not to be found in scripture, the doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, &c. rites and customs, as the observance of fasts and festivals, on certain days, and at certain times of the year; baptism of infants, signing with the sign of the cross, &c, such like things Christian liberty sets us free from, and our consciences are not bound to pay any regard to them.

3. Christian liberty lies in the free use of the creatures, which God has provided for food and nourishment, and which were granted to men originally, without any distinction; for though there was very early a distinction of creatures into clean and unclean, with respect to sacrifice, yet not with respect to food, until the Levitical law took place, which made the use of some creatures unlawful; but now, under the gospel dispensation, we are at full liberty to eat of every kind, that is fit, proper, and convenient for food: as Peter, by the vision, was taught to call nothing common and unclean; so we may be persuaded, with the apostle Paul, that there is nothing common and unclean of itself; but that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; and provided it is used with moderation, and not indulged to excess, to luxury and intemperance; or used as an occasion to the flesh, to pamper that, and fulfil the lusts of it (Acts 10:14, 15; Rom. 14:14; 1 Tim. 4:3, 4). The injunction by the synod at Jerusalem, to abstain from blood, and things strangled, was only “pro tempore”, for the peace of the churches, till things could be settled in them, between Jews and Gentiles, to mutual satisfaction.

4. Another part of Christian liberty respects things indifferent; things which are neither commanded nor forbidden of God, and which may be used and abstained from at pleasure; and which, in the first times of the gospel, chiefly concerned the eating, or not eating, some certain things (Rom. 14:2, 3), which might be made use of by those who thought fit to use them, provided they did it in faith; for if they made use of them, doubting whether they should or not, they sinned (Rom. 14:22, 23), and that they did not lay a stumbling block in the way of weak Christians, and so offend, grieve, and wound them, and destroy their peace (Rom. 14:13,15, 20, 21;

1 Cor. 8:9- 13), and such that abstained from the use of them, were not to reckon it as a point of merit, thereby obtaining the favour of God, and the remission of their sins, and becoming more holy and more perfect; nor as a part of religious worship, and as necessary for the peace of conscience, and continuance in the divine favour; for the “kingdom of God”, true, real religion, and godliness, “is not meat and drink”; it does not lie in what a man eats or drinks, or wears, provided moderation, decency, and circumstances, are attended to (Rom. 14:17), and care should be taken, on the one hand, lest such things should be reckoned indifferent, which are not indifferent, and so any precept, or ordinance of God, be neglected; and on the other hand, such as are indifferent, should not be imposed as necessary, which may lead to superstition and will worship.

5. Christian liberty lies in the use of ordinances, which God has enjoined; it is a privilege to come to mount Zion, the city of the living God; to have a place and a name in the church of Christ; to be of the family and household of God, and partake of the provisions which are there made for spiritual refreshment. Subjection to gospel ordinances is not contrary to Christian liberty; but accords with it, and, indeed, is a part of it; but to be subject to the ordinances and commandments of men is contrary to it; but not subjection to the ordinances of God. Carnal men may reckon them bonds and cords, and be for breaking and casting them away; but spiritual men account them their privileges, and receive Christ’s “yoke” as “easy”, and his “burden” as “light”; and they yield subjection to them, not with a mercenary and servile spirit, but under the influence, and by the assistance, of the Spirit of God, who is a free spirit; they act from a principle of love; they love the house and worship of God, his word and ordinances, and in love observe them (John 14:15, 21, 23). Christian liberty does not lie in a neglect of gospel ordinances, or in an attendance on them at will and pleasure; men are not to come into a church, and go out when they please, or attend an ordinance now and then, or when they think well: this is not liberty, but licentiousness. The ordinances of Christ, particularly the supper, are perpetual things, to be observed frequently and constantly, unto the second coming of Christ; and it is both well pleasing to God, to

keep the ordinances, as they were delivered; and it is profitable to the saints; since these are for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till they come to be perfect men, and arrive to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

6. Christian liberty lies in worshipping God according to his word, and the dictates of conscience, without the fear of men, which indulged to, brings a snare, and leads to idolatry, superstition, and will worship: though Christians are obliged to regard the laws of men, respecting civil matters, yet not what regard religion and conscience, and are contrary thereunto; by such they are not bound, but should serve God rather than men; as the cases of the three companions of Daniel, of Daniel himself, and of the apostles, and of the martyrs and confessors in all ages, show; who chose rather to suffer imprisonment, confiscation of goods, and death itself, than part with this branch of Christian liberty, to serve God, according to his word, and that light which they had in it. Nor does it become rulers and governors to infringe this liberty of theirs.

7. Another glorious part of Christian liberty is freedom of access to God, through Christ the Mediator, under the influence of the blessed Spirit (Eph. 2:18), this is a great privilege the sons of God have, that they can come to God as their Father; not as on a throne of justice, requiring at their hands satisfaction for their sins; but as on a throne of grace, communicating pardoning grace and mercy, and all supplies of grace to them, as the God of all grace; and this access they have through Christ, the Mediator between God and man, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and by the Spirit, who is a Spirit of grace and supplication, under whose influence saints can pour out their souls to God with great freedom, and make known their requests to him with thankfulness.

8. It also lies in a freedom from the fear of death, both corporal and eternal; Christ, through his incarnation, sufferings, and death, has delivered them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage: death, as formidable as it is, is no king of terrors to them; in a view of interest in Christ, and in the exercise of faith, and hope of being for ever with him, they choose to depart; knowing, that to die is gain; and in a prospect of death and eternity,

can sit and sing, and say, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" And as to an eternal death, they are comfortably assured, they shall not be hurt by it; that shall have no power over them, though it is the just desert of sin; yet being justified by Christ, and having access, through him, into a state of grace, they rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and being made spiritually alive, they believe they shall never die, neither a spiritual nor an eternal death.

Secondly, The liberty of glory, or that which the sons of God will be possessed of in the world to come; and this will be entirely perfect; the soul, in its separate state, will be perfectly free from sin, be with the spirits of just men made perfect; free from all corruption and defilement, from the very being of sin, and any consequences of it; from all unbelief, doubts, fears, and distresses of mind; from all evil thoughts and vain desires; and from all the temptations of Satan: and at the resurrection their bodies will be no more subject to pains, griefs, disorders, and diseases of any kind; but be entirely free from corruption, and mortality, and death; and be, both in soul and body, perfectly pure and holy, and live for ever in the enjoyment of God, and in the company of angels and saints; and be in no danger of ever being brought into bondage in any sense: and as this state is called the adoption, so it may be said to be "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21, 23).

The author, or "efficient cause", of this liberty, is Christ; it is a liberty with which Christ has made his people free, (Gal. 5:1) it is of his procuring, he has obtained it with the price of his blood, by which he has redeemed them from sin, Satan, and the law: and it is his proclaiming; for he was anointed with the Holy Spirit, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and it is by his Spirit that they are put into the possession of it, who is a spirit of liberty, being the Spirit of adoption, and so opposed to the Spirit of bondage; and Christ is the author and finisher of faith, by which they receive this privilege; so that it may be truly called, as it sometimes is, by divines, "Christian liberty"; both from Christ, the author of it, and from the subjects of it, Christians, such as truly believe in Christ.

The "instrumental cause", or the means by which liberty is

conveyed to the sons of God, is the word of God, the truth of the gospel; which is not only a proclamation of this liberty, made by Christ, the great Prophet, in the church, and by his apostles and ministering servants; and was prefigured by the jubilee trumpet, which proclaimed liberty throughout the land; but is the means, attended with the Spirit and power of God, of freeing souls from the bondage they are in by nature, and when first under a work of the law; “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32), and the clearer knowledge men have of the gospel, and the truths of it; and the more they are evangelized, or cast into a gospel mould by it, the farther off they are from a spirit of bondage again to fear. So that this liberty may be rightly called “gospel liberty”; which, though not restrained entirely to the gospel dispensation, yet is more peculiar to that; since the saints under the former dispensation were as children in bondage, under the elements of the world, the law, which gendered to bondage, and brought upon them that servile bondage spirit which prevailed in them.

Both from the nature of this liberty, and from the influence the Spirit of God has in it, it may be, with great propriety, called “spiritual liberty”; as well as from its having its seat in the spirits, or souls of men; and may be distinguished from corporal liberty, and from civil liberty. Nor does it at all interfere with the latter; it does not dissolve the ties, obligations, connections, and dependencies of men, one with, and on, another; nor free from subjection to parents, masters, and civil magistrates. It is in its nature, pure, holy, and spiritual; it is not a liberty to sin, as has been observed; but a liberty from sin. It is a real liberty, and not a shadow, an appearance of one; “If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed”: and it is perpetual; such who are once made free, shall never more be servants, or come into a state of bondage; they shall never be disfranchised, or lose their freedom; and the fruits and effects of it are, peace, joy, and comfort, and a capacity and disposition of worshipping and serving the Lord, in the most spiritual, evangelical, and acceptable manner!

Chapter 11

OF REGENERATION

Regeneration follows adoption, being the evidence of it; regeneration describes the persons who have received the power to become the sons of God (John 1:12,13), and though these are distinct things, yet they are closely connected together; where the one is, the other is also, as to enjoyment and experience; and they bear a similarity to each other. Regeneration may be considered either more largely, and then it includes with it effectual calling, conversion, and sanctification: or more strictly, and then it designs the first principle of grace infused into the soul; which makes it a fit object of the effectual calling, a proper subject of conversion, and is the source and spring of that holiness which is gradually carried on in sanctification, and perfected in heaven. Concerning regeneration, the following things may be enquired into:

I. What regeneration is, or what is meant by it, the nature of it; which is so mysterious, unknown, and unaccountable to a natural man, as it was to Nicodemus, though a master in Israel; now it may be the better understood by observing the phrases and terms by which it is expressed.

1. It is expressed by being “born again”, which regeneration properly signifies; (see John 3:3, 7; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23 and this supposes a prior birth, a first birth, to which regeneration is the second; and which may receive some light by observing the contrast between the two births, they being the reverse of each other: the first birth is of sinful parents, and in their image; the second birth is of God, and in his image; the first birth is of corruptible, the second birth of incorruptible seed; the first birth is in sin, the second birth is in holiness and righteousness; by the first birth men are polluted and unclean, by the second birth they become holy and commence to be saints; the first birth is of the flesh and is carnal, the second birth is of the Spirit and is spiritual, and makes men spiritual men; by the first birth men are foolish and unwise, being born like a wild ass’s colt; by the second birth they become knowing and wise unto salvation: by the first birth they are slaves to sin and the lusts of the flesh, are home born slaves; by the second birth they become Christ’s free men: from their first birth they are transgressors, and go on in a course of sin, till stopped by grace; in the second birth they cease to commit sin,

to go on in a course of sinning, but live a life of holiness, yea he that is born of God cannot sin; by the first birth men are children of wrath, and under tokens of divine displeasure; at the second birth they appear to be the objects of the love of God; regeneration being the fruit and effect of it, and gives evidence of it; a time of life is a time of open love.

2. It is called a being “born from above”, for so the phrase in John 3:3, 7 may be rendered; the apostle James says in general, that “every good and every perfect gift is from above”; and regeneration being such a gift, must be from above; and indeed he particularly instances in it, for it follows, “of his own will begat he us with the word of truth” (James 1:17, 18). The author of this birth is from above; those that are born again are born of God their Father who is in heaven; the grace given in regeneration is from above, (John 3:27) truth in the inward part, and wisdom in the hidden part, or the grace of God in the heart produced in regeneration, is that “wisdom that is from above”, (James 3:17) such that are born again, as they are of high and noble birth, they are partakers of the heavenly and high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and shall most certainly possess it (1 Pet. 1:3, 4; Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14).

3. It is commonly called the new birth, and with great propriety; since the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, are joined together as meaning the same thing; and what is produced in regeneration is called the new creature, and the new man; and those who are born again are said to be new born babes (Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph 4:24; 1 Pet. 2:2), it is a new man, in distinction from the old man, or the principle of corrupt nature, which is as old as a man is; but the principle of grace infused in regeneration is quite new; it is something “de novo”, anew implanted in the heart, which never was before in human nature, no not in Adam in his state of innocence; it is not a working upon the old principles of nature, nor a working them up to an higher pitch: it is not an improvement of them, nor a repairing of the broken, ruined image of God in man. But it is altogether a new work; it is called a creature, being a work of almighty power; and a new creature, and a new man, consisting of various parts, and these all new: there are

in it a “new heart”, and a “new spirit”, a new understanding, to know and understand things, never known nor understood before: a new heart, to know God; not as the God of nature and providence; but as the God of Grace, God in Christ, God in a Mediator; the love of God in him, the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it made with him; Christ, and the fullness of grace in him, pardon of sin through his blood, justification by his righteousness, atonement by his sacrifice, and acceptance with God through him, and complete salvation by him; things which Adam knew nothing of in Paradise: in this new heart are new desires after these objects, to know more of them, new affections, which are placed upon them, new delights in them, and new joys, which arise from them (Ezek. 36:26; 1 John 5:20; 1 Cor. 2:9). In this new man, are “new eyes” to see with; to some God does not give eyes to see divine and spiritual things; but to regenerated ones he does; they have a seeing eye, made by the Lord (Deut. 29:4; Prov. 20:12), by which they see their lost state and condition by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, their own ability to make atonement by anything that can be done by them; the insufficiency of their own righteousness; their impotence to every good work, and want of strength to help themselves out of the state and condition in which they are, and the need they are in of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and of salvation by him. They have the eye of faith, by which they behold the glories of Christ’s Person, the fullness of his grace, the excellency of his righteousness, the virtue of his blood and sacrifice, and the suitableness and completeness of his salvation: and regeneration, in this view of it, is no other than spiritual light in the understanding. Moreover, in the new man are new ears to hear with; all have not ears to hear; some have, and they have them from the Lord, and blessed are they! (Rev. 2:11; Deut. 29:4; Prov. 20:12; Matthew 13:16,17), they hear the word in a manner they never heard before; they hear it as to understand it, and receive the love of it; so as to distinguish the voice of Christ in it, from the voice of a stranger; so as to feel it work effectually in them, and become the power of God unto salvation to them; they know the joyful sound, and rejoice to hear it. The new man has also “new hands”, to handle and to work with; the hand of faith, to receive Christ as the Saviour and Redeemer,

to lay hold on him for life and salvation, to embrace him, hold him fast, and not let him go; to handle him, the Word of life, and receive from him grace for grace: and they have hands to work with, and do work from better principles, and to better purposes than before. And they have “new feet” to walk with, to flee to Christ, the City of refuge; to walk by faith in him; and to walk on in him, as they have received him; to run with cheerfulness the ways of his commandments; to follow hard after him, and to follow on to know him; and even to run, and not be weary, and to walk, and not faint.

4. Regeneration is expressed by being quickened. As there is a quickening time in natural generation; so there is in regeneration; “You hath he quickened” (Eph. 2:1). Previous to regeneration, men are dead while they live; though corporally alive, are morally dead, dead in a moral sense, as to spiritual things, in all the powers and faculties of their souls; they have no more knowledge of them, affection for them, will to them, or power to perform them, than a dead man has with respect to things natural; but in regeneration, a principle of spiritual life is infused; that is a time of life when the Lord speaks life into them, and produces it in them. Christ is the resurrection and life unto them, or raises them from a death of sin to a life of grace; and the spirit of life, from Christ, enters into them. Regeneration is a passing from death to life; it is a principle of spiritual life implanted in the heart; in consequence of which, a man breathes, in a spiritual sense; where there is breath, there is life. God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and he became a living soul, or a living person, and breathed again: so the Spirit of God breathes on dry bones, and they live, and breathe again. Prayer is the spiritual breath of a regenerate man; “Behold, he prayeth!” is observed of Saul when regenerated; who, just before, had been breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ. A regenerate man breathes in prayer to God, and pants after him; after more knowledge of him in Christ, after communion with him, after the discoveries of his love; particularly after pardoning grace and mercy: and sometimes these breathings and desires are only expressed by sighs and groans, yet these are a sign of life; if a man groans, it is plain he is alive. There are, in a regenerated man, which shows that he is made alive, cravings

after spiritual food: as soon as an infant is born, it shows motions for its mother's milk, after the breast: so newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. They have their spiritual senses exercised about spiritual objects; they have what answer to the senses in animal life, their seeing and hearing, as before observed, and also their feeling; they feel the burden of sin on their consciences; the workings of the Spirit of God in their hearts; as well as handle Christ, the Word of life; which makes it a plain case that they are alive; a dead man feels nothing. They have a spiritual taste, a gust for spiritual things; the word of Christ is sweeter to their taste than honey, or the honeycomb; they sit under his shadow with pleasure, and his fruit, the blessings of his grace, are sweet unto their taste; they taste that the Lord is gracious, and invite others to taste and see also how good he is; they savour the things which be of God, and not of men; Christ, and his grace, are savoury to them; his robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, smell delightfully as myrrh, &c. (Song of Sol. 1:3; Ps. 45:8) and these spiritual senses, and the exercise of them in them, show them to be alive, or born again; such persons live a life of faith; they live by faith; not upon it, but on Christ, the object of it; and they grow up into him their Head, from whom they receive nourishment; and so increase with the increase of God; which is an evidence of life. In a word, they live a new and another life than they did before; not to themselves, nor to the lusts of men; but to God, and to Christ who died for them, and rose again; they walk in newness of life.

5. Regeneration is signified by "Christ being formed in the heart" (Gal. 4:19), his image is stamped in regeneration; not the image of the first Adam, but of the second Adam; for the new man is after the image of him who has anew created it, which is the image of Christ; to be conformed to which God's elect are predestinated, and which takes place in regeneration (Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10). The graces of Christ, as faith, and hope, and love, are wrought in the hearts of regenerate persons, and soon appear there; yea, Christ himself lives in them; "Not I", says the apostle, "but Christ lives in me"; he dwells by faith there; Christ, and the believer, mutually dwell in each other.

6. Regeneration is said to be "a partaking of the divine nature" (2

Pet. 1:4), not of the nature of God essentially considered: a creature cannot partake of the divine essence, or have that communicated to it; this would be to deify men: the divine perfections, many of them, are utterly incommunicable, as eternity, immensity, &c. nor of the divine nature, or of it in such sense as Christ is a partaker of it, by the personal, or hypostatical union of the two natures in him; so that the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him. But in regeneration there is that wrought in the soul, which bears a resemblance to the divine nature, in spirituality, holiness, goodness, kindness, &c. and therefore is so called.

7. There are also several terms, or words, by which the grace of regeneration is expressed; as by grace itself; not as that signifies the love and favour of God towards his people, or the blessings of grace bestowed upon them; but internal grace, the work of grace in the heart; and which consists of the various graces of the Spirit implanted there; as faith, hope, and love: such as are begotten again, are begotten to a lively hope, and have it, and believe in the Son of God; and love him that begot, and him that is begotten (1 Pet. 1:3; 1 John 5:1). It is called “spirit” (John 3:6) from its author, the Spirit of God; and from its seat, the spirit of man; and from its nature, which is spiritual, and denominates men spiritual men. It is also signified by “seed” (1 John 3:9). “Whosoever is born of God—his seed remaineth in him”; which is the principle of grace infused in regeneration; and as seed contains in it virtually, all that after proceeds from it, the blade, stalk, ear, and full corn in the ear; so the first principle of grace implanted in the heart, seminally contains all the grace which afterwards appears, and all the fruits, effects, acts, and exercises of it.

II. The springs and causes of regeneration; efficient, moving, meritorious, and instrumental.

First, The efficient cause of it; who is not man, but God.

First, Not man; he cannot regenerate himself; his case, and the nature of the thing itself, show it; and it is indeed denied of him. The case in which men before regeneration are, plainly shows that it is not, and cannot be of themselves; they are quite ignorant of the thing itself. Regeneration is one, and a principal one, of the things of the Spirit of God, and which a natural man cannot discern and

understand; let him have what share he may of natural knowledge; as Nicodemus, a master in Israel, and yet said, how can these things be? and a man cannot be the author of that of which he has no knowledge: nor do men, previous to regeneration, see any need of it; as those who think themselves whole, see no need of a physician, nor make use of any; and who reckon themselves rich, and stand in need of nothing; as not of righteousness, so not of repentance; and if not of repentance, then not of regeneration. And whatsoever notion they may have of it, from what others say concerning it; they have no inclination, nor desire, nor will to it, till God works in them both to will and to do; the bias of their minds is another way; yea, their carnal minds are enmity to it; they mock at it, and count it all dream and enthusiasm. And had they any disposition of mind to it, which they have not, they have no power to effect it; they can do nothing, not the least thing of a spiritual kind; and much less perform such a work as this: this is not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; to all which may be added, and which makes it impracticable, is, that men are dead in trespasses and sins; and can no more quicken themselves than a dead man can; as soon might Lazarus have raised himself from the dead, and the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, have quickened themselves and lived.

2. The nature of the work clearly shows that it is not in the power of men to do it; it is represented as a creation; it is called a new creature, the workmanship of God created in Christ, the new man after God, created in righteousness. Now creation is a work of almighty Power; a creature cannot create the least thing, not a fly, as soon might he create a world; and as soon may a man create a world out of nothing, as create a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him. It is spoken of as a "resurrection" from the dead; and as soon might dead bodies quicken themselves, as men, dead in sin, raise themselves up to a spiritual life; this requires a power equal to that which raised Christ from the dead; and is done by the same. Its very name, "regeneration", shows the nature of it; and clearly suggests, that it is out of the power of man to effect it: as men contribute nothing to their first birth, so neither to the second; as no man generates himself, so neither can he regenerate himself; as an infant is passive

in its natural generation, and has no concern in it; so passive is a man in his spiritual generation, and is no more assisting in it. It is an “implantation” of that grace in the hearts of men which was not there before; faith is one part of it, said to be “not of ourselves”, but the gift of God; and hope is another, without which men are, while in a state of unregeneracy; and love is of such a nature, that if a man would give all he has for it, it would utterly be contemned; it is a maxim that will hold, “nil dat quod non habet”, nothing can give that which it has not: a man destitute of grace, cannot give grace, neither to himself nor to another. This work lies in taking away “the heart of stone”, and giving an “heart of flesh”; even “a new heart” and “a new spirit”: and none can do this but he who sits upon the throne, and says, “Behold, I make all things new”. To say no more, it is a “transforming” of men by the renewing of their minds, making them other men than they were before, as Saul was, and more so; the change of an Ethiopian’s skin, and of the leopard’s spots, is not greater, nor so great, as the change of a man’s heart and nature; and which, indeed, is not a change of the old man, or corruption of nature, which remains the same; but the production of the new man, or of a new principle, which was not before.

3. Regeneration is expressly denied to be of men; it is said to be “not of blood”, the blood of circumcision, “which availeth not anything; but a new creature” is of avail, when that is not; nor of the blood of ancestors, of the best of men, the most holy and most eminent for grace; the blood of such may run in the veins of men, and yet they be destitute of regenerating grace; as was the case of the Jews, of multitudes of them, who boasted of being of Abraham’s seed, and of his blood: none need value themselves upon their blood on any account, and much less on a religious one; since all nations of the earth are made of one man’s blood, and that is tainted with sin, and conveys corruption; sin is propagated that way, but not grace: nor are men born “of the will of the flesh”, which is carnal and corrupt; impotent to that which is good, and enmity to it: regeneration is not of him that willeth; God, of his own will, begets men again, and not of theirs: nor are they born of “the will of men”, of the greatest and best of men, who are regenerated persons themselves; these, of

their will, cannot convey regenerating grace to others; if they could, a good master would regenerate every servant in his family; a good parent would regenerate every child of his; and a minister of the gospel would regenerate all that sit under his ministry; they can only pray and use the means; God only can do the work. Wherefore,

Secondly, the efficient cause of regeneration is God only; hence we so often read, “which were born of God”, and “whosoever and whatsoever is born of God” (John 1:13; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:1, 4), and this is true of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, who have each a concern in regeneration.

1. God the Father, who is the Father of Christ; he as such begets men again according to his abundant mercy (1 Pet. 1:3), and as the Father of lights, of his own sovereign will and pleasure, regenerates with the word of truth; and as light was one of the first things in the old creation, so in the new creation, or regeneration, light is the first thing sprung in the heart by the Father and fountain of light (James 1:17,18), and as the Father of men by adoption he regenerates; it is of him they are born again, who is their covenant God and Father in Christ; he has chose them unto holiness, of which regeneration is the root, seed, and principle; he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, which is done in regeneration; and it is by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he sheds abundantly through Christ the Saviour, that he saves his elect ones.

2. God the Son has also a concern in regeneration, and so great a concern, that they who am born again are said to be “born of him”, that is, Christ; for no other is spoken of in the context (1 John 2:29), he is the “resurrection and the life”; the author of the spiritual resurrection to a spiritual life, which is no other than regeneration; he quickens whom he will, as the Father does; and it is through his powerful voice in the gospel, that the dead in sin hear and live; it is his Spirit which is sent down into the hearts of his people, as to bear witness to their adoption, so to regenerate them; his grace is given to them, yea he himself is formed in them; his image is stamped upon them; and it is by virtue of his resurrection that “they are begotten” to a lively hope of the heavenly inheritance (John 11:25; 5:21, 25; Gal.

4:6,19; 1 Pet. 1:3, 4).

3. The Holy Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, and to him it is ascribed by our Lord; “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit” (John 3:5), by “water”, is not meant the ordinance of water baptism, that is never expressed by water only, without some other word with it in the text or context which determines the sense; nor is regeneration by it; Simon Magus was baptized, but not regenerated: regeneration ought to precede baptism; faith and repentance, which are graces given in regeneration, are required previous to baptism; nor is water baptism absolutely necessary to salvation; whereas without regeneration no man can neither see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the grace of the Spirit is meant by water, so called from its cleansing and purifying use, as it has to do with the blood of Jesus, hence called the washing of regeneration; of this grace the Spirit is the author, whence it bears his name, is called “Spirit”; it is the renewing of the Holy Ghost, or the new creature is his workmanship; quickening grace is from him; it is the Spirit that quickens and gives life, and frees from the law of sin and death (Titus 3:5; John 3:6; 6:63).

Secondly, The impulsive, or moving cause, is the free grace, love and mercy of God; “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us” (Eph 2:4, 5). Regeneration, as it is a time of life when men are quickened, it is a time of love, of open love; it springs from love, which moves mercy to exert itself in this way; it is “according to his abundant mercy God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope” (1 Pet. 1:3), and this was sovereign grace and mercy, not excited by any motives or conditions in men, or by any preparatory works in them; what were there in the three thousand, some of whom had been concerned in the death of Christ, converted under Peter’s sermon? what were in the jailor, who had just before used the apostles in a cruel manner? what were there in Saul, the blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious person, between these characters and his obtaining mercy? no, it is not according to the will and works, of men that they are regenerated, but God, “of his own will begat he us” (James 1:18), his own sovereign will and pleasure; and this grace and mercy is abundant; it is richly

and plentifully displayed; it is “exceeding abundant”, it flows and overflows; there is a pleonasm, a redundancy of it (1 Tim. 1:14), and to this, as a moving cause, regeneration is owing.

Thirdly, the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the virtual or procuring cause of it; there is a power or virtue in Christ’s resurrection, which has an influence on many things; as on our justification, for which he rose again, so on our regeneration; for men are said to be “begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead” (1 Pet. 1:3), and which also may be considered as the exemplary cause of it; for as there is a planting together “in the likeness of his death, so in the likeness of his resurrection from the dead”; as Christ’s resurrection was a declaration of his being the Son of God, so regeneration is an evidence of interest in the adoption of children; and as the resurrection of Christ was by the mighty power of God, so is the regeneration and quickening of a dead sinner; and as Christ’s resurrection was his first step to his glorification, so is regeneration to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God.

Fourthly, The instrumental cause of regeneration, if it may be so called, are the word of God, and the ministers of it; hence regenerate persons are said to be “born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pet. 1:23), and again, “of his own will begat he us with the word of truth” (James 1:18), unless by the Word in these passages should be meant the Eternal Logos, or essential Word of God, Christ Jesus, since Xoyoc, is used in both places; though ministers of the gospel are not only represented as ministers and instruments by whom others believe, but as spiritual fathers; “though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ”, says the apostle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:15), “yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel”; so he speaks of his son Onesimus, whom he had “begotten in his bonds” (Philemon 1:10) yet this instrumentality of the word in regeneration seems not so agreeable to the principle of grace implanted in the soul in regeneration, and to be understood with respect to that; since that is done by immediate infusion, and is represented as a creation; and now as God made no use of any instrument in the first and old creation, so neither does it seem so agreeable that he should use any

in the new creation: wherefore this is rather to be understood of the exertion of the principle of grace, and the drawing it forth into act and exercise; which is excited and encouraged by the ministry of the word, by which it appears that a man is born again; so the three thousand first converts, and the jailor, were first regenerated, or had the principle of grace wrought in their souls by the Spirit of God, and then were directed and encouraged by the ministry of the apostles to repent and believe in Christ: whereby it became manifest that they were born again. Though after all it seems plain, that the ministry of the word is the vehicle in which the Spirit of God conveys himself and his grace into the hearts of men; which is done when the word comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and works effectually, and is the power of God unto salvation; then faith comes by hearing, and ministers are instruments by whom, at least, men are encouraged to believe: “received ye the Spirit”, says the apostle, “by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith”: (Gal. 3:2), that is, by the preaching of the law, or by the preaching of the gospel? by the latter, no doubt.

III. The subjects of regeneration are next to be inquired into, or who they are God is pleased to bestow this grace upon. These are men, and not angels; good angels have no need of regeneration; they are holy angels, and continue in that state of holiness in which they were created, and are confirmed therein; they have no need of it to make them meet for heaven, they are there already; they are the angels of heaven, and always behold the face of our heavenly Father there: as for the evil angels, none of them ever had, nor never will have any share in regenerating grace; they believe indeed, but they have not the faith of regenerate ones, or that faith which worketh by love; they believe there is a God, but they do not, nor can they love him; they believe he is, and tremble at his wrath; they have no hope as regenerate ones have, but live in black despair, and ever will. They are men God regenerates, and not brutes, nor stocks nor stones; these are not subjects capable of regeneration; God could raise up children out of these, but it is not his way and work; they are rational creatures he thus operates upon, and he treats them as such in the ministry of his word; though he is represented as dealing otherwise by the

adversaries of the grace of God: but though they are men, and men only, whom God regenerates, yet not all men; all men have not faith, and hope, and love; they are a kind of first fruits of his creatures, whom of his own will he begets with the word of truth; they are such who are called out and separated from the rest of the world; they are such who are the peculiar objects of his love; for regeneration is the fruit and effect of love, and the evidence of it; they are such whom God has predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, in which image they are created in regeneration; those whom the apostle speaks of as “begotten again unto a lively hope, are first described as elect according to the foreknowledge of God” (1 Pet. 1:2, 3), and they are such who are redeemed by Christ, for they that are chosen in him, have redemption through his blood; and those are quickened by his Spirit and grace, when dead in trespasses and sins, for such is their state and condition before they are born again; they are such who are the sons of God by adopting grace, who because they are sons the Spirit of God is sent into them, as to witness their adoption, so to regenerate them, which gives evidence of it; and thus they become openly the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Let it be further observed, that though the chief and principal seat of regeneration is the spirit or soul of man, yet it extends its influence to the body and the member’s thereof; whereby they are restrained from the lusts of the flesh, as to yield a ready, constant, and universal obedience to them; or so as to “yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin”; but, on the contrary, are so under the power of the reigning principle of grace, implanted in them in regeneration, that they, “through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, and live” (Rom. 6:12,13; 8:13).

IV. The effects of regeneration, or the ends to be answered, and which are answered by it, and which show the importance and necessity of it.

I. A principal effect of it; or, if you will, a concomitant of it, is a participation of every grace of the Spirit. Regenerate ones have not only the promise of life made to them, but they have the grace of life given them; they live a new life, and walk in newness of life: they partake of the grace of spiritual light; before, their understandings

were darkened; but now they are enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of divine things; they were before, darkness itself; but now are made light in the Lord. In regeneration is laid the beginning of sanctification, which is carried on till completed, without which no man shall see the Lord; for the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness; the principle of holiness is then formed, from whence holy actions spring. The grace of repentance then appears; the stony, hard, obdurate, and impenitent heart being taken away, and an heart of flesh, susceptible of divine impressions, being given; on which follow, a sense of sin, sorrow for it after a godly sort, and repentance unto life and unto salvation, which is not to be repented of: faith in Christ, which is not of a man's self, but the gift of God, and the operation of the Spirit of God, is now given and brought into exercise; which being an effect, is an evidence of regeneration; for "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ", and especially that believes in Christ, as his Saviour and Redeemer, "is born of God" (1 John 5:1), and such have hope of eternal life by Christ; while unregenerate men are without hope, without a true, solid, and well grounded hope; but in regeneration, they are begotten to a "lively hope", and have it; a good hope, through grace, founded upon the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, which is of use to them both in life and death. Regenerated persons have their "hearts circumcised", which is but another phrase for regenerating grace, "to love the Lord their God with all their heart and soul" (Deut. 30:6), and though before, their carnal minds were enmity to God, and all that is good; now they love him, and all that belong to him, his word, worship, ordinances, and people; and by this it is known, that they "have passed from death to life", which is no other than regeneration, "because they love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). In short, regenerate persons are partakers of all the fruits of the Spirit; of all other graces, besides those mentioned; as humility, patience, self-denial, and resignation to the will of God. And they are blessed with such measures of grace and spiritual strength, as to be able to resist sin and Satan, and to overcome the world, and every spiritual enemy; "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world", the god of it, the men in it, and the lusts thereof; "Whosoever

is born of God, sinneth not”, does not live in sin, nor is he overcome by it; “but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself” from Satan, and his temptations, from being overcome with them; “and that wicked one toucheth him not”: being clothed with the whole armour of God, which he has skill to wield; he keeps him off, and at bay, so that he cannot come in with him; he holds up the shield of faith to him, whereby he quenches all his fiery darts (1 John 5:4,18)

2. Knowledge, and actual enjoyment of the several blessings of grace, follow upon regeneration. The covenant of grace is “ordered in all things”, and is full of all spiritual blessings; and a grant of all the blessings of grace was made to Christ, and to the elect in him, before the world began, and they were secretly blessed with them in him as early; but then till the Spirit of God is sent down into their hearts in regeneration, to make known unto them the things which God has freely given them, they are strangers to them, and have no knowledge of them, cannot claim their interest in them, nor are they actually possessed of them. They are loved of God with an everlasting love; but then the first open display of it to them is in regeneration, when God draws them with lovingkindness to himself, as a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of his ancient love to them. They are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; but this is not known by them till the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; working powerfully in them, regenerating, quickening, and sanctifying them; when that holiness to which they are chosen, is implanted, and that image of Christ, to which they are predestinated, is stamped: there is an union with Christ, which election in him gives; and there is a legal union between him and the elect, as between a surety and debtor, in virtue of suretyship engagements for them; and there is a mystical union, as between head and members; and a conjugal one, as between man and wife: but before regeneration there is no vital union, or such an union as between vine and branches, by which they actually receive life, and grace, and nourishment, and bear, and bring forth fruit. They are the sons of God by predestination; and in covenant, the adoption of children belongs, unto them; but this does not appear till regeneration takes place, when they receive in person the power

and privilege of it, and are manifestly the sons of God by faith in Christ. Justification was a sentence conceived in the mind of God from eternity; was pronounced on Christ, and his people in him, when he rose from the dead; but is not known to those interested in it, till the Spirit of God reveals the righteousness of Christ from faith to faith, and pronounces upon it the sentence of justification in the conscience of the believer; until he is born again, he has no knowledge of this blessing, no comfortable perception of it; nor can he claim his interest in it, nor have that peace and joy which flow from it. And now it is that an awakened sinner has the application of pardoning grace and mercy; for though pardon of sin is provided in covenant, and the blood of Christ is shed for it, and he is exalted to give it; yet it is not actually given, applied, and enjoyed, until repentance is given also; for they are both in Christ's gift together; and when also it is that God blesses his people with peace, with peace of conscience, flowing from the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ.

3. Another effect of regeneration is, a fitness and capacity for the performance of good works. In regeneration men are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works"; and by their new creation, become fit for, and capable of, performing them; the new man is formed in them "unto righteousness and true holiness", to the acts and exercises of righteousness and holiness (Eph 2:10; 4:24), such who are born again, are "sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21), whereas, an unregenerate man is "to every good work reprobate"; he has neither will nor power to perform that which is good, till God "works in him both to will and to do". The principal ingredients in good works are wanting in them, wherefore they cannot be acceptable to God: and, indeed, "without faith", as these are without it, "it is impossible to please God"; nor can they that are "in the flesh", who are carnal and unregenerate, "please God"; that is, do those things which are pleasing to him (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 8:8), without the Spirit of God, and the grace and strength of Christ, nothing of this kind can be performed; wherefore God has promised to put his "Spirit" in his people, which he does in regeneration, to "cause them to walk in his statutes, and to keep

his judgments, and do them”: so though they can do nothing of themselves, yet, through the Spirit, grace, and strength of Christ, they can do all things (Ezek. 36:27; Phil. 4:13) to which they must be referred; even a very heathen could say, “Whatever good thing thou dost, ascribe it to God.”

4. Regeneration gives a meetness for the kingdom of God; without this, no man can see, nor enter into it (John 3:3, 5), whether by “the kingdom of God” is meant, a gospel church state, and a participation of the privileges and ordinances of it, or the ultimate state of glory and happiness: the former may be meant, into which publicans and harlots went before the Pharisees; and which they would neither enter into themselves, nor suffer others to go in who were entering; and a removal of which from them, Christ threatens them with (Matt. 23:13; 21:31, 43). Unregenerate men may indeed, in a sense, see and enter into this kingdom of God; they may attend the word, and embrace the truths of it, make a profession of faith, submit to gospel ordinances, and become members of a gospel church; this they may do in fact, but not of right; they are such as do not come in at the right door, Christ, and true faith in him; but climb up another way, and are thieves and robbers; hypocrites in Zion, tares in Christ’s field, and foolish virgins among the wise; to whom the kingdom of God is compared. Unregenerate men have not the proper qualifications for the church of God, and the ordinances of it; these particularly, are faith and repentance; these are required to a person’s admission to baptism (Matthew 3:2, 8; Acts 2:38; 8:12, 37), and so to the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper; “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat” (1 Cor. 11:28), whether he has true repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and if such a man, devoid of these, which attend or flow from regeneration, gets admitted to these ordinances, and into a church state, of what avail is it to him here or hereafter? what does it signify now to have the form of godliness, without the power? a name to live, and yet be dead? or hereafter; for “what is the hope of the hypocrite” of what use is it to him? “though he hath gained” the name of a professor, of a religious man, and a place in the house of God, “when God takes away his soul”, these will be of no service to him? Though may be

the ultimate state of glory may be meant by the kingdom of God, in the above passages; as in (1 Cor. 6:9; Luke 12:32; Matt. 25:34). An unregenerate man has no apparent right unto it; nor meetness for it. The proper right unto it lies in adoption; “If children, then heirs”. But this right, so founded, does not appear till a man is born again, which is the evidence of adoption; nor can he be meet and fit for it, without this grace of God regenerating, quickening, and sanctifying; for without holiness man shall see the Lord; and nothing shall enter into the heavenly state that defiles or makes an abomination; but when men are born again, they are, heirs apparent to the heavenly inheritance; they are rich faith, and heirs of a kingdom; and are meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light.

V. The properties of regeneration; and which may serve to throw more light on the nature of it.

1. Regeneration is a passive work, or rather, men are passive in it; as they must needs be, in the first infusion and implantation of grace, and the quickening of them; even as passive as the first matter created was, out of which all things were made; and as a dead man, when raised from the dead is; or as the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision were, while the Spirit of God breathed upon them, and then they became active; and as infants are in the natural generation of them; for men no more contribute to their spiritual birth, than infants do to their natural birth; all this appears from regeneration being a creation, a resurrection from the dead, and a being begotten and born again.

2. It is an irresistible act of God’s grace; no more resistance can be made unto it, than there could be in the first matter to its creation; or in a dead man to his resurrection; or in an infant to its generation. Regeneration is of the will of God, which cannot be resisted; the Spirit, in regeneration, is like “the wind”, which “bloweth where it listeth”, and none can hinder it “so is everyone that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8), it is done by the power of God, which is uncontrollable; whatever aversion, contrariety, and opposition there may be in the corrupt nature of men unto it, that is soon and easily overcome by the power of divine grace; when the stony heart is taken away, and an heart of flesh is given. When God works, nothing can let; an unwilling people are made willing in the day of his power;

high thoughts, reasonings, and imaginations of the carnal mind, are cast down by him.

3. It is an act that is instantaneously done, at once; it is not like sanctification it gives rise to; which is but a begun work, and is carried on gradually; faith grows, hope and love abound more and more, and spiritual light and knowledge increase by degrees, till they come to the perfect day: but regeneration is at once; as an infant in nature is generated at once, and is also born at once, and not by degrees; so it is in spiritual generation; one man cannot be said to be more regenerated than another, though he may be more sanctified; and the same man cannot be said to be more regenerated at one time than at another.

4. As it is done at once, so it is perfect; some persons speak of a regenerate and an unregenerate part in men; and that they are partly regenerate and partly unregenerate. I must confess I do not understand this; since regeneration is a new creature, and perfect in its kind. There are, indeed, two principles in a man that is born again; a principle of corrupt nature, and a principle of grace; the one is called the old man, and the other the new: the whole old man is unregenerate, no part in him is regenerated; he remains untouched, and is just the same he was, only deprived of his power and dominion; and the new man is wholly regenerate, no unregenerate part in him: there is no sin in him, nor done by him, he cannot commit sin; “the king’s daughter is all glorious within”: a man child, as soon as born, having all its limbs, is a perfect man, as to parts, though these are not at their full growth and size, as they will be, if it lives: so the new man is a perfect man at once, as to parts, though as yet not arrived to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

5. The grace of regeneration can never be lost; once regenerated, and always so; one that is born in a spiritual sense, can never be unborn again; for he cannot die a spiritual death; he is born of incorruptible and immortal seed; he is born of water and of the Spirit, or of the grace of the Spirit, which is as a well of living water in him, springing up unto everlasting life: and all such who are begotten again unto a lively hope of a glorious inheritance, are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation (1 Pet. 1:3-5, 23).

To which may be added,

6. An adjunct which always accompanies regeneration, a spiritual warfare between the old and the new man, the principle of sin, and the principle of grace; the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; the law in the members warring against the law of the mind; which are, as it were, a company of two armies engaged in war with each other, which always issues in a victory on the side of the new creature; for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and sin and Satan, and every enemy,

Chapter 12

OF EFFECTUAL CALLING

Though effectual calling may be distinguished from regeneration, taken more strictly, for the first infusion and impartation of grace in the heart; yet it is closely connected with it, and the consideration of it naturally follows upon it. It is, with great propriety, said to be “effectual” calling, to distinguish it from another calling, which is not effectual; at least, which is not attended with any salutary effect to the persons called with it; of which more hereafter. Concerning effectual calling, the following things may be observed.

1. What it is, and the nature of it. It is not of a civil kind, of which there are various sorts; as a call to an office in state; so Saul and David were chosen and called to take upon them the government of the people of Israel: likewise a call to do some particular service, which God has appointed men to do; so Bezaleel was called and qualified to devise and do some curious work for the tabernacle, and to teach and direct others in it: so the Medes and Persians were sanctified, or set apart by the Lord, and called by him to the destruction of Babylon; and Cyrus was raised up, and called from a far country, to let the captive Jews go free. Indeed, every ordinary occupation, employment, and business of life, men are brought up in, and exercise, is a calling, and a calling of God; hence the apostle says, “Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called” (1 Cor. 7:20, 24). But the calling now to be treated of is of a religious kind; and of which also there are various sorts; as a call to an ecclesiastical office, whether extraordinary or ordinary; so Aaron and his sons

were called to officiate in the priesthood; for “no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Heb. 5:4), so the twelve disciples of Christ were called to apostleship; and Paul, “a servant of Christ”, is said to be “called to be an apostle” (Rom. 1:1), and ordinary ministers of the word, are set apart and called by the Lord, and by his churches, to the work of the ministry they are put into. There is likewise an universal call of all men, to serve and worship the one true and living God; this call is made by the light of nature, displayed in the works of creation, which demonstrate the Being of God; and by the law of nature, written on the hearts of all men; and by the works of providence, and the bounties of it, which all have a share in, and in which God leaves not himself without a witness; and by all which men are called upon, and directed to seek after God, to worship him, and glorify him as God. And besides this, there is a more special and particular call of men, and not so general, and is either external or internal: the “external” call is by the ministry of the word; by the ministry of the prophets under the Old Testament; and of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and of Christ himself in human nature, and of his apostles under the New; and of all succeeding ministers in all ages. The “internal” call is by the Spirit and grace of God to the hearts and consciences of men; these two sometimes go together, but not always; some are externally called, and not internally called; and of those that are internally called, some are called by and through the ministry of the word, and some without it; though, for the most part, men are called by it; and because it is usually so, and this external call is a matter of moment and importance, it is necessary to be a little more large and explicit upon it. And,

First, This may be considered either as a call to saints, to such who have a work of grace already begun in them; and to such it is a call, not only to the means of grace, but to partake of the blessings of grace; to come as thirsty persons, eagerly desirous of spiritual things, “to the waters”, the ordinances, and drink at them; to “buy wine and milk”, spiritual blessings, signified hereby, without “money, and without price”, these being to be had freely: and these are also called as laboring under a sense of sin, and under a spirit of bondage, to

“come” to Christ for “rest”, peace, pardon, life, and salvation (Isa. 55:1; Matthew 11:28), and these in and by the ministry of the word, are called, excited, and encouraged to the exercise of evangelical graces, wrought in them, and bestowed upon them; as repentance, faith, hope, love, and every other; such were the three thousand converts under Peter’s sermon, and the jailor, who were under a previous work of the Spirit of God, when they were called and encouraged to repent and believe in Christ, (Acts 2:37, 38; 16:29-31), and these are also called, and urged, and pressed, in and by the ministry of the word, to a constant attendance on ordinances, and not to forsake the assembly of the saints, and to a diligent performance of every religious duty, and to be ready to every good work in general: or this external call may be considered, as a call of sinners in a state of nature and unregeneracy; but then it is not a call to them to regenerate and convert themselves, of which there is no instance; and which is the pure work of the Spirit of God: nor to make their peace with God, which they cannot make by anything they can do; and which is only made by the blood of Christ: nor to get an interest in Christ, which is not got, but given: nor to the exercise of evangelical grace, which they have not, and therefore can never exercise: nor to any spiritual vital acts, which they are incapable of, being natural men, and dead in trespasses and sins. Nor is the gospel ministry an offer of Christ, and of his grace and salvation by him, which are not in the power of the ministers of it to give, nor of carnal men to receive; the gospel is not an offer, but a preaching of Christ crucified, a proclamation of the unsearchable riches of his grace, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and life, and salvation by him. Yet there is something in which the ministry of the word, and the call by it, have to do with unregenerate sinners: they may be, and should be called upon, to perform the natural duties of religion; to a natural faith, to give credit to divine revelation, to believe the external report of the gospel, which not to do, is the sin of the deists; to repent of sin committed, which even the light of nature dictates; and God, in his word, commands all men everywhere to repent: to pray to God for forgiveness, as Simon Magus was directed by the apostle: and to pray to God for daily mercies that are needed, is a natural and moral duty; as well as to give him

praise, and return thanks for mercies received, which all men that have breath are under obligation to do. They may, and should be called upon to attend the outward means of grace, and to make use of them; to read the Holy Scriptures, which have been the means of the conversion of some; to hear the word, and wait on the ministry of it, which may be blessed unto them, for the effectual calling of them. And it is a part of the ministry of the word to lay before men their fallen, miserable, lost, and undone estate by nature; to open to them the nature of sin, its pollution and guilt, and the sad consequences of it; to inform them of their incapacity to make atonement for it; and of their impotence and inability to do what is spiritually good; and of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them in the sight of God: and they are to be made acquainted, that salvation is alone by Christ, and not other ways; and the fullness, freeness, and suitableness of this salvation, are to be preached before them; and the whole to be left to the Spirit of God, to make application of it as he shall think fit.

Secondly, this external call by the ministry is not universal, nor ever was: under the former dispensation God sent his word unto Jacob and his statutes unto Israel; as for other nations, they knew them not; God overlooked the heathens in their times of ignorance for hundreds of years together, and sent no prophet nor minister unto them, to acquaint them with his mind and will, and lead them into the knowledge of divine things. When the gospel dispensation took place, the apostles of Christ were forbid, by their first commission, to go to the Gentiles, or to any of the cities of the Samaritans; and though, upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, their commission was enlarged, and they were sent to preach to all nations of the world; yet before they could reach to the extent of their commission, multitudes must be dead, to whom the gospel call, or the sound of it, never reached. To say nothing of the new world, or America, supposed not then to be discovered; in succeeding ages, many parts of the world have been without the preaching of the word, and are at this day; and, indeed, it is confined to a very small part of it; and where it is, though many may be externally called by it, yet few are chosen, and internally called by the Spirit and grace of God: and

as this call is of many who are not chosen, so of many who are not sanctified, or that are not called with an holy calling; and so of many who are not saved; for it is to some the savour of death unto death.

Thirdly, the external call is frequently rejected, and for the most part, and by the greater numbers of those that hear it; “I have called, and ye have refused: I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people”; and to these it must be useless, as to any salutary effects; many that are called and invited to attend the gospel ministry refuse to come; such were they that were bidden and called to the marriage feast; but they made light of it, and some went to their farms, and others to their merchandise; such were the Scribes and Pharisees, who would neither go into the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer others that were entering to go in but shut it up against them; that is, would neither attend the ministry of Christ and his apostles themselves, nor suffer others, but discouraged them from it, by their reproaches, threats, and persecutions, as our Lord complains (Matthew 23:13,37). Others that attend the ministry of the word, do it in a careless and negligent manner, not minding what they hear, but like leaking vessels, let it slip, or run out; or stop their ears to the voice of the charmer, charming ever so wisely; many that hear have an aversion to what they hear; the gospel is an hard saying to them, foolishness to some, and a stumblingblock to others; some mock and scoff at it, as the Athenians did; and others, as the Jews, contradict and blaspheme it, putting it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life; and therefore it is no wonder it becomes of no saving effect to either of these sort of persons: and, indeed, it is always insufficient and ineffectual of itself unto real conversion, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God; when God goes forth with his ministers, working with them, then work is done, but not otherwise; when the hand of the Lord is upon them, or his power attends their ministry, many believe and turn to the Lord; but unless his arm is revealed, the report of the gospel will not be believed, nor the call of it be attended to. Yet,

Fourthly, the external ministry of the word, or the outward call by it, is not in vain; it has its usefulness, and various ends are answered by it. All things are for the elect’s sake, and particularly

the ministration of the gospel, which to them is the savour of life unto life; as it is the will of God that his chosen people, and others, should promiscuously dwell together, so he sends his gospel to them in general, and by it takes out a people for his name; calls them by his grace effectually, out of the world, and separates them from the men of it, to be a peculiar people to himself; and the rest are thereby left inexcusable; for if the light of nature leaves men so, much more the light of the gospel; the condemnation of men is aggravated by it; inasmuch, as though they are surrounded with light, they love darkness rather than light. Moreover, by the external ministry of the word, many, though not effectually called, become more civilized and more moral in their conversation; are reformed, as to their outward manners; and through a speculative knowledge of the gospel, escape the grossest pollutions of the world: and others are brought by it to a temporary faith, to believe for awhile, to embrace the gospel notionally, to submit to the ordinances of it, make a profession of religion, by which means they become serviceable to support the interest of it. So that it comports with the wisdom of God that there should be such an outward call of many who are not internally called: nor is he to be charged for it with dissimulation and insincerity; since by it he declares what is his good, perfect, and acceptable will, and what would be grateful and well pleasing to him was it complied with and done. Should it be said, that that is called for and required which man has not power to perform; be it so, which yet may be questioned, it should be observed, that though man by sin has lost his power to comply with the will of God by an obedience to it; God has not lost his power, right, and authority to command. Wherefore, when the ministry of the word is slighted, and the gospel call rejected, it is most righteously resented by the Lord; see Proverbs 1:24-28 and such are justly punished with everlasting destruction by him (1 Peter 4:17; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9).

The “internal” call is next to be considered, which is sometimes immediately, and without the ministry of the word; as seems to be the case of the disciples of Christ, of the apostle Paul, and of Zacchaeus, and others: and sometimes mediately by the word; for faith comes by hearing, and bearing by the word; so the three thousand under

Peter's sermon, and those in the family of Cornelius, on whom the Holy Spirit fell while the apostle was preaching; and this is the ordinary way in which God calls men by his grace; and which call is,

1. Out of great and gross darkness, into marvelous and surprising light (1 Pet. 2:9). God's elect, while in a state of nature, are in a state of darkness and ignorance; they are in the dark about God, his perfections, purposes, counsels, and methods of grace; about themselves, the state and condition they are in; about sin, the nature of it, and its sad consequences; about the Person of Christ, his offices, and the way of salvation by him; about the Spirit, his work and operations on the souls of men; and about the scriptures, and the doctrines of the gospel contained in them: but in effectual calling the eyes of their understandings are opened and enlightened, and they are made light in the Lord. When the apostle Paul was called by grace, a light surrounded him, as an emblem of that internal light which was sprung in him; and after that there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, as a token of the removal of his former darkness and ignorance: as God, in the first creation, commanded light to shine out of darkness; so in the new creation, and at effectual calling, he irradiates the minds of his called ones with a divine light, in which they see light; see what sin is, what an evil thing it is, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; see themselves lost and undone by it, and just ready to perish; see their incapacity to save themselves, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; see the glory, fulness, and grace of Christ, the completeness and suitableness of him as a Saviour; and see the truths and promises of the gospel, the great doctrines of it, in another light than they did before; so as to understand them, receive the love of them, believe them with the heart, and distinguish them from those that differ, and rejoice at them, as bringing good news and glad tidings of good things.

2. The internal call, is a call of men out of bondage, out of worse than Egyptian bondage, into liberty, even the glorious liberty of the children of God; "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty" (Gal. 5:13), while in a state of nature, they are, as they were by nature, home born slaves, slaves to their sinful lusts and pleasures, and are

brought into bondage by them, and held under the power of them, as in a prison; but in the effectual calling, the fetters and shackles of sin are broken off, and the prison doors opened, and they are bid to go forth and show themselves; they become free from the tyranny of sin, and sin has no more dominion over them: in their state before calling, they are under the power and influence of Satan, the strong man armed who keeps possession of them, by whom they are kept in bondage, and led captive by him at his will; but when effectually called, they are taken out of his hands, and are turned from the power of Satan unto God, and are delivered from the power of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, where they are Christ's free men. While they are seeking righteousness and life by the works of the law, they are brought into bondage, for that genders to bondage, and brings on a spirit of bondage upon those that are under it; but in effectual calling they are delivered from it, by the Spirit of God, as a free spirit; and are called to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage; they are called and allowed to make use of a liberty of access to God, through Christ, by one Spirit, and to enjoy all the privileges of the gospel, and the immunities of a gospel church state, being fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

3. The internal call, is a call of persons from fellowship with the men of the world, to fellowship with Christ; "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9), it is like that of the call of Christ to his church (Song of Sol. 4:8). "Come with me from Lebanon", &c. a call to forsake the vanities, pleasures, and profits of the world, and the company of the men of it, and go along with him, and enjoy communion with him: as Abraham was called out of his country, from his kindred, and his father's house; so saints are called to forsake their own people, and their father's house; to relinquish the society of their former companions, and to have no fellowship with ungodly men: not that they are to have no civil correspondence, commerce, and society with the men of the world; for then, as the apostle says, they must needs go out of it; but not to join with them in superstitious worship, in acts of idolatry,

in a false religion, and in the observance of the commandments of men; nor in any sinful, profane, and immoral practices; and as much as may be, should shun and avoid all unnecessary company, and conversation with them; for evil communications corrupt good manners; and it is a grief to the people of God, to be obliged to dwell among them, and with them, as it was to Lot, to Isaac and Rebekah, to David, Isaiah, and others: the people of God, in the effectual calling, are called to better company, to communion with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; to fellowship with one another; to converse with saints, the excellent in the earth, in whom is all their delight.

4. Such as are effectually called by the Spirit and grace of God, are called to peace; “God hath called us to peace” (1 Cor. 7:15), to internal peace, to peace of mind and conscience; which men, in a state of nature, are strangers to; for there is no peace to the wicked: but God calls his people to it, and blesses them with it; with a peace which passes all understanding; with peace in the midst of the tribulations of the world; with a peace which the world can neither give nor take away; and which arises from the blood and righteousness of Christ, and is part of that kingdom of God which is within them, into which they are brought at effectual calling. They are likewise called to peace among themselves, and with all men as much as possible; “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body” (Col. 3:15).

5. They are called out of a state of unholiness and sinfulness, into a state of holiness and righteousness; for being created anew in righteousness and true holiness, and created in Christ Jesus to good works, they are called to the exercise of them; to live holily, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world; “God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thess. 4:7), and “hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Pet. 1:3), to glorious acts of virtue and goodness, becoming the nature of their call, and of him that has called them; “As he which hath called you is holy” &c. (1 Pet. 1:15).

6. The internal call, is a call of persons “into the grace of Christ” (Gal. 1:6), into the gospel of the grace of Christ, as appears by what follows, to receive it, embrace it, profess it, and stand fast in it; and

into the fullness of grace in Christ, to receive out of it, to be strong in it, to exercise faith on it: and to the blessings of grace in his hands, and which are given forth by him; to lay hold upon them, take them to themselves, and claim their interest in them; all being theirs, they being Christ's, his chosen, redeemed, and called ones; and by whom they have access into the state of grace in which they stand.

7. It is a call of them to a grate of happiness and bliss in another world; "Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (1 Thess 2:12), to a glory, which is a kingdom; to possess a kingdom of grace now, which cannot be removed; and to inherit the kingdom of glory hereafter, which is an everlasting one; to a glory which is given to Christ; "To the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:14; John 17:22; Col. 3:4), and to eternal glory by Christ Jesus (1 Pet. 5:10), and to "lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:12), and to an eternal inheritance; and "they which are called, receive the promise of it," and shall certainly enjoy it; having a meetness for it, through the grace of God, and a right unto it, through the righteousness of Christ (1 Pet. 1:3,4; Heb. 9:15), and they are all "called in one hope of their calling" (Eph. 4:4) to partake of the same inheritance with the saints in light; and to enjoy the same blessed hope laid up for them in heaven; and for which hope of righteousness they wait by faith, through the holy Spirit.

II. The author and causes of effectual calling, efficient, impulsive, instrumental, and final.

1. The efficient cause is God; "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you; God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Thess. 2:12; 4:7; 2 Tim. 1:8, 9). Sometimes it is ascribed to God personally, to the three divine Persons in the Godhead, to Father, Son, and Spirit; to the Father, when he is said to call by his grace, and reveal his Son; and to call unto the fellowship of his Son; and to call men by Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:15, 16; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:10), in which places, God that calls, is distinguished from his Son Jesus Christ. Sometimes calling is ascribed to the Son; so Wisdom, the eternal Logos, Word, and Son of God, is represented as calling both externally and internally (Prov. 1:20 &c; Prov. 8:1-4), and saints are said to be the called of Jesus Christ, whom he has a property in, as

called ones, being efficiently called by him. And sometimes it is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; “There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling”; that is, by the one Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God; and to him are owing that illumination, and that freedom from bondage, and that fellowship with Christ, which make a principal part of what men in the effectual calling are called into; and it is he that leads to peace and holiness, and into the grace of Christ, and encourages to hope and wait for glory: so that effectual calling is a divine work, and not human.

2. The impulsive, or moving cause of effectual calling, are not the works of men, but the sovereign will, pleasure, purpose, and grace of God; as in 2 Timothy 1:9.

(1) 1. The works of men are not the moving or impulsive cause of their being called of God; for those must be either such as are done before calling, or after it: not before calling; for works done then are not properly good works; they are not subjectively good; the doers of them are not good men; and a man must be a good man, before he can perform good works; and though some works done by bad men, may have the show and appearance of good, and be materially, or as to the matter of them, good actions; yet are not such circumstantially: the requisites and circumstances of a good work, being wanting in them; as riot being done according to the will of God, and in obedience to it; nor in faith, and so sin; nor proceeding from a principle of love to God, nor directed to his glory: and such works can never be moving causes of men being called. Nor can good works after calling be such; for they are fruits and effects of the effectual calling; and therefore cannot be ranked among the causes of it. Men, in and by effectual calling, are sanctified, and become meet for their master’s use, and ready to every good work.

(2). The sovereign will, pleasure, and purpose of God, are what move and determine him to call, by his grace, any of the sons of men: not their wills; for “it is not of him that willeth”, but of his own good will and pleasure; they that are called, are “called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28), he has, in his eternal purpose, fixed upon the particular persons whom he will call, and the time when he will call them; for there is a time for every purpose, and so for this, called

the time of life and of love; and the place where they shall be called; in this and that place; as at Corinth, Philippi, &c. the means and occasion of their calling, with the several circumstances thereof, are all according to a divine purpose; and show that the whole is owing to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will.

(3). The free grace of God, in a sovereign, distinguishing way and manner, may truly be said to be the grand, impulsive, moving cause of the effectual calling; to this the apostle ascribed his own; “And called me by his grace”: that is, of his pure grace, and according to it. God, as the God of all grace, calls men to grace and glory by Christ; and an abundance of grace is displayed in calling; yea, the first open display of grace, and discovery of love, to a sinner himself, is then made; then is he drawn with loving kindness, as a frail and evidence of everlasting love; and therefore the time of calling, is called a time of love (Jer. 31:3; Ezek. 16:8), and it being of some particular persons, and not of all, shows it to be the effect of distinguishing grace, and of sovereign good will; and, indeed, nothing out of God could move him to such an act as this; and as his grace is his own, he may call by it, and to it, and bestow it on whom he pleases.

3. The instrumental cause, or rather means of the effectual calling, is the ministry of the word. Sometimes, indeed, it is brought about by some remarkable providence, and without the word; but generally it is by it; “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”. Christ stands in the gospel ministry, at the door of men’s hearts, and knocks and calls; and having the key of the house of David, he opens the heart by his power and grace, and lets himself in; and in this way, and by this means, the Spirit, and his graces, are received; men are called both to grace and glory by the gospel (Gal. 1:6; 2 Thess. 2:14).

4. The final causes, or rather the ends of the effectual calling, which are subordinate and ultimate: the subordinate end, is the salvation of God’s elect, that they may possess the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; to both which they are called. And the ultimate end is the glory of the grace of God; for this end God forms his people in regeneration and the effectual calling; namely, to show forth his praise: and this end is answered, in part, in this life, they ascribing all

they have, and expect to have, solely to the free grace of God; and it will be consummately answered in the world to come, when all their work will be praise; attributing the whole of their salvation to the sovereign will and pleasure, grace and goodness, of God.

III. The subjects of the effectual calling, or who they are whom God calls by his grace.

1. They are such whom God has chosen to grace and glory; “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called” (Rom. 8:30). Election and calling are of equal extent; the objects are the same, neither more nor fewer; they that were chosen from eternity, are called in time; and they that are called in time, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; the “vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory”, are explained and described by such “whom God hath called; not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles” (Rom. 9:23, 24).

2. They are such who are in Christ, and secured in him; for they are “called according to grace given them, in Christ Jesus before the world began”; and as grace was given them in him so early, they themselves, in some sense, must then have a being in him; which they have, through being chosen in him, and thereby coming into his hands, they are secured and preserved in him, in consequence of which they are called by grace; thus stands the order of things, as put by the apostle Jude 1:1. “To them that are sanctified by God the Father”; that is, set apart by him in eternal election; and preserved in Christ Jesus, being put into his hands by that act of grace; and called, in virtue of the foregoing acts of grace.

3. They are such who are redeemed by Christ; calling, follows redemption, and is the certain consequent of it; “I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine” (Isa. 43:1). Election, redemption, and calling, are of the same persons; those whom God has chosen in Christ, are redeemed by Christ; and who are chosen and redeemed, are, sooner or later, called; and the reason of their being called, is because they are redeemed; “I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them” (Zech. 10:8).

4. Those that are called, are, for the most part, either the meanest, or the vilest, among men; the meanest, as to their outward circumstances; “Not many mighty, not many noble are called”; and

the meanest, as to their internal capacities; “Not many wise men after the flesh”; the things of the gospel, and of the grace of God, are “hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes” (1 Cor. 1:26; Jas. 2:5; Matthew 11:25), and oftentimes some of the worst arid vilest of sinners are called by grace; publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God, when scribes and Pharisees did not; attended the ministry of the word, and were called by it, when they were not; and Christ came, as he himself says, “not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance”, (Matthew 21:31, 32; 9:13; 1 Cor 6:11).

IV. The properties of effectual calling; which may lead more clearly and fully into the nature of it; though they may be, in general, collected from what has been observed.

1. It is a fruit of the love of God; because he has loved them with an everlasting love, therefore “with loving kindness he draws” them to himself, and to his Son, in the effectual calling (Jer. 31:3), and as it is only of as many as the Lord our God thinks fit to call, it appears to be an act of special and distinguishing grace; it is of special and particular persons, by special grace, and to the special blessings of it.

2. It is an act of efficacious and irresistible grace. The external call may be, and often is, resisted and rejected; but when God calls internally by his Spirit and grace, it is always effectual, and can never be resisted, so as to be ineffectual; for when God works, none can let or hinder; men, dead in trespasses and sins, rise out of their graves of sin, and live, at his all commanding voice; even as Lazarus came forth out of his grave at the call of Christ; nor could that call be resisted; and even the same power that was exerted in raising Christ himself from the dead, is displayed in the effectual calling of a sinner (Eph. 1:18-20).

3. This call is an “holy calling” (2 Tim. 1:9), the author of it is the holy God; holy in his nature, and in all his ways and works, and in this; “As he that has called you is holy” (1 Pet. 1:15), and the means by which they are called are holy; whether by reading the scriptures, which has been sometimes the case, they are styled “the holy scriptures”; or whether the first awakenings to a serious concern about divine things, are by the law; that commandment is holy, just, and good; or whether by the pure gospel of Christ; that

is a “doctrine according to godliness”, and teaches to live an holy life and conversation: and as in the effectual calling, it appears that principles of grace and holiness are wrought in men; so by it they are called to the exercise of holiness and virtue, and of the performance of every good work; they are called into a state of holiness here, and to enjoy an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance hereafter (Rom. 1:7; 1 Thess. 4:7; 2 Pet. 1:3).

4. It is an high calling (Phil. 3:14), he that calls is the high and lofty One, who dwells in the high and holy place; and in and by calling grace, he raises men from the dunghill, and sets them among princes, that they may inherit the throne of glory; however poor they may be with respect to the things of this world, yet by effectual calling they become rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom, and of an inheritance reserved for them in the highest heavens, to which they will be admitted. Wherefore,

5. This call is styled an “heavenly calling” (Heb. 3:1), it is a call out of this earthly country, to seek a better country, even an heavenly one; and those that are called, have their citizenship in heaven, and are free denizens of it; and shall enjoy the hope, the hoped for blessedness laid up for them there. For,

6. This is one of the gifts of God’s special grace, and that “calling” of his, which is without “repentance” (Rom. 11:29), it is unchangeable, irreversible, and irrevocable; such shall be preserved safe to the kingdom and glory of God, to which they are called, and shall most certainly enjoy it; for “faithful is he that has called them, who also will do it” (1 Thess. 5:23, 24), wherefore such are most happy persons; for they may be comfortably assured of their election; for “whom he did predestinate, them he also called”: election and calling are put together; the one as the fruit, effect, and evidence, of the other (2 Pet. 1:10), and election is to be known by the internal call of the Spirit, through the ministry of the word; (1 Thess. 1:4, 5), and they may also be comfortably assured of their justification; for “whom he called, them he also justified”; and such may conclude themselves safe from all charges, from all condemnation, and from wrath to come: and they may most certainly expect eternal glory; for whom God calls and justifies, “them he also glorifies”: between calling grace

and eternal happiness, there is a sure and an inseparable connection

Chapter 13

OF CONVERSION

Conversion, though it may seem, in some respects, to fall in with regeneration and the effectual calling, yet may be distinguished from them both. Regeneration is the sole act of God; conversion consists both of God's act upon men, in turning them, and of acts done by men under the influence of converting grace; they turn, being turned. Regeneration is the motion of God towards and upon the heart of a sinner; conversion is the motion of a sinner towards God, as one (Charnock) expresses it. In regeneration men are wholly passive, as they also are in the first moment of conversion; but by it become active: it is therefore sometimes expressed passively; "ye are returned", or converted (1 Pet. 2:25), and sometimes actively; "a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21), and "when it", the body of the people of the Jews, "shall turn to the Lord", which has respect to their conversion in the latter day (2 Cor 3:16). The effectual calling is the call of men out of darkness to light; and conversion answers to that call, and is the actual "turning" of men from the one to the other; so that, with propriety, conversion may be considered as distinct from regeneration and the effectual calling. Concerning which may be observed,

First, what conversion is, and wherein it lies. The conversion to be treated of is not,

1. An external one, or what lies only in an outward reformation of life and manners, such as that of the Ninevites; for this may be where internal conversion is not, as in the Scribes and Pharisees; and is what persons may depart from, and return to their former course of life again; and where it is right and genuine, it is the fruit and effect of true conversion, but not that itself.

2. Nor is it a mere doctrinal one, or a conversion from false notions before imbibed to a set of doctrines and truths which are according to the Scriptures; so men of old were converted from Judaism and heathenism to Christianity: but not all that were so converted in a doctrinal sense were true and real converts; some had

the form of godliness without the power of it, had a name to live, and be called Christians, but were dead, and so not converted; thus the recovery of professors of religion from errors fallen into, to the acknowledgement of the truth, is called a conversion of them (Jas. 5:19, 20).

3. Nor the restoration of the people of God from backslidings to which they are subject, when they are in a very affecting and importunate manner called upon to return to the Lord (Jer. 3:12, 14, 22; Hosea 14:1-4), so Peter, when he fell through temptation, and denied his Lord, and was recovered from it by a look from Christ, it is called his conversion (Luke 22:32). But,

4. The conversion under consideration is a true, real, internal work of God upon the souls of men; there is a counterfeit of it, or there is that in some men who are not really converted, which is somewhat similar to that which is always found in those that are truly converted; as, a sense of sin, and an acknowledgment of it; an apprehension of the divine displeasure at it; great distress about it, a sorrow for it, humiliation on account of it, and an abstinence from it; and something that bears a resemblance to each of these may be found in unconverted persons; though their concern about sin is chiefly for the evil that comes by it, or like to come by it, and not for the evil that is in it; so in converted persons there is sooner or later light into the gospel and the doctrines of it: particularly the doctrine of salvation by Christ, which yield relief and comfort to them under a sense of sin, and encourage faith and hope in God; and there is something like this to be observed in some who are not truly converted, who are said to be “enlightened”, that is, in a notional and doctrinal way; and to “taste” the good word of God, though it is only in a superficial manner; and to “receive it with joy”, with a flash of natural affection, which lasts for a while; and to believe it with a temporary faith, historically, and become subject to the ordinances; but yet in all this there is no heart work, whereas true genuine conversion lies,

(1). In the turn of the heart to God, of the thoughts of the heart; which are only evil, and that continually, and about evil things, not about God, and the things of God; “God is not in all their thoughts”,

nor in any of the thoughts of wicked men; but when converted, their thoughts are about their state and condition by nature, about their souls, and the eternal welfare of them; and about God, and the methods of his grace in the salvation of men: it is a turn of the “desires” of the heart, which before were after vain, carnal, worldly, sinful lusts and pleasures; but now after God and communion with him, after Christ and salvation by him, after the Spirit and the things of the Spirit: it is a turn of the “affections” of the heart, which before were “inordinate”, and ran in a wrong channel; before they were fleshly, after the things of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life: but now they are checked, and turned towards God, their hearts being circumcised to love him; and whom they love with their whole hearts and souls, because he first loved them; though before their carnal minds were enmity to him; and towards Christ, whom they now love affectionately, fervently, superlatively, and sincerely; and towards the saints, who are now the excellent in the earth, in whose conversation is all their delight, though before hateful to them; and towards the word, worship, and ordinances of God, which they take pleasure in attending on, though before a weariness to them. Conversion is a turn of the “mind” from carnal things to spiritual ones, and from earthly things to heavenly ones; yea it is a turn of the “will”, which before conversion is in a very bad state, is stubborn and inflexible, biased to and bent upon that which is evil, and averse to all that is good; but in conversion God “works in” men “both to will and to do of his good pleasure”; he gives them another will, or however a turn to their will, so that of an unwilling people, they are made a willing people in the day of his power on them; whereas they were unwilling to come to Christ for salvation, and take him alone to be their Saviour; “ye will not come unto me that ye might have life”, says Christ (John 5:40), that is, ye have no will to come to me at all for life and salvation; they chose rather to go anywhere than to him for it; but now they are willing to be saved by him, and resolve to have no other Saviour but him; yea though he slay them they will trust in him, and say he shall be our salvation; and though before they went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not and would not submit to the righteousness

of Christ; now their stout hearts, which were far from righteousness, are brought down, and they become willing to be found in Christ, and in his righteousness only; and inasmuch as before they would not have Christ to reign over them, and chose not to be subject to his laws and ordinances, now they are ready to acknowledge him as their king and governor, and turn their feet to his testimonies, and esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right.

(2). Conversion lies in a man's being turned from darkness to light; the apostle says, he was sent by Christ to the Gentiles, as a minister of the gospel, "to turn them from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18), that is, to be the instrument or means of their conversion, by preaching the gospel to them. In this conversion may seem to coincide with the effectual calling; but it may be observed, that the effectual calling is a call to, but conversion is a turning of, men from darkness to light; God not only calls unto light, but turns them to light in every sense; to God who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all; to Christ, who is the light of the world; to the gospel, which is the great light that shines on men who sit in darkness; and to the light of grace, which is a shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

(3). Conversion lies in the turning of men "from the power of Satan unto God", as in the above place (Acts 26:18). Satan has great power over men in an unconverted state, his seat is in their hearts, which are the palace in which he rules; he works effectually with great power and energy in the children of disobedience, by stirring up their lusts and corruptions, suggesting evil things to their minds, and tempting them to them; he does all he can to keep them in their native blindness and ignorance, and to increase it, and to prevent them from hearing the gospel, and from its being beneficial to them, lest the light of it should shine into their minds; he captivates them, and leads them captive at his will; and they are willingly led by him, the lusts of their father they will do; but now in conversion they are turned from his power; he is dispossessed of them, and his armor taken from him in which he trusted; the prey is taken out of the hands of the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; men are translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's

dear Son; and though they are not freed from his temptations, yet they have grace sufficient given them to bear up under them till it is the pleasure of God to save them from them, who will shortly bruise him under them; and as they are in conversion turned from him, they are turned to God; who before were without him, and alienated from the life of him, and strangers to him; but now they are turned to the knowledge of him, to love to him, to faith in him, and to communion with him.

(4). Conversion lies in turning men from idols to serve the living God; not merely from idols of silver and gold, of wood and stone, as formerly, but from the idols of a man's own heart, his lusts and corruptions; with respect to which the language of a converted sinner is, "What have I to do any more with idols?" this is a blessing bestowed in conversion, "Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you", in "turning away everyone of you from his iniquities". In redemption Christ turns away iniquities from his people by bearing them and making satisfaction for them; and in conversion, he by his Spirit and grace turns them from their iniquities; he turns them from the love of them to an hatred of them, even of vain thoughts, as well as of sinful actions; from the service and drudgery of them to the service of righteousness; from the power and dominion of them and subjection to them, and from a course of living in them to a life of holiness; and from the paths of sin to the paths of truth and uprightness.

(5). Conversion lies in turning men from their own righteousness to the righteousness of Christ; not from doing works of righteousness, for such converted persons are most fit for, and most capable of, and are under the greatest obligations to perform; but from depending upon them for justification before God and acceptance with him; in order to which they must be convinced by the Spirit of God of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them, being imperfect; and of the necessity, perfection, and fullness of Christ's righteousness, which being turned unto, they receive, embrace, lay hold on, and plead as their justifying righteousness before God; and this requires more than human teachings: for though ministers are said to "turn many to righteousness", that is, to the righteousness

of Christ, yet only instrumentally, and as the means of it, through preaching the gospel, in which there is a revelation of it; for God is the efficient cause of the turn of them to it; for though the gospel is the ministration of it, yet it is the Lord that must bring it near to stouthearted ones far from righteousness, and make them willing to submit unto it, and to be desirous of being found in it; for men naturally do not care to part with their own righteousness; it is their own, and what they have been a long time and with great labour rearing up, and to have it demolished, they cannot bear it; they would fain hold it fast, and lean upon it, though it shall not stand; it is their idol, in which they place their trust and confidence, and to take this away from them is to take away their god; as Micah said, when his idol was stolen from him, “Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?” Wherefore the conversion of a self-righteous person is more rare and difficult than the conversion of a profligate sinner; hence our Lord says to the Scribes and Pharisees, that “the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before them”; and that he himself “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 21:31; 9:13).

(6). Conversion lies in a man’s turning to the Lord actively, under the influence of divine grace; and by this phrase it is often expressed in scripture, as in Isaiah 10:21; Acts 11:21; 2 Corinthians 3:16, men being thoroughly convinced that there is salvation in no other but in Christ, that it is in vain to expect it elsewhere; after they have made many inquiries and searches to no purpose, turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, and look to him alone for salvation; being apprized of their danger, they turn as they are directed, encouraged and enabled to Christ the stronghold, where they are safe from all danger, and from every enemy; being made sensible of the insufficiency of their own righteousness and of the suitableness of the righteousness of Christ for them, they turn to him as the Lord their righteousness, in whom all the seed of Israel are justified and shall glory; and being fully satisfied with the equity of the laws, rules, and ordinances of Christ, they turn to him as their Lord and Lawgiver, and submit to his commands, renouncing all other lords and their dominion over them; and though in their natural state they are like sheep

going astray, in conversion they are returned to Christ, as the great Shepherd and bishop of souls: the parable of seeking and finding, and bringing home the lost sheep, is a fit representation of the conversion of a sinner: Christ's people are his sheep before conversion, but they are lost sheep, straying in the wilderness; and as sheep never return to the fold, shepherd and pasture of themselves, unless looked up and are returned; so neither do they, till they are sought for and found, and brought home by Christ, the proprietor of them, with joy; and the parables following represent the same thing; as that of the lost piece of silver, for finding which the woman lights a candle and sweeps the house, and searches every corner till she finds it, which gives her joy; this sets forth the high esteem and value the elect are in with Christ, comparable to silver, yea to line gold and precious stones; and the passiveness of men in first conversion, who no more contribute to it than the piece of silver to its being found; and the means and methods made use of in conversion, the light of the gospel ministry, and the stir and bustle on that occasion: so the parable of the prodigal son, and his return to his father, is expressive of the same; his manner of living before his return is a lively picture of the state of unconverted men, living in their lusts, and pursuing the desires of the flesh and of the mind; in his return there are all the symptoms of a true and real conversion; as a sense of his starving, famishing, and perishing state by nature; his coming to his right mind, his sense of sin, confession of it, and repentance for it; his faith and hope of meeting with a favourable reception by his father, which encouraged him to return, and which he met with; (see Isa. 55:7).

Secondly, The causes of conversion, efficient, moving, and instrumental.

First, The efficient cause, which is not man but God.

1. Not man, it is neither by the power nor will of man.

2. Not by the power of man; what is said of the conversion or turning of the Jews from their captivity, is true of the conversion of a sinner, that it is "not by might nor by power", that is not of man, "but by my Spirit, as saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). Men are dead in a moral sense while unconverted, they are dead in trespasses and sins, which are the cause of their death; and their very living in them

is no other than a moral death; nor can they quicken themselves, and unless they are quickened they cannot be converted; and being in a moral sense dead they are “strengthless”; they are not only “weak through the flesh”, the corruption of nature, but they are “without strength”; without any strength at all to perform that which is good, and much less a work of so great importance as their own conversion; they have not the command of themselves, nor any power over their hearts, the thoughts, desires, and affections of them; they cannot check them and control them at pleasure; they cannot think anything as of themselves, much less think a good thought; they cannot turn the streams of their desires and affections to proper objects; they cannot move their minds, nor bend their wills, even to that which is to their own advantage. Conversion is such an alteration in a man as is not in his power to effect: it is like that of an Ethiopian changing his skin, and a leopard his spots; such things are never heard of, as a blackamoor becoming white, and a leopard becoming clear of his spots; and as unlikely is it that a man should convert himself (Jer. 13:23), a tree must first be made good, so as to bring forth good fruit; “Make the tree good”, says our Lord; but the tree cannot make itself good; another hand must be employed about it, to engraft it, cultivate and improve it: a thorn bush cannot turn itself into a vine tree, and so bring forth grapes; nor a thistle into a fig tree, to bring forth figs; but as soon may these things be done as a man to convert himself and bring forth the good fruits of righteousness (Matthew 12:33; 7:16-18). Conversion is the motion of the soul towards God; but as this cannot be in a dead man, and unless he is quickened, so not unless he is drawn by efficacious grace; wherefore God, in conversion, draws men with lovingkindness to himself; and, with the cords of love, to his Son; for “no man”, says Christ, “can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him” (John 6:44), and even converted persons themselves are so sensible of this, that they pray, as the church did, “Draw me, we will run after thee” (Song of Sol. 1:4), the thing speaks for itself, and shows that it cannot be done by the power of man; for it is no other than a “creation”, which requires creation power to effect it, which a creature has not; for if the restoration, or conversion, of a backslidden saint is a creation,

and requires the power of the Creator to do it; of which David, when backslidden, was sensible, and therefore prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" then much more is the first conversion of a sinner, and requires like power; it is a resurrection from the dead, and is not to be effected but by the exceeding greatness of God's power, even such as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:19).

(2). Nor is conversion owing to the will of men; the will of man, before conversion, is in a bad state, it chooses its own ways, and delights in its abominations; it is in high pursuit after the desires of the flesh and of the mind; it is resolved to go after its lovers, its lusts, which feed its appetite, and furnish with things agreeable to the carnal mind; the will is become a slave to carnal lusts and pleasures; though the natural liberty of the will is not lost by sin, it can freely will natural things, as to eat or drink, sit, or stand, or walk, at pleasure; yet its moral liberty is lost, it is shackled with the fetters of sinful lusts, by which it is overcome and brought into bondage; and notwithstanding its boasted liberty, it is an home born slave; and therefore Luther rightly called it "servum arbitrium": man has no will to that which is good till God works it in him, and of unwilling makes him willing in the day of his power: he has no will to come to Christ, to be saved by him; nor to submit to his righteousness; nor to be subject to his laws and ordinances, until such a will is worked in him by efficacious grace. Conversion is denied to be of the will of men; as the whole of salvation is "not of him that willeth"; so this part of it in particular, regeneration, with which conversion, in the first moment of it, agrees; "is not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Rom. 9:16; John 1:13).

But it may be said, if conversion is not in the power and will of men, to what purpose are such exhortations as these; "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; turn yourselves, and live ye?" and again, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted?" Ezekiel 18:30, 32 and Acts 3:19 to which it may be replied, That these passages have no respect to spiritual and internal conversion, but to an external reformation of life and manners. In the first instance the Jews were then in a state of captivity, which was a kind of death, as sometimes sore afflictions are said to be (2 Cor. 1:10), and into which

they were brought through their sins: now the Lord declares, that he took no pleasure in this their uncomfortable state and condition; it was more desirable to him, and therefore he exhorts them to it, to reform from their evil practices; then they would be returned from their captivity, and live comfortably in their own land, as they had formerly done. But what has this to do with the spiritual and internal conversion of a sinner unto

God? with respect to the latter case, the Jews were threatened with the destruction of their city and nation, for their rejection of Jesus the Messiah, and other sins they were guilty of; and now the apostle advises those to whom he directs his discourse, to relinquish their wrong notions of Christ, and repent of their ill usage of him and his followers, and of their other sins, in an external way, that so they might escape the calamities coming upon their nation and people. But supposing these, and such like exhortations, respected internal conversion of the heart to God; such exhortations may be only designed to show men the necessity of such conversion in order to salvation; as our Lord said, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"; and when men are convinced of this, they will soon be sensible of their impotence to convert themselves, and will pray, as Ephraim did "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned", immediately and effectually; for,

2. God only is the author and efficient cause of conversion. He that made man's heart, and formed the spirit of man within him, he only can turn their hearts, and frame and mould their spirits, as he pleases; the heart of a king, and so of every other man, is in the hand of the Lord, and he can turn them as the rivers of water are turned; he, and he only, can give a check unto, and turn the thoughts, desires, and affections of the heart into another channel, and the mind and will to other objects; he can remove the stubbornness of the will, and bend it at his pleasure, and make it pliable and conformable to his own will; he can take away the hardness of the heart, though it is like an adamant stone, he can make it soft, and susceptible of the best impressions; he can break the rocky heart in pieces; yea, take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh; as he can take what he pleases out of it, so he can put into it what he will, as he does in

conversion, his laws, the fear of him, and his Spirit; he can and does draw them, by the powerful influence of his grace upon them, to himself and to his Son; and this he does without forcing their wills; he sweetly allures, by his grace, to come to Christ and his ordinances; he powerfully persuades Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem; he makes his people willing, in the day of his power, to do what they had before no will nor inclination to; and yet they act most freely; the manslayer did not more willingly flee to a city of refuge, to shelter him from the avenger of blood, than a sinner, sensible of his danger, flees to Christ for refuge, and lays hold on the hope set before him.

The power of divine grace, put forth in conversion, is irresistible; that is, so irresistible, as that a stop cannot be put to the work, and that become of no effect, through opposition made unto it from within and from without. Conversion is according to the will of God, his will of purpose, which can never be frustrated; "Who hath resisted his will?" his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; it is wrought by his almighty power; the work of faith, which is a principal part of the work of conversion, is begun, carried on, and performed with power; nor can a sinner any more resist, so as to make of none effect, the power of God in conversion, than Lazarus could resist the power of Christ in calling him out of his grave. If it was in the power of the will of men to hinder the work of conversion, so as that it should not take place, when it is the design of God it should; then God might be disappointed of his end, which must not be said; for there is no counsel nor might against him; whatever devices may be in a man's heart, the counsels of God can never be disappointed; when God has purposed to convert a sinner, who can disannul it? and when his mighty hand of grace is stretched out, to put that purpose into execution, who can turn it back? when he works in any way, and so in this, there is none can let. Besides, if conversion was to stand or fall according to the will of men; or if that had the turning point in man's conversion, it would rather be ascribed to the will of men than to the will of God; and it would not be true what is said, "It is not of him that willeth": yea, as the will of men then would have the greatest stroke in conversion, in answer to that question, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" it might be said, as it has been

said by a proud and haughty free wilier Grevinchovius, I have made myself to differ.

To all this may be objected the words of Christ; “How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37) but it should be observed, that this gathering is not to be understood of conversion; but of attendance on the ministry of the word under John the Baptist, Christ himself, and his apostles; to which Christ had affectionately and importunately exhorted them; which, had it been regarded, would have preserved them from the vengeance coming upon Jerusalem: and it should also be observed, that they are not the same persons whom Christ would have gathered, and those of whom he says, “and ye would not”; by whom are meant, the rulers and governors of the people, who would not allow them to attend the gospel ministry, but threatened them with putting them out of the synagogue if they did; (see Matthew 23:13).

Secondly, The moving, or impulsive cause of conversion, is the love, grace, mercy, favour, and goodwill of God; the same as are the moving cause of regeneration and effectual calling, and not the merits of men; for what is there in men before conversion to move God to take such a step in their favour? (see 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 2:2-4).

Thirdly, The instrumental cause, or means of conversion, is usually the ministry of the word; sometimes, indeed, it is wrought without the word, by some remarkable awakening providence or another, and sometimes by reading the scriptures; but, for the most part, it is through the preaching of the word; hence ministers are said to “turn many to righteousness”; and the apostle Paul says, he was sent by Christ into the Gentile world, to “turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God”; and this is done both by the preaching of the law and of the gospel; “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Ps. 19:7), though perhaps not the law, strictly taken, but the whole doctrine of the word is there meant; however, the preaching of the law is made use of by the Spirit of God to convince of sin; for “by the law is the knowledge of sin”; and by means of it, when it enters into the heart and conscience, under his influence, sin is made to appear exceeding sinful, and the soul is

filled with great distress on account of it; for the “law worketh wrath”; though some take this to be rather preparatory to conversion than conversion itself, which may be better ascribed to the gospel; and, indeed, the receiving of the Spirit, and his graces, and particularly faith, are attributed to the preaching of the gospel, and not to the law, as the means thereof; “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law?” that is, by preaching the doctrine of obedience to it; “or by the hearing of faith?” that is, by the doctrine of the gospel, preaching faith in Christ; which is therefore called “the word of faith”, and by which it comes; for “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Gal. 3:2; Rom. 10:8,17), but then the preaching of the word of the gospel is not sufficient of itself to produce the work of conversion in the heart; men may hear it, and not be converted by it; nor receive any benefit, profit, and advantage through it; if it comes in word only, and not with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; and when it is accompanied with the power of God; or is made the power of God unto salvation, even then it is only an instrument, and not an efficient; for “who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers, or instruments, by whom ye believed?” (1 Cor. 3:5).

Thirdly, The subjects of conversion; these are not all men, for all, in fact, are not converted; nor does it appear to be the design and purpose of God to convert all men; nor does he give sufficient grace to all men to convert themselves if they will; for he does not so much as give to all men the means of grace, the outward ministry of the word: this was not vouchsafed to the Gentiles for hundreds of years before the coming of Christ; and since, millions have never been favored with it; nor are multitudes at this day; and those who have the scripture to read, to many it is a sealed book, and to all, unless opened by the Spirit of God; and to whom the gospel is preached, it is hid, unless it is given them to know the mysteries of the kingdom, which is not the case of all; the persons converted are the “elect” of God, both among Jews and Gentiles: in the first ages of the gospel, many among the Gentiles were converted, and churches formed of them; and ever since there have been conversions among them, and even to this day, and in the latter day an abundance of them will be converted; and when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, then

the Jews, of whom only now and then one are converted, they will be all as a nation born again, converted and saved. They are “redeemed” ones who are converted; and the reason why they are converted is, because they are redeemed; “I will hiss for them”, by the ministry of the word, and “gather them”, which is another phrase for conversion, “because I have redeemed them” (Zech. 10:8), they whom God converts are the same persons for whom he has provided forgiveness of sins in the covenant of his grace, and an eternal inheritance in his divine purpose; for the apostle says, he was sent by Christ “to turn men unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ” (Acts 26:18). In a word, they are described as “sinners”; “Sinners shall be converted unto thee” (Ps. 51:13), sinners by nature and by practice, and some of them the worst and chief of sinners; and therefore the wonderful grace of God is the more displayed in their conversion, (1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Tim. 1:3,14,15).

Chapter 14

OF SANCTIFICATION

The foundation of “sanctification” is laid in “regeneration”; as it is a holy principle, it is first formed in that; the new creature, or new man, is created in righteousness and true holiness; and it appears in “effectual calling”, which is an “holy calling”; and is to be seen in conversion, which is a turning of men “from their iniquities”: and that holiness which is begun in regeneration, and is manifest in effectual calling and conversion, is carried on in sanctification, which is a gradual and progressive work, and issues and is finished in glorification; so that it may, with propriety, be distinguished from regeneration, effectual calling, and conversion, and be separately treated of.

There is a sanctification which is more peculiarly ascribed to God the Father; and which is no other than his eternal election of men to it: under the law, persons and things separated and devoted to holy uses, are said to be “sanctified”; hence those who are set apart by God for his use and service, and are chosen by him to holiness here and hereafter, are said “to be sanctified by God the Father” (Jude

1:1). There is a sanctification also that is more peculiar to Christ the Son of God; not only as he is the representative of his people, and is “holiness to the Lord” for them; which the high priest had upon his forehead, who was a type of him, and the representative of Israel; and as he has the whole stock of grace and holiness in his hands, which is communicated to the saints as is necessary; and as the holiness of his human nature, is, with his active and passive obedience, imputed to their justification, and so makes a part of that; hence he is said to be made to them “sanctification” (1 Cor. 1:30), but as the expiation of their sins is made by his blood and sacrifice; this is called a sanctification of them; “Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his blood, suffered without the gate” (Heb. 13:12). But there is another sanctification, which is more peculiar to the Holy Spirit of God, and is called “the sanctification of the Spirit” (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:2) and this is the sanctification to be treated of. Concerning which may be inquired,

First, what it is, and the nature of it. It is something that is “holy”, both in its principle and in its actings; and is superior to anything that can come from man, or be performed by him of himself. It does not lie in a conformity to the light of nature, and the dictates of it; nor is it what may go by the name of moral virtue, which was exercised by some of the heathen philosophers to a very great degree, and yet they had not a grain of holiness in them; but were full of the lusts of envy, ambition, pride, revenge, &c. nor does it lie in a bare, external conformity to the law of God; or in an “outward reformation” of life and manners; this appeared in the Pharisees, to a great degree, who were pure in their own eyes, and thought themselves holier than others, and disdained them, and yet their hearts were full of all manner of impurity. Nor is what is called “restraining grace”, sanctification; persons may be restrained by the injunctions of parents and masters, by the laws of magistrates, and by the ministry of the word, from the grosser sins of life; and be preserved, by the providence of God, from the pollutions of the world, and yet not be sanctified. Nor are “gifts”, ordinary or extraordinary, sanctifying grace; Judas Iscariot, no doubt, had both, the ordinary gifts of a preacher, and the extraordinary gifts of an apostle, and yet not a holy

man. Gifts are not grace; a man may have all gifts, and all knowledge, and speak with the tongue of men and angels, and not have grace; there may be a silver tongue where there is an unsanctified heart! Nor is sanctification a restoration of the lost image of Adam, or a reparation and an amendment of that image marred by the sin of man; or a new vamping up the old principles of nature: but it is something entirely new; a new creature, a new man, a new heart, and a new spirit; and the conformity of a man to another image, even to the image of the second Adam, the Son of God.

Some make sanctification to lie in the deposition, or putting off, of the old man, and in the putting on of the new man. This has a foundation in the word of God (Eph. 4:22, 24) and belongs to sanctification, and may be admitted, if understood of the actings of it, as these are, which suppose a previous principle from which they arise. By the “old man”, is meant corrupt nature; which is as old as a man is in whom it is, and which he brings into the world with him; and by the putting of it off, is not meant the removal of it from him; for it continues with him, even with a sanctified person, as long as he is in the world; nor any change in the nature of it, which always remains the same; much less a destruction of it, which will not be till this earthly house is dissolved: but a dispossession of it, of its power, a displacing it from its throne, so as not to yield obedience to the lusts of it; nor walk according to the dictates of it; nor have the conversation according to it. By the new man, is meant the new principle of grace and holiness, wrought in the soul in regeneration: and by the putting on of that, the exercise of the several graces of which it consists; see Colossians 3:12,13.

Others distinguish sanctification, into “vivification” and “mortification”: and both these are to be observed in sanctification. Sanctification, as a principle, is a holy, living principle, infused; by which a man that was dead in trespasses and sins, is quickened; and from whence flow living acts; such as living by faith on Christ; walking in newness of life; living soberly, righteously, and godly: all which belong to sanctification. And there is such a thing as mortification; not in a literal and natural sense, of the body, by fasting, scourging, &c. Nor is it the abolition of the body of sin, by the sacrifice of Christ;

nor the destruction of the principle and being of sin in regenerate and sanctified persons; for though they do not live in sin, yet sin lives in them, and is sometimes very active and powerful: but the weakening of the power of sin, and a mortification of the deeds of the body, and of the members on earth; so that a course of sin is not lived in, but men are dead unto it; and to which the Spirit of God, and his grace, are necessary (Col. 3:5; Rom. 8:13). But leaving these things, I shall more particularly consider sanctification as an holy principle, and the holy actings of it.

First, as an holy principle. The first rise of which is in regeneration; there it is first formed, as before observed. And this is no other than the good work of grace begun in the hearts of regenerate ones. It is a “work”, not of men; for as regeneration is not of the will of men; nor conversion by might or power of men: so neither is sanctification; none can say, “I have made my heart clean”, or have sanctified myself: it is the work of God; “We are his workmanship”, and a curious piece of workmanship sanctification is; too curious for a creature to perform; it is done “in the name” of the Lord Jesus, and “by the Spirit of our God”. It is a “good” work; the efficient cause is good, God himself; the moving cause good, his love, grace, kindness, and good will; the matter good, some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel; the instrumental cause or means, the good word of God: and it is good in its effects; it makes a man a good man, and fits him for the performance of good works, and is the source of them. It is commonly called “a work of grace”, and with great propriety; since it flows from the free, sovereign, and abundant grace of God in Christ; and is an implantation of all grace in the heart. And in scripture it is called “the work of faith”, because faith is a principal part of it; and in the exercise of which sanctification much lies; hence saints are said to be “sanctified by faith, which is in Christ” (Acts 26:18). It is an internal work; it is a work “begun in” the soul, which the Spirit of God works in the hearts of his people, by putting the fear of God, and every other grace, there; hence it goes by various names, which show it to be something within a man, and not anything external; see Romans 2:28, 29. It is called “the inward man, and the hidden man of the heart”, which has its place there, and is not obvious to everyone

(Rom. 7:22; 1 Pet. 3:4), and not only from the author of it, the Spirit of God; and from the nature of it, being spiritual, and conversant with spiritual things; but from the seat and subject of it, the spirit or soul of man; it is called “spirit”, being wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God (John 3:6). It has also the name of “seed”, which sometimes signifies the word; which being cast into the heart, and taking place there, becomes the “engrafted word”; and sometimes grace itself, which is like seed sown in the earth, which lies hid in it awhile, and then springs and grows up, a man knows not how; and this is that “seed” which remains in the heart of believers, and is never lost (1 John 3:9). Sometimes it is compared to a “root”, which lies under ground, is not seen, and is the cause of fruit being brought forth upwards; and may be what Job calls, “the root of the matter” in him; and which the stony ground hearers being without, withered, and came to nothing (Job 19:28; Matthew 13:21). It is called, “truth in the inward parts”; which is expressive of the integrity and uprightness of the heart, of a true and right spirit created there, and of the truth and reality of grace and holiness, or true holiness, in which the new man is created (Ps. 50:6, 10; Eph. 4:24). Once more, it is signified by “oil in the vessel” of the heart, had with the “lamp” of an external profession (Matthew 25:4), by “oil” is meant grace, so called for its illuminating nature, grace is spiritual light in the understanding; and for its supple, softening nature, it takes off the hardness of the heart, and the stubbornness of the will; and because it will not mix with other liquids, as grace will not mix with sin; and which is had, held, and retained in the heart, as in a vessel; and from which the lamp of profession is distinct, which is more visible. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider sanctification in its holy actings.

I. With respect to God; which appear in the disposition of the mind, the motions of the heart Godwards, and in the behavior and conduct of a saint before him, and with regard unto him; and which become manifest,

(1). In a holy reverence of him, on account of his nature, perfections, works, and blessings of goodness. In an unsanctified man, there is no fear of God before his eyes; but where a principle of grace and holiness is wrought, the fear of God soon appears; it is

the beginning of wisdom; and is one of the first things that appear in a regenerate man; he cannot do what he before did, and others do; “so did not I, because of the fear of God”, said Nehemiah (Neh. 5:15), such an one will serve the Lord with reverence and godly fear.

(2). Sanctification shows itself in love to God, and delight in him. An unsanctified man cannot love God, who is pure and holy; nor take any delight in him, in his word, his ways, and worship; “The carnal mind is enmity to God”, and desires him to depart from him, and chooses not the knowledge of his ways; nay, one that has taken on him the mask of religion, and is not sincere, can have no true affection for God, nor pleasure in the things of God. Job says of the hypocrite, “Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?” No, he will not (Job 27:10). But in regeneration and sanctification, the Lord circumcises the heart, or regenerates and sanctifies it, “to love the Lord with all the heart and with all the soul!” that is, sincerely and cordially.

(3). It appears in submission to the will of God in all things, even in the most adverse dispensations of providence; as the instances of Aaron, Eli, David, and others show; who murmured not, nor complained, but were still and quiet, and resigned to the divine will, under some severe rebukes of providence. Much of sanctification lies in the conformity of our wills to the will of God. That holy man Bishop Usher said of it, “Sanctification is nothing less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God, and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as a whole burnt offering to Christ.”

(4). It is to be seen in religious exercises, and in acts of devotion to God, and in the exercise of grace in them as in an affectionate attendance on the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; and in fervent prayer, which is the breath of a sanctified soul towards God. Holiness only appears in these things, or is real, when grace is in exercise in them; for otherwise, there may be an outward performance of them, and yet no true holiness.

(5). The holy actings of sanctification may be discerned in the earnest pantings and eager desires of the soul after communion with God, both in private and public; when a soul cannot be content with

ordinances without enjoying God in them; when it pants after him, as the heart pants after the water brooks; and when without him, seeks everywhere for him, till it finds him, and then exults in its fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.

(6). A soul that is sanctified by the Spirit of God, seeks the glory of God in all it does, whether in things civil or religious: one that is unsanctified, and only makes a show of religion, and of good works, he does all to be seen of men, and seeks his own glory therein; whatever show of devotion and holiness may be made by such persons, there is not a grain of holiness in them. Whereas he that seeks the glory of God in all, “the same is true”, hearty and sincere, a real saint, “and no unrighteousness is in him”, no insincerity and dissimulation (John 7:18).

(2). Sanctification discovers itself in its holy actings, with respect to Christ.

(1). In applying to him for cleansing; as in a view of its guilt, it applies to blood for pardon; and to his righteousness for justification: so under a sight and sense of its pollution, and of the spreading leprosy of sin all over it; it goes to him as the leper did, saying, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean!” and such deal with his blood for the purification of their souls, as well as for the remission of their sins; and have their hearts purified by faith in it.

(2). In subjection to him, as King of saints; they not only receive him as their Prophet, to teach and instruct them, and embrace his doctrines; and as their Priest, by whose sacrifice their sins are expiated; but as their King, to whose laws and ordinances they cheerfully submit; esteeming his precepts, concerning all things, to be right, none of his commandments grievous; but, from a principle of love to him, keep and observe them.

(3). In setting him always before them, as an example to copy after; being desirous of walking even as he walked; both in the exercise of the graces of faith, love, patience, humility, &c. and in the discharge of duty.

(4) In a desire of a greater degree of conformity to the image of Christ, which is what they are predestinated unto; which first appears in regeneration, and is increased by every believing view of

Christ and his glory, and will be completed in the future state; hence sanctified souls desire to be with Christ, that they might be perfectly like him, as well as see him as he is.

3. Sanctification is discovered in its actings, with respect to the Holy Spirit.

1. In minding, savoring, and relishing, the things of the Spirit of God. "They that are after the flesh", carnal, unregenerate, unsanctified ones, "mind the things of the flesh", carnal and sensual lusts and pleasures; "but they that are after the Spirit", who are regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, "mind the things of the Spirit", which he reveals, recommends, and directs to; these they savor, relish, highly value, and esteem (Rom. 8:5).

2. In walking after the dictates, directions, leadings, and teachings of the Spirit; so sanctified persons are described as such "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1).

3. In a desire and carefulness not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom they have their present grace and experience, joy and comfort, and by whom they are sealed to the day of redemption, by any disagreeable behavior to him, to one another, and in the world (Eph. 4:30).

4. In a desire "to live and walk in the Spirit"; to live in a spiritual manner, under his influence, to exercise every grace, and abound therein, through his power; to perform every duty by his assistance; and to wait, through him, for the hope of righteousness by faith (Gal. 5:5, 25; Rom. 12:11; 15:13).

4. The holy actings of sanctification are apparent, with respect to sin.

1. In approving, loving, and delighting in the law of God, which forbids it, and condemns for it. An unsanctified man cannot brook the law of God on this account; he is not subjected to it; nor can he be, without efficacious grace exerted on him; he despises it, and casts it behind his back: whereas, a man sanctified by the Spirit of God, approves of the law of God, as holy, just, and good, and loves it exceedingly; "How love I thy law!" says David; and he delights in it, after the inward man, and serves it with his mind and Spirit (Ps. 119:97; Rom. 7:12, 22, 25).

2. In a dislike of sin, and a displacency at it; it is displeasing to him, as it is contrary to the holy nature of God, a breach of his righteous law, and is in its own nature exceeding sinful, as well as disagreeable in its effects and consequences.

(3). In a loathing sin, and in an abhorrence of it. An unsanctified man chooses his own ways, and delights in his abominations; he takes pleasure in committing sin himself, and in those that do it; sin is a sweet morsel, which he rolls in his mouth, and keeps under his tongue; but one that has the principle and grace of holiness, loaths his sin, and himself for it; and, with Job, abhors himself, and repents in dust and ashes.

(4). In an hatred of sin; unholy persons, hate the good and love the evil; but an holy man, loves righteousness and hates iniquity: such that love the Lord, cannot but hate evil; it being so extremely opposite to him: he hates, not only sinful actions, and even what he himself does, though he would not do them, but vain thoughts also (Rom. 7:15; Ps. 119:113).

(5). In an opposition to sin: a sanctified man, not only does not make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it; does not regard it in his heart, so as to encourage, nourish, and cherish it; but he acts the part of an antagonist to it, “striving against sin; the spirit lusteth against the flesh”; grace opposes sin, upon the first motion of it, and temptation to it; he has that principle within him that argues thus, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

(6). In an abstinence from it, even from every appearance of it, a passing by the ways of it, and avoiding every avenue that leads to it, as being what wars against the soul, and is dangerous and hurtful to it. The grace of God implanted in the heart, as well as displayed in the word, “teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts”(Titus 2:11,12)

(7). Sanctification appears in lamenting sin, in deploring the corruption of nature, bewailing indwelling sin, as well as all sinful actions, of thought, word, and deed; sanctified persons are like doves of the valley, everyone mourning for his own iniquities, and for those of others, and the sad effects of them.

(8). In earnest desires to be wholly freed from sin; uneasy that

vain thoughts should so long lodge within them, weary of a body of sin and death, they groan under the burden of it, and cry, O wretched men that we are! who shall deliver us from it? they long to be with Christ, and to be in heaven; for this reason greatly, among others, that they may be entirely free from sin, and be perfectly holy.

Now can such actings in the mind, and in life, spring from nature? must they not arise from a principle of holiness in the heart? can there be such reverence of God, love to him, resignation to his will, affectionate and fervent devotion to him, desires of communion with him, and a concern in all things for his glory, without a supernatural principle of grace and holiness in the soul? Is it possible, that an unsanctified man should ever apply to Christ for cleansing, be subject to him as King, be desirous of walking as he walked, and of being wrought up to a conformity to him? or be concerned to mind the things of the Spirit, and to walk after the Spirit, and to live in him, and be careful not to grieve him? can there be such actings in the mind concerning sin, as to love the law, which forbids it; to dislike sin, abhor it, and hate it; engage in an opposition to it, abstain from it, lament it, and earnestly desire to be rid of it; can these be the produce of nature? or be without being internally sanctified by the Spirit of God?

Secondly, the subjects of sanctification are next to be inquired into; who they are that are sanctified, and what of them.

First, who are sanctified? not all men; all men are unholy, and need sanctification; but all are not made holy; some are filthy, and remain filthy still.

1. They are the elect of God; and all of them, whom God chose in eternity, he sanctifies in time; those who are a chosen generation, become an holy people; whom God chose, he chose to holiness, as an end which is always answered, and he chose them through sanctification, as a means in order to a further end, salvation; conformity to the image of the Son of God, in which sanctification lies, is what the chosen are predestinated unto; and, in consequence of their predestination, are made partakers of it. Faith, which is a part of sanctification, flows from electing grace, and is insured by it; as many as are ordained to eternal life believe, and are everlastingly

glorified, which is their perfect sanctification.

2. They are the redeemed ones; the subjects of election, redemption, and sanctification, are the same persons. In order, they are first chosen, then redeemed, and then sanctified; those who are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, are sanctified by the Spirit. One end of Christ's redemption of them, was to sanctify and purify them, a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works; and that they being dead to sin, and that to them, through his sacrifice for sin, they might live unto righteousness; hence of the same persons it is said, "They shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord!" (Isa. 62:12).

Secondly, what of those persons is sanctified? The whole of them; "The God of peace sanctify you wholly"; that is, as next explained, in soul, body, and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23).

1. The soul, or spirit, is the principal seat, or subject of sanctification, in all the powers and faculties of it; "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds" (Eph. 4:23). It is the heart into which the fear of God is put, and which is circumcised to love the Lord, and which is purified by faith: it is the understanding that is enlightened, to discern holy and spiritual things; and so to mind them, approve of them, and gaze at them, with wonder and delight: the will is bowed to the will of God, and made willing in the day of his power, to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and which is resigned to all the dispensations of divine providence: the affections are made spiritual, holy, and heavenly; from whence springs a cheerful obedience to the commands of God and Christ: and the mind and conscience, which were defiled with sin, are purged from dead works to serve the living God.

2. The body also is influenced by sanctifying grace. As, though the heart is the principal seat of sin, out of which all manner of wickedness flows, and spreads itself, not only over the powers and faculties of the soul, but also over the members of the body; so that there is no part nor place clean: thus, though the soul is the principal seat of sanctification, yet it diffuses its influence, as over all the powers of the soul, so over all the members of the body; its sensual appetite and carnal lusts are checked and restrained by sanctifying grace; so

that sin reigns not in our mortal bodies, as to obey the lusts thereof, and to yield our members, as instruments of unrighteousness, unto sin (Rom. 6:12,13)

Thirdly, the causes of sanctification, by whom it is effected, from whence it springs, and by what means it is carried on, and at last finished.

1. The efficient cause is God, Father, Son, and Spirit. Sometimes it is ascribed to the Father, the God of all grace, who will make us perfect, perfectly holy; the very God of peace, with whom we have peace, through Christ, will sanctify us wholly; the Father, on whom we call, the Father of Christ, and of us, says, "Be ye holy, as I am holy", and who only can make us so (1 Pet. 1:15, 16; 5:10; 1 Thess. 5:23). And Christ is not only our sanctification, but our sanctifier; "He that sanctifieth" is Christ, "and they who are sanctified" are his chosen and redeemed ones; and these "are all of one" (Heb. 2:11), of one and of the same nature; he partakes of their nature, and they are made partakers of his; all that holiness which they have, they have from him; from that fulness of it which is in him. Though this work of sanctification is more commonly ascribed to the Holy Spirit, who is therefore called, "the Spirit of holiness"; not only from his own nature, but from his being the author of holiness in the hearts of God's people, and which is therefore called, "the sanctification of the Spirit"; it is he that begins, and carries on, and finishes this work; every grace is from him, faith, hope, and love, and every other; and which are supported and maintained, and drawn forth into exercise, and brought to perfection by him.

2. The moving cause, is the grace and good will of God; the same grace which moved God to choose any to holiness, moves him to work it in them: the same grace which moved him to send his Son into the world to redeem men, moves him to send his Spirit into their hearts to sanctify them: the same great love, and abundant mercy, that moves him to regenerate and quicken them, moves him to sanctify them: as of his own good will he begets them again, it is of his own good will that he sanctifies them; "This is the will of God", not only his will of precept, and his approving will; but the purpose and counsel of his will, what flows from his sovereign will;

“Even your sanctification” (1 Thess. 4:3). The state and condition of the people of God, before their sanctification, clearly shows that it must arise, not from any merit or motive in them; but from the free favour and good will of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

3. The instrumental cause, or means, is the word of God; both the written word, the scriptures, which are holy scriptures; the author holy, the matter holy, and, when attended with a divine power and influence, are the means of making men holy, and of fitting and furnishing them for every good work; and also the word preached, when accompanied with the same power; “Faith comes by hearing”; and is increased thereby; the doctrines of the gospel are according to godliness; and with a divine blessing, influence both the heart and life to godliness and holiness; the ordinances are made and continued, for the perfecting of the saints, for the carrying on, and perfecting the work of holiness in them; and various providences of God, even afflictive ones, are designed of God, and are means, in his hand, of making his people more and more “partakers of his holiness” (Heb. 12:10), of this use afflictions were to holy David (Ps. 119:67, 71).

Fourthly, the adjuncts or properties of sanctification.

1st, it is imperfect in the present state, though it will most certainly be made perfect; where the work is begun it will be performed: sanctification in Christ is perfect, but sanctification in the saints themselves is imperfect; it is perfect with respect to parts, but not with respect to degrees. Sanctification, as a principle, which is the new creature, or new man, has all his parts; though these are not grown up to the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ, as they will do; where there is one grace, there is every grace, though none perfect; there is a comparative perfection in the saints, when compared with what they themselves once were, and others are; and when compared even with other saints, for one saint may have a greater degree of grace and holiness than another; “let us therefore, as many as be perfect”; and yet the greatest of those was not absolutely perfect, even the apostle himself, who so said (Phil. 3:12, 17), all the saints may be said to be perfect, as perfection denotes sincerity and truth; so their faith, though imperfect, is unfeigned; their hope is without hypocrisy, and their love without dissimulation; but

otherwise sanctification in the best of men is imperfect; this appears,

1. From the continual wants of the saints; they are always “poor and needy”, as David says of himself; which could not be true of him as to things temporal, but as to things spiritual: the best of saints continually stand in need of more grace to oppose sin, resist temptations, perform duty, and persevere in faith and holiness; the grace of God is sufficient for them, but then that must be daily communicated to them; God has promised to supply, and he does supply all their need, as it returns upon them; but then it cannot be said that they are “perfect and entire, wanting nothing”; since they are continually in want of more grace.

2. This appears from their disclaiming perfection in themselves, and their desires after it. Job, David, the apostle Paul, and others, have in express words declared they were not perfect, nor thought themselves so, but far from it; and yet expressed strong desires after it, which showed they had it not; the apostle Paul has fully set forth both in those words of his, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect” &c.(Phil. 3:12-14).

3. That sanctification is imperfect, is abundantly manifest from indwelling sin in the saints, and the sad effects of it; the apostle Paul speaks of “sin dwelling in him” (Rom. 7:18, 19), and the apostle John says, “if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves” (1 John 1:8), and the experience of the saints in all ages testifies the same: this is clear from their ingenuous confessions of sin, such as made by Jacob, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and others; from their groans and complaints under the weight of sin, as an heavy burden, too heavy to bear; from the continual war in them between flesh and spirit, the law in their members and the law in their minds; from their prayers for the manifestation of the pardon of their sins, and for cleansing from them, and to be kept from the commission of them; from the many slips and falls which the best are subject to in one way or another; and from backwardness to duty, remissness in it, and that coldness and lukewarmness which too often attend it.

4. This is also evident from the several parts of sanctification, and the several graces of which it consists, being imperfect. Faith is imperfect; there are deficiencies in faith to be made up; the best of

saints have had them, and their failings in the exercise of that grace have been manifest, as in Abraham, Peter, and others; and they have been sensible of their imperfection in it, as the apostles of Christ were when they said, “Lord increase our faith”, or “add” to it (Luke 17:5), hope sometimes is so low as that it seems to be “perished from the Lord”, and only the mouth is put in the dust with an “if so be there may be hope” (Lam. 3:18, 29). Love, however warm and fervent at first, remits and abates; its ardour is left, though that is not lost; the love of many waxes cold. Spiritual, experimental, sanctified knowledge is but in part, and will remain so until that which is perfect is come.

Secondly, though sanctification is imperfect, it is progressive, it is going on gradually till it comes to perfection; this is clear from the characters of the saints, who are first as little children, infants newly born; are in a state of childhood, and by degrees come to be young men, strong and robust, and overcome the evil one, and at length are fathers in Christ (1 John 2:13,14), and from the similies by which the work of grace is illustrated; as that in general by seed sown in the earth, which springs up first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear; and faith in particular by a grain of mustard seed, which when first sown is small, the least of all seeds, but when it grows up, it becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out great branches (Mark 4:28, 31, 32), so spiritual light and knowledge at first is very dim and obscure, like the sight that the man had whose eyes Christ opened; first he saw men like trees walking, and after that all things clearly; so the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Mark 8:23; Prov. 4:18), there is such a thing as growing in grace, in the grace of faith, and abounding in hope and love, and increasing in the knowledge of divine things which there would be no room for, if sanctification was perfect. Yet,

2d3. *Thirdly*, though it is imperfect, it will certainly be perfected; grace in the soul is a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life; it is always running to, and will issue in eternal life: it is certain, from election and redemption, the ends whereof would not be answered, if this was not completed; and from its being the work of

the Holy Spirit, who having begun it, will finish it; he is a rock, and his work is perfect; having undertook it, he will not leave it till it is done; and when he works, none can let; he will perfect that which concerneth his saints, and will fulfil the good pleasure of his will in them, and the work of faith, with power.

Fourthly, sanctification is absolutely “necessary” to salvation. It is necessary for many things; it is necessary to the saints, as an evidence of their election and redemption; this is the closing work of grace, and is the evidence of all that goes before. It is necessary to church fellowship, to the communion of saints in a social manner. Members of churches are described as holy brethren, saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus, and none are meet to be admitted among them but such who are so; for “what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” &c. (2 Cor. 6:14- 16). Sanctification is necessary as a meetness for heaven; for the inheritance of the saints in light; without regeneration, in which sanctification is begun, no man shall see, nor enter, into the kingdom of God. It is absolutely necessary for the beatific vision of God in a future state; “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord”; but being possessed of that, shall see him, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him for ever (Heb. 12:14; Matthew 5:8; Ps. 17:15). To say no more, it is necessary for the work of heaven, which is singing songs of praise, songs of electing, redeeming, regenerating, calling, and persevering grace; how can unholy persons join with the saints in such work and service as this? yea, it would be irksome and disagreeable to themselves, could they be admitted to it, and were capable of it; neither of which can be allowed.

Chapter 15

OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

The doctrine of the saints’ final perseverance in grace to glory is next to be considered; which is, that those who are truly regenerated, effectually called, and really converted, and internally sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, shall persevere in grace to the end, and shall be everlastingly saved; or shall never finally and totally fall, so as to perish everlastingly. This truth may be confirmed,

1. From various passages of scripture, which clearly hold it forth and assert it; it is written as with a sunbeam in the sacred writings; to give the whole pass of the proof of it, which they will admit, would be to transcribe great part of the Bible. I shall only therefore select some passages, both out of the Old and New Testament, which fully express it. And shall begin,

First, with Job 17:9. “The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger”. By the righteous man is meant one that is made truly righteous, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and which he receives by faith; in consequence of which he lives soberly and righteously: and by his way is meant, Christ “the way”; in whom he walks as he has received him, as the Lord his Righteousness. And it is promised, he “shall hold on” in this his way; which is opposed to going back, turning aside, and standing still; if he went back, or apostatized, or turned either to the right hand or the left, or was at a full stop, he could not be said to go on; and if he goes on he must persevere; and though he meets with discouragement in the way, from sin, and Satan, and the world, yet he goes on; and though he may slip, and slide, and stumble, and even fall; yet as the traveller, when this is his case, gets up again and pursues his journey; so the believer rises again in the strength of Christ, in whom he walks, and in the exercise of faith and repentance; and still goes on his way, rejoicing in Christ his righteousness and strength; and to which his going on is owing, and not to his own conduct, power, and strength. As “hands” are an emblem of action, by “clean hands” are meant, a holy, upright walk and conversation, arising from an inward principle of grace in the heart; as appears by comparing Psalm 15:1, 2 with Psalm 24:3, 4 and such a man who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, though he may have but little strength, yet he has some, which is here supposed; and as he wants more, to resist temptations, oppose corruption, exercise grace, and perform duty, he shall have more, be stronger and stronger, as here promised; God will, and does, “give power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength, and renews their strength, so that they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint”, and consequently persevere

to the end; yea, the “way” of the Lord itself is “strength” unto them; as they walk in it, they become stronger and stronger, and go “from strength to strength”, till they appear before God in Zion above (Isa. 40:29, 31; Prov. 10:29; Ps. 84:5-7). Now if the righteous shall hold on his way, he must persevere; and if the good man shall be stronger and stronger, he must endure to the end, and be saved; or otherwise, he would become weaker and weaker, until he had no strength at all; and then how would this promise be fulfilled?

Secondly, another passage of scripture, proving the saints final perseverance, is in Psalm 94:14. “For the Lord will not cast off his people”, &c. the Lord’s people are his special and peculiar people, whom he has loved, chosen, redeemed, and called, his “foreknown people”; these he never casts off, casts out, nor casts away (Rom. 11:2), though he may seem to do so; and they may think he has, when he does not immediately arise for their help in distress; and when he withdraws his presence, or afflicts them, or suffers them to be afflicted by others, which seems to be their case in this Psalm; and for their comfort these words are said; (see Ps. 94:5, 6, 12, 13; 44:9, 23, 24; 88:14) yet, in reality, God does not cast off, at least for ever, as unbelief sometimes suggests; he never casts them off, nor casts them out from being in his sight; for they are engraven on the palms of his hands; nor from being on his heart, for they are set as a seal there; nor from a place in his house, for being sons they always abide there; and whoever casts them off, or casts out their names as evil, he never will; so far from it, that he takes the utmost delight and complacency in them; grants them nearness to himself, and expresses the strongest affection for them, and takes the greatest care of them, even as the apple of his eye: and these are his “inheritance”, which he will never “forsake”, though he may seem to forsake them for a little while, yet he never does, finally and totally; he has promised he will not, and he is faithful who has promised; he never forsakes their persons, neither in youth nor in old age; nor the work of his hands on them, but fulfils the good pleasure of his goodness in them, and the work of faith with power; and for this reason he will not forsake them, because they are his inheritance, which he has chosen, his jewels, and his peculiar treasure; and therefore will never lose them: if, therefore, he will not

cast off his people for ever, nor utterly forsake them, then they shall persevere to the end, and be saved, and not everlastingly perish.

Thirdly, this doctrine may be concluded from Psalm 125:1, 2 the persons described are such who “trust in the Lord”, and not in the creature, nor in creature services; that trust in him at all times, and for all things; for temporal and spiritual blessings; for grace and glory: these are “like mount Zion”, for many things, but especially for its immovableness; for those, like that, cannot be removed; not from the love of God, in which they are rooted and grounded; nor from the covenant of grace, which is as immovable as hills and mountains, yea, more so; they may be removed, but that cannot be removed; nor the Lord’s covenant people out of it; nor out of the hands of Christ, out of whose hands none can pluck; nor off of him, the foundation, on which they are laid, which is a sure and everlasting one; nor out of a state of grace, in which they stand; neither of sanctification, which is connected with life everlasting; nor of justification, for those who have passed from death to life, shall never enter into condemnation. These, like mount Zion, abide for ever; they abide on the heart of God, in the hands of Christ, on him the sure foundation laid in Zion; in the house of God, and in the family of his people. And what makes their safety and security appear still the greater, is, that as Jerusalem was encompassed with mountains, which were a natural and strong fortification to it; “so the Lord is round about his people, even for ever”; he surrounds them with his love, encompasses them with his favors, as with a shield, guards them by his special providence, and watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them; and keeps them by his power as in a garrison, through faith unto salvation. And if all these things are true of them, as they most certainly are, then they shall finally persevere in grace, and be eternally saved.

Fourthly, this truth will receive further proof from Jeremiah 32:40. “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them”, &c. In which words are more proofs than one of the saints final perseverance. This may be concluded,

I. From the perpetuity of the covenant made with them; which is not a covenant of works, promising life on doing; then their perseverance would be precarious; but of grace, sovereign and free;

and so is a better covenant, and established on better promises, which are absolute and unconditional, not depending on anything to be performed by them; but which runs thus, “I will”, and “they shall”; a covenant “ordered in all things”, not one thing wanting in it, conducive to the welfare and happiness of the saints; in all spiritual blessings, for time and eternity, in both grace and glory, which are eternally secured in it, and therefore said to be sure; its blessings are the sure mercies of David; its promises yea and amen, in Christ; and the whole is ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, and sure to all the spiritual seed, to all interested in it; a covenant not made with them as considered by themselves, but with Christ, as their head, and with them in him; and it is kept, and stands fast with him for evermore. It is an everlasting covenant, flows from everlasting love, and founded on an everlasting purpose; consists of promises, which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began; and of grace, and blessings of grace, given in Christ so early, who was set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; and the covenant ones, with all their grace, were put into his hands; all which show the certainty of their perseverance; for as God knew so early, when he took them into covenant, and provided for them, what they would be, even transgressors from the womb, and do as evil as they could; and yet this hindered not his taking them into covenant; then it may be depended upon, that none of these things shall ever throw them out of it, for it abides to everlasting; God that made it, has commanded it for ever; he will never break it; it shall never be antiquated and made void, by another covenant succeeding it; its blessings are irreversible, and its promises are always fulfilled; its grace is sufficient for the saints under all their temptations, trials, and exercises, to bear them up, and bear them through time to eternity: covenant interest always continues; he that is their covenant God, will be their God and guide even unto death, and through it, to the world beyond the grave; and therefore they shall most certainly persevere, and be saved.

2. This may be confirmed from the promise made in the covenant, that God will “not turn away from them to do them good!” he may withdraw his gracious presence, and return again, which shows that

he does not turn away from them for ever; he never turns from his affections to them, which are unalterably fixed on them; nor from his kind purposes concerning them; for he is in one mind, and none can turn him: nor from his gracious promises to them; for he is not a man, that he should lie or repent; but what he has said, he will do, and not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips: nor from his gifts bestowed on them, which are without repentance, and which he never revokes, or calls in again: and he continues to do them good, both in things temporal and spiritual, as they stand in need of them; he has laid up much good for them in covenant, and in the hands of his Son; and he has bestowed much good upon them, given himself to them to be their portion and exceeding great reward; his Son, and all things with him; the Holy Spirit, and his graces; and continues the supplies of his grace, and carries on his good work in them, and makes all things to work together for their good.

3. This is further strengthened by what follows; “I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me”; not that they shall cease to sin; every sin being, in a sense, a departure from his precepts, and his judgments (Dan. 9:5). Nor that they shall not revolt and backslide from God, to which they are prone; and which backslidings are partial departures from him; but then these do not break the relation between God and them, as of father and children, of husband and wife: and besides, he heals their backslidings, and still loves them freely (Jer. 3:14; Hosea 14:4), but they do not wickedly depart from him; as David says, (Ps. 18:22) purposely, obstinately, and with an evil intent, and finally and totally. They do not depart from the word of faith they have received; this, when it has once a place in their hearts, and becomes the engrafted word, and they have a true experience of, can never be utterly departed from, through the sleight of them who lie in wait to deceive: nor from the worship, ordinances, and people of God; having set their hand to the plough, they neither turn back nor look back, so as entirely to leave the good ways, and good people of God; and this the fear of God, put into their hearts, guards them against, and influences them to the contrary (Neh. 5:15). Now if God will not turn away from his people, and will continue to do them good; if he so influences their hearts

with his fear that they shall not depart from him, then they shall certainly persevere to the end, and be saved.

Fifthly, another passage of scripture, which clearly expresses this truth, is in John 10:28. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand!" These words are spoken of the sheep of Christ, which he has a property in, whom the Father has given to him, and he has laid down his life for; whom he knows and calls by name, and they follow him in paths he directs them to: now to these he gives "eternal life", which he has in his hands, and a right to bestow; and which he does give to all his chosen, redeemed, and called cries; and if he gives them eternal life, they must live for ever, or it would not be an eternal life he gives them; they can never die the second death, or be hurt by it; but must persevere in a life of grace, till they come to a life of glory; and if Christ says, "they shall never perish", who dare say they may or shall perish? though they were lost in Adam, with the rest of mankind, yet they were preserved in Christ, and saved by him, who came to seek and to save that which was lost; and though in their nature state they seem ready to perish, and see themselves to be in such a condition, and therefore apply to Christ, and say, "Lord, save us, we perish!" yet they never shall really perish; for he is able and willing to save all that come to him; nor will he cast out any that are given him, as the sheep in the text are; and though when called by grace, they are liable to many slips and falls; to spiritual decays and declensions; to loss of comfort and peace, and in that sense to perishings (1 Cor. 8:11), and to fears of perishing finally; and to faintings and sinkings of spirit; yet they shall never fail and sink under their burdens, and be lost; and though they die as other men, in which sense the righteous are said to perish (Eccl. 7:15; Isa. 57:1), yet they shall not perish eternally, as the wicked will, who will go into everlasting punishment, when these shall go into eternal life. Besides, they are "in the hands" of Christ, and can never be plucked from thence; being put there by his Father, through his act of choosing them in him, as an instance of his love to them, and care of them, and for their security: and which is expressive of their being in his possession, at his dispose, under his guidance, care, and protection, and therefore must be safe; nor is it

in the power of any man, either by force to pluck them, or by fraud to draw them out of Christ's hands; not the most violent persecutor, by the most cruel methods he can practice; nor the most cunning and artful false teacher, by all the wiles and sophistry he is master of; nor xiq, "any one", man or devil; Satan, with all his principalities and powers, can never force anyone from Christ; nor with all his stratagems, can draw anyone from him: and if they are in his hands, who is not only the mighty Saviour, and mighty Mediator, who has all power in heaven and in earth, but is the Lord God Almighty; are in his hands, which made the heavens and the earth; and which hold and uphold all things in being, and who is the Governor of the universe; then they shall never totally and finally fall away, or perish everlastingly.

Sixthly, the words of Christ in his prayer to his Father, are another proof of the preservation of his people by him; and of their final perseverance through that (John 17:12). "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled"; the persons spoken of, though primarily and more immediately the apostles of Christ, yet not they only; they were not the only persons given to Christ out of the world, and who stand opposed to the world, as these do (John 17:6,9), nor are the words spoken of them as apostles, but as given to him by an act of special grace, as united to him, members of him, and believers in him; and as such, preserved by him: and if the preservation of them as such was secured to them, by being thus given to him; why may not the preservation of all other true believers in him be equally as sure and certain? nor is this said of their preservation from a temporal death; and that this might be fulfilled, he requested what he did (John 18:8, 9), but as the other things Christ speaks of, and prays for in this chapter, are all of a spiritual kind; such as sanctification, union, eternal glory; it is most reasonable to suppose, that this was of the same kind. Besides, if preservation from temporal death is meant, the sense would be, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept" from a temporal death, "and none of them is lost" by a temporal death, "but the son of perdition", he is lost by a temporal death: which last was

not true; Judas was not, at this time, lost in such sense; he had not yet betrayed Christ, and it was after his condemnation that he went and destroyed himself. To which may be added, that as Christ had kept those that were given him, he prays his Father would keep them in like manner (John 18:11); now if he prayed they might be kept from a temporal death, he was not heard, and yet he is always heard; for as for his disciples, they all died a violent death, suffered martyrdom for his sake; though they were all, in a spiritual sense, preserved to his kingdom and glory, as all true believers will be. Moreover, as it was from evil that he desires his Father would keep them, it was the same which he kept them from, namely, from the “evil” of the world; not from suffering reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions in it; for such he has given all his followers reason to expect; but from sinking under them, and being overcome by them, so as to drop their profession of him; and from the evil one, Satan, under whose influence the world is; and from the evil of sin in the world. The time of Christ keeping those that were given him, “while I was with them in the world”; the expression does not imply, that he was not then in the world when he said these words, for he was, though the time of his departure was at hand; nor that he should be no longer with them when removed out of it; for though he would not be with them, as to his bodily presence, yet with respect to his spiritual, powerful, and all preserving presence, he would be with them still, and with all his people, to the end of the world: nor does the expression imply, that Christ’s keeping those that were given him was confined to the time he was in the world as to the flesh; for at his death he did not “deliver up the kingdom to the Father”, or the care and charge of his elect; this will not be done till his second coming; when he will say, “Lo, I, and the children”, even all the children, “thou hast given me”; till then, all the elect remain under the care and keeping of Christ. The manner in which he keeps them is in his Father’s “name”, in the name of the Majesty of his God; in which he stands and feeds them, as Mediator, through a delegated power and authority committed to him as such; and in his gospel, and the doctrines of it, called his “name” (John 18:6), in the faith of the gospel, and in the profession of it, so as not to relinquish either; and, indeed, so as to be “lost”, no, not one of

them, that is, to be eternally lost; for it is both his own will, and the will of his Father, that not one of those who truly believe in him, no not the least of them, should ever perish (Matthew 18:14; John 6:39, 40), and whereas it may be said, there is an instance in the text of one that was given to Christ who perished, Judas. The answer is, that though Judas was given to Christ, and chosen by him as an apostle, yet was not given to him by an act of his Father's special grace; nor was he chosen in him, and by him, and united to him, and a member of him, as the rest were; nor does it appear, from all accounts of him, that he ever was a partaker of the true grace of God; and so no instance of the apostasy of a real saint. Judas stands distinguished from the rest of the apostles, in the choice of Christ; "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen", that is, to eternal life; for otherwise, Judas was chosen as an apostle with the rest; "Have I not chosen ye twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 13:18; 6:70), and as here, a son of perdition; and was never considered as an object of his, or his Father's love, and so was left to that perdition to which he was appointed, "that the scripture might be fulfilled", which foretold it; and the particle "but" is not exceptive, but adversative; and does not imply, that he was one of those given to Christ to be kept, but the contrary.

Seventhly, when the apostle says of God (1 Cor. 1:8, 9). "Who shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; faithful is God", &c. to do it; with other passages of the same kind (1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23, 24; 2 Thess. 3:3). These are so many proofs of the saints final perseverance. The blessing itself promised and assured is confirmation, or establishment, in Christ; in faith in Christ, in the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of faith, and in holiness: the author of it is God; though ministers may be instruments of establishing the saints; God is the efficient: he has promised it; and he, as the God of all grace, is able to do it, and will; "He which establisheth us with you in Christ is God" (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 Pet. 5:10), and the duration of it is to the end; not for a short time, but to the end of life; so that such shall endure to the end, or finally persevere; yea, so confirmed are they, that they shall be "unblameable at", and be "preserved blameless to the coming of

our Lord Jesus”; though not in themselves, yet in him, who will then present them to himself glorious, and without spot; and to his Father faultless, before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. And to do all this, the faithfulness of God is engaged, which is observed in the several passages; and which faithfulness of his he will never suffer to fail; and therefore the confirmation, and the preservation of the saints to the end, even to the coming of Christ, are sure and certain; and their final perseverance in grace to glory, out of all doubt.

Eighthly, it is said of those who are “elect”, and are “begotten again”, that they “are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation” (1 Pet. 1:5), they are kept in the love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the hands of Christ, and on his heart; in him, the strong hold, and on him, the foundation; in a state of grace, both of sanctification and of justification; and in the paths of truth and holiness: they are kept from Satan, not from his temptations, but from destruction by him; and from false teachers, and their errors, from being carried away with them, and finally deceived by them: and from sin, not from the indwelling of it in the hearts of believers; nor from all acts of sin in their conversation; but from the dominion, power, and tyranny of it; and from a final and total falling away through it. The means by which they are kept is, “the power of God”, which is as a fortress to them, inexpugnable; where they are (ἰ)ποῖ) ποῖ)U£VOi, kept, as in a garrison, as the word signifies, and so are safe and secure; there being no might or power of men or devils, that can withstand, break through, or weaken the power of God. Likewise they are kept, “through faith”, in the power of God, and in the person and grace of Christ; through faith looking to Christ, living upon him, and leaning on him; through that faith which overcomes the world, and every spiritual enemy; and through the views it has of eternal glory; and so the believer endures, as seeing what is invisible: and what they are kept unto, is “salvation”; the full possession of that salvation which Christ is the author of, and they are heirs of; and which shall be completely enjoyed in a future state; to which, and till they come into it, their perseverance is certain. There are many other passages of scripture, which might be produced in proof of this doctrine; but these are sufficient. I pass on,

II. To observe those arguments in proof of the saints final perseverance, taken from various sacred and divine things. As,

First, from the perfections of God; whatever is agreeable to them, and made necessary by them, must be true; and whatever is contrary to them, and reflects dishonor on them, must be false. The doctrine of the saints final perseverance is agreeable to, and becomes necessary by them, and therefore must be true; but the contrary to it, that of the apostasy of real saints, so as to perish everlastingly, is repugnant to them, and reflects dishonor on them, and therefore must be false. The perfections of God, which are manifestly displayed in the doctrine of the saints final perseverance, and by which it is confirmed, are the following.

1. The immutability of God. God is unchangeable; this is asserted by himself, "I am the Lord; I change not": and he himself drew this inference from it, "Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed"; ye that are Israelites indeed perish not, nor ever shall; and after God himself, we may safely draw the same conclusion: if they are consumed, or perish everlastingly, he must change in his love to them, which he never does, but rests in it; and in his purposes and designs concerning them. And those whom he has appointed to salvation, he must consign over to damnation; and his promises of grace made to them, and his blessings of grace bestowed on them, must be reversed; and yet he will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips, nor change his mind; for he is "of one mind, and who can turn him?" The doctrine of the saints final perseverance asserts the unchangeableness of God, and does honour to it; but the contrary doctrine makes him changeable in his nature, will, and grace, and reflects dishonor on him, with whom there is no "variableness nor shadow of turning" (Mai. 3:6; Job 23:13; Jas. 1:17).

2. The wisdom of God appears in this doctrine; and whose wisdom is seen in all his works of nature, providence, and grace; and is very conspicuous in the salvation of his people; which it would not be, should they perish. No wise man, who has an end in view, but will devise and make use of proper means; and will, if in his power, make those means effectual to attain the end, or he will not act a wise part. The end which God has in view, and has fixed, with respect to his

people, is the salvation of them; and it can never be consistent with his wisdom to appoint insufficient means, or not make those means effectual, which it is in his power to do; which must be the case, if any of those he has appointed to salvation should perish. Now as he has fixed the end, salvation, he has provided his Son to be the author of it, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and has appointed as means to the enjoyment of this salvation, the sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth; for which purpose he sends his Spirit to sanctify them, and work faith in them, whereby these means become effectual, and the end is answered; and so the wisdom of God is highly displayed and glorified. But where would be his wisdom to appoint men to salvation, and not save them at last? to send his Son to redeem them, and they be never the better for it? and to send his Spirit into them, to begin a good work of grace, and not finish it? But this is not the case, he has put the work of redemption into the hands of his Son, who has completed it; and assigned the work of sanctification, in its beginning, progress, and issue, to the divine Spirit, who is equal to it, and will perform it: and throughout the whole, God abounds towards his people in all wisdom and prudence.

3. The power of God is greatly concerned in this affair. Such who are elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and are regenerated by his grace, are “kept by his power to salvation”, so that they shall never perish, but be everlastingly saved. Not only salvation is appointed as walls and bulwarks to them, which is a sufficient security; but God himself is a wall of fire about them; and no enemy can possibly break through such walls, bulwarks, and fortifications, to destroy them. God is all powerful, his power is irresistible, nothing can withstand it, nor overcome it; nothing in earth and hell is a match for it. And this power of his can never be weakened, nor his hand shortened, that he cannot save; which must be the case, if any of those kept by his power perish.

4. The goodness, grace, and mercy of God, confirm this truth. “The mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him”; which it would not be, should any of those that truly fear him perish; “His compassions fail not”; which they would, should any of his be consumed; but because of his tender mercies

they are not consumed: nor can it be thought that that God, who is “gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth”; who has, of his “abundant mercy, begotten again his elect”; and because he is “rich in mercy”, and for his “great love” to them, has “quicken’d” them when “dead in trespasses and sins”; will, after all this, suffer them to fall, so as to perish everlastingly; no, “the Lord will perfect that which concerneth” them, his work of grace upon them, and the whole salvation of them: the reason is, “Thy mercy, O Lord, endures for ever!” and then follows a prayer of faith; “Forsake not the work of thine own hands!” which God never will (Ps. 138:8).

5. The justice of God makes the perseverance of the saints necessary. God is righteous in all his ways and works, and so in the work of salvation. He is a just God, and a Saviour; his justice is, and must be glorified, in the salvation of men, as the other attributes of his and it is through Christ’s making satisfaction for sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness. And can it be imagined, that God should accept of the righteousness of his Son, and express a well pleasedness in it, because by it his law is magnified and made honourable; that he should impute it to his people, and give them faith to receive it, and plead it as their justifying righteousness; and yet, after all, suffer them to perish? Nay, where could be his justice, to punish those for whose sins Christ has made satisfaction, and God himself has discharged upon it? It is not consistent with the justice of God to punish sin twice; once in the surety, and again in those he has redeemed; which must be the case, if any for whom Christ suffered should perish eternally; for to perish eternally is the same as to be punished with everlasting destruction.

6. The faithfulness of God secures the final perseverance of the saints; God is faithful to his counsels, to his covenant, and to his promises concerning their salvation, and will never suffer his faithfulness to fail; which must fail if they perish. But God is faithful, who has called them by his grace, and will confirm them to the end; will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear; will establish them, and keep them from evil; and will preserve them blameless to the coming of Christ; faithful is he who has promised, who also will do it.

Secondly, the final perseverance of the saints may be concluded from the purposes and decrees of God; which are infrustrable, and are always accomplished; “The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?” or make it void, and of no effect? and “his hand is stretched out”, to execute his purposes, “and who shall turn it back” from doing the thing he is resolved on? as he has “thought, so shall it come to pass”; and as he has “purposed, it shall stand” (Isa. 14:24, 27), though there may be a thousand devices in the hearts of men and devils, they can never counteract, nor undermine the decrees of God. His “counsel shall stand”, every purpose of his, and particularly his “purpose according to election”; which stands not upon the foot of “works”, but upon the will “of him that calls”, which is unalterable and irreversible. “The election hath obtained”, or the elect, in all ages, have obtained righteousness, life, and salvation; it is not possible they should be deceived; nor can any charge be laid against them by law or justice, and therefore must be saved. Election is an ordination of men to eternal life, and therefore they shall never die the second death; it is an appointment of them to salvation, and therefore they shall be saved; they are chosen to obtain the glory of Christ, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; and accordingly they are sanctified by the Spirit, and do believe in Christ, who is the truth, and shall be glorified; for between their predestination and glorification, there is an inseparable connection; “Whom he did predestinate—they he also glorified” (Rom. 9:12, 13; 11:7; 8:30).

Thirdly, the argument in favour of the saints final perseverance, receives great strength from the promises of God, which are sure, and are all yea and amen in Christ, and are always fulfilled; not one of the good things God has promised has ever failed; and many are his promises, as has been observed, concerning the perseverance of his people; as that they shall hold on their way, and be stronger and stronger; that he will not turn away from them; and they shall never depart from him; with a multitude of others; and, in general, he has promised, he will never leave nor forsake them: and therefore it is impossible they should perish; for then his promises and his faithfulness in them would be of none effect; which ought not to be

said.

Fourthly, this truth may be further confirmed from the gracious acts of God, flowing from his everlasting and unchangeable love. The love of God to his people is an everlasting love, which it would not be should they perish; for none can perish and remain the objects of his love: but his love always remains, it is never taken away, nor does it ever depart, nor can there be any separation from it; and consequently those interested in it can never be finally and totally lost: and there are many acts of grace arising from this love, which show it; not to take notice of the act of election before observed, which secures their salvation; nor the covenant of grace, from the perpetuity of which this point has been argued; nor the act of putting the elect into Christ's hands, from whence they can never be plucked; there are several others which ascertain the same thing; two or three of which I shall mention.

1. The adoption of the children of God into his family; by which he takes them for his sons and daughters; which is a wonderful instance of his love (1 John 3:1), now to this they are predestinated according to the good pleasure of his will; and this predestination and appointment of them to adoption is his will to adopt them; and his will to adopt them is the adoption of them; this is what is called a putting them among the children (Jer. 3:19), and whom God puts among the children, and accounts as such, it is not in the power of men or devils to put them out; nor can they put out themselves, should they even desire it, or express their contentment to be no longer sons but to be servants; it is impracticable and not to be admitted, as the case of the prodigal shows (Luke 15:19, 21), the blessing is bestowed in the covenant of grace, and is irreversible; Christ by his redemption as made way for the reception of it, which makes his redemption a plenteous one, this with other blessings of grace, being included in it; and to them that receive him, and believe in him, he gives a power to become the sons of God; his Spirit witnesses to theirs that they are so, and by faith it becomes manifest. Now between sonship and heirship there is a close connection: "if a son, no more a servant of sin and Satan, and the world, but an heir of God through Christ; if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ"

(Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17), and can a child of God become a child of the devil? shall an heir of heaven be seen in the flames of hell? or shall one that is a joint heir with Christ, come short of the incorruptible inheritance? no, that is reserved for them, and they are kept to that by the power of God.

2. Justification is another act of God's free grace, and the fruit of his ancient love (Rom. 3:24; 5:17), the sentence is pronounced in the mind of God by himself, and none can reverse it; it is God that justifies, and who shall condemn? such as are justified by him can never come into condemnation and everlastingly perish; otherwise how could he be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; if, after all, notwithstanding his imputation of the righteousness of his Son to them, and the justification of them by it, and their reception of it by faith, they should be condemned? or how would Christ's righteousness be an everlasting righteousness and answer for his people in a time to come, should they be condemned with the world and excluded from the kingdom of heaven? or how would this righteousness of his be unto justification of life? or what would signify their being made heirs of eternal life through it? or of what avail would their title to it by it be unto them, if after all they perish eternally? But the connection between justification and glorification is inseparable; "whom he justified them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30), and most certain it is, that the righteous, who are justified by Christ's righteousness shall go into everlasting life when the wicked will go into eternal punishment (Matthew 25:46).

3. Pardon of sin is another act of the riches of divine grace, and flows from unmerited and distinguishing love. Those whom God forgives for Christ's sake, on account of his blood shed for the remission of their sins, and upon the foot of satisfaction made for them by him, he forgives all their iniquities; not one sin is left unforgiven; and if so, how can they be destroyed or perish everlastingly? Is it possible that a man should go to hell with a full and free pardon of all his sins in his hands? Was ever any man executed, having received the king's pardon? and especially can it be thought that any whom the King of kings has pardoned, whose acts can never be made void, should yet suffer everlasting punishment for sin? no, when "the iniquity of

Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none” to be laid to their charge, being cleared of all; and “the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found”, nor any bill on account of them be found against them, and that for this reason; “for I will pardon them whom I reserve”, that is, for himself; and if reserved for himself, being fully pardoned by his grace, they shall be preserved from everlasting destruction.

Fifthly, The saints final perseverance in grace to glory, and security from ruin and destruction, may be concluded from the love of Christ to them, his interest in them, and theirs in him. Christ’s love to them was from everlasting, his delights were with those sons of men before the world was, and from it nothing can separate them: “having loved his own, which were in the world, he loves them to the end” (John 13:1), to the end of their lives, and to all eternity; and therefore they can never perish. And they are not only the objects of his love, dear unto him, but they are his care and charge, who are committed to him to be kept by him; and he has undertook the care of them, has eternal life to give them, and does give it to them, and they shall never perish, but have it; yea, they have it already, a right unto it and earnest of it; and as they are his Father’s “gift” to him, to be preserved by him, so they are the “purchase” of his blood, the flock he has purchased with it, and he will not lose one of them; should he, so far his blood would be shed for nought, and his death be in vain. They are “members” of his body, and can never be separated from it; should they, even the least member of them, his body, the church, would not be “the fulness of him that filleth all in all”; if anyone member in a natural body should be wanting, even the least, it would not be a complete body; and this would be the case of Christ’s mystical body, should any member in it perish; but as sure as Christ the head lives, so sure shall every member of his body live also, and never die. They are his “children”, his spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands in the relation of an “everlasting Father”; these are a “seed” that it is promised he shall see and enjoy for ever, and that they shall “endure for ever”; nor shall anyone of them be missing at the great day; but Christ will present them to his Father complete and safe, who gave them to him, saying, “Lo, I, and the children thou hast given me!” They are his “spouse” and

bride, whom he has betrothed to himself in lovingkindness, and that for ever, to whom he stands in the relation of an “husband”; and between whom there is a conjugal and indissoluble union; whom he has so loved as to give himself for, to sanctify and cleanse, and make them spotless and glorious in his sight; and after all the cost and pains he has been at to make her so, can it be thought he will suffer this choice one, and beloved spouse of his, or any of them that make up this spiritual body, to perish eternally? They are his “portion, and the lot of his inheritance”, his Father has given him, and he is well pleased with; they are his “jewels”, and he will never lose any of them; they are a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in his hand; his Hephzibah, in whom he delights; his Beulah, to whom he is married, and he will employ all his power in the preservation and security of them. They are on him the “foundation” laid in Zion, which is sure and everlasting; on which all those who are laid are safe, and from whence they can never be removed by all the winds and waves, storms and tempests, raised by sin, Satan, and the world; they are built upon a rock immovable, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. They are interested in the intercession of Christ, which is always prevalent; for he is always heard; and he ever lives to make intercession for them; not only for all the necessary supplies of grace, for grace to help them in time of need; but for their eternal glorification (John 17:24). Lastly, Christ is making “preparations” in heaven for them; he is gone beforehand, and entered into heaven as their forerunner, and in their name to take possession for them; he is gone to prepare a place, and fit up mansions of glory for them; and has promised to come and take them to himself, that where he is they may be also (John 14:2, 3). And are these mansions preparing in vain? and shall these seats and dwelling places be empty of those for whom they are designed, or any of them? this would be the case should any perish for whom Christ is gone to prepare a place.

2f. Sixthly, A further proof of this doctrine may be taken from the work of grace, and the nature of it; and from the Spirit’s concern in it, as the author of it, in those in whom it is wrought. Grace is an incorruptible seed, that never dies; it always remains, and is the reason why those in whom it is shall not sin unto death, or so sin as

to die eternally: it is a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life: grace and glory are inseparably connected; to whom God gives the one, he assuredly gives the other. The several particular graces of which the work consists, are abiding ones, as faith, hope, and love (1 Cor. 13:13). Faith ever remains; it is more precious than gold that perisheth; and for that reason, among others, because it perishes not, when gold does; Christ, who is the author, is the finisher of it; though it may sometimes seem as if it would fill, it shall not fail, through his powerful and prevalent mediation; he that truly believes in Christ, shall be most certainly saved by him, if there is any truth in the gospel of Christ. "Hope", though a lowly grace, is a lively one; however, is always a living one, and is an anchor sure and steadfast; and is of great use to the saint under all his trials and afflictions in life, and will continue with him till death; "For the righteous hath hope in his death"; nor will it ever make ashamed, because it never disappoints, nor is disappointed. Love, though it sometimes waxes cold, and the first love may be left, though not lost; it is of such a nature, that all the floods of afflictions, persecution, and temptations, can never quench. The church in darkness, and without the presence of Christ, and sight of him, could even then describe him as the Person whom her soul loved. Peter, though he fell so grievously, through the temptations of Satan, yet did not lose his love to Christ; but upon first meeting with him, when asked the question, and that repeated again and again, declared he did love him; yea, he appeals to him, as the omniscient God, that he knew he loved him. The Spirit of God is the author of this work of grace; it is he who begins it, and will perform it, till the day of Christ, and finish what he has begun. He has his residence in the hearts of the Lord's people, and dwells in them, as in his temple; nor does he ever utterly depart from them; he is given to abide with them, and he does. Yea he is given as the earnest and pledge of their glorious inheritance; and having such an earnest, can they doubt, or have any reason to doubt, of their full enjoyment of it, since by him, they are sealed unto the day of redemption? In a word, the glory of the three divine Persons is concerned in the final perseverance of the saints; for should they, or any of them perish, where would be the glory of the Father in choosing them to salvation? and the

glory of the Son in redeeming them? and the glory of the Spirit in the sanctification of them? respecting them, their glory would be lost, should they come short of heaven and happiness; but since the doctrine of the saints final perseverance is bound together with this threefold cord, which cannot be broken, the certainty of it may be depended upon. I proceed,

III. To answer to, and remove the objections made, to this doctrine.

First, from some passages of scripture which may seem to be contrary unto it; or, however, are brought to disprove it.

1. The first passage of scripture, and which is usually set in the front of those that are brought against the saints final perseverance, is Ezekiel 18:24. “But when the righteous turneth away front his righteousness”, &c. from whence it is concluded, that a man may be truly just and good, and yet become a very wicked man, and die in his sins, and perish everlastingly.

(1). The scope of the chapter should be attended to; which is to vindicate the justice of God in the dispensations of his providence towards the people of Israel: they had a proverb much in use among them, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”: the meaning of which was, their fathers had sinned, and they their children were punished for their sins; upon which they charged the ways of God with inequality and injustice. In answer to which, the Lord says, that whereas all souls were his, as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son, it was the soul that sinned that should die, or be punished with one temporal calamity or another; that if a man was a just man, and behaved well, he should live comfortably and happily in the land; if not, he should die, as to civil enjoyment in it, and be removed from it; for,

(2). This chapter, and the context of it, only relate to the land of Israel, and to the house of Israel, the inhabitants of it; who, when first put into the possession of it, had a law given them; and according to their obedience, or disobedience to it, they were to live in the land, or be driven out of it; for they held their tenure by their obedience; if they were willing to serve the Lord, and keep his statutes, and be obedient to them, then they should eat the good of the land and

enjoy the benefits of it (Isa. 1:19), but if they were disobedient, they were to be exiled from it, and be captives in another land; which was now their case, and of which they complained. And,

(3). By the “righteous man” in the text is not meant one truly righteous; no man is truly righteous by the works of the law in the sight of God, these being imperfect; but he that is made righteous, by the perfect obedience and righteousness of Christ imputed to him, anti received by faith. But there is not a word in the text, nor context, of the obedience and righteousness of Christ, which is an “everlasting righteousness”; from which no man that has it can turn, so as to die and perish eternally; for then it would not be everlasting; nor can a man that has true faith in this righteousness, or that lives by faith upon it, “commit iniquity”; that is, live a sinful course of life, make a trade of sinning, addict himself wholly to it; for such a man is a servant of sin, a slave to it, and of the devil; which can never be said of a truly just and good man; for though there is not a just man that doth good and sinneth not, yet he doth not sin at such a rate as this; the “seed” of grace remains in him, and he cannot sin, as to do “all the abominations” the wicked man does. Nor can he die spiritually and eternally; the just man lives by faith upon that righteousness by which he becomes just; he lives by the faith of the Son of God; and he that lives and believes in Christ shall never die spiritually; and the righteousness of Christ is upon him, “unto justification of life”, and entitles him to eternal life; and therefore he shall never be hurt by the second death; he shall never come into condemnation; but being righteous, shall be “righteous still”, and evermore so. But this is to be understood of one that only seemed to be a righteous man, was so in the sight of others, and in his own account, but not really so; one that reckoned himself righteous by his “own righteousness”, and “trusted in” that; (Ezek. 33:13) a righteousness that consisted of a few external, moral performances; as appears from Ezekiel 33:5-9 and from such a righteousness, or course of living, a man may turn, and give up himself to all manner of wickedness; and become like the dog and the swine in the proverb; when it would have been better if such a man had not known the way of righteousness, than after to have turned from the holy commandment delivered to him.

(4). The death here spoken of, and in other passages in this chapter; as in Ezekiel 33:23, 31, 32 is not an eternal death, or the death of the soul and body in hell; for this was now upon them, of which they were complaining, imagining it was for their fathers sins; but of some severe judgment, or sore calamity, or some great affliction, which is called a “death”; as in Exodus 10:17; 2 Cor. 1:10; 11:23 so here the exile of the Jews from their native country, and captivity in a foreign land, which was a civil death, is here so called; wherefore no argument cast be formed from hence to prove the saints perishing eternally. And,

(5). After all the words are only a supposition; “When”, or “if, a righteous man, turn from his righteousness”; and a supposition puts nothing in being, proves nothing, is no instance of matter of fact; and all that can be concluded from the whole is, that a just man may sin, and be afflicted for sin, which he may, and yet be everlastingly saved.

2. Another passage of scripture brought against the saints final perseverance, and to prove their falling from grace, is the case of the stony ground hearer; who is said to “hear the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended” (Matthew 13:20, 21). Or as in Luke 8:13. “Which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away”. But it should be observed,

(1). That those persons thus described, were not truly good and gracious persons; for though the seed, or word, fell upon them, they were a rock, stony ground still; they were yet in a state of nature, no change or alteration in them; their hearts were as hard as an adamant stone; the stony heart was not taken away from them, nor an heart of flesh given them; otherwise the word would have had a place in them, took root in them, would have sprung up, and brought forth fruit.

3a2b. And though they received the word with “joy”, this is what a wicked man, a very wicked man, may do; and Herod did, who heard John “gladly”, though he afterwards took off his head; such a man may receive the word with a flash of natural affection, and be pleased

with it; being so far enlightened, as to see the truth, the harmony of it, and some interesting things in it; he may flatter himself he shall share in; so that this joy arises only from a principle of self-love: such do not receive it as the Thessalonians did, “in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost”; having been either in great distress of soul, on account of sin, when the gospel of peace and pardon coming to them, was joyfully received as good news and glad tidings; or though they were reproached and persecuted for hearing, receiving, and professing the gospel, they rejoiced at it, and abode by it: but so did not these stony ground hearers; for when tribulation or persecution arose because of the word, they were offended and gone; their joy was the joy of the hypocrite, which is but for a moment.

(2). The faith they had was but “for a while”, as it is expressed (Luke 8:13), it was a temporary faith, like that of Simon Magus, who, though he professed to believe, was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; their faith was not the faith of God’s elect; for that stands sure, upon the same footing as electing grace itself does, from whence it springs; it was not that faith which is the gift of God; for his gifts of grace are without repentance, and are never revoked, but always abide: not that faith which is the operation of God; for that is maintained and performed with power: not that faith of which Christ is the author; for of that he is the finisher; and though it is sometimes low and languid, he prays for it that it fail not.

(3). Those persons had no root in themselves, and therefore withered; they had not “the root of the matter” in them, as Job calls it, the truth of grace; they were not rooted in the love of God, nor in Christ, and had not the grace of God rooted in them; otherwise they would have been fruitful and established; for “the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit”, and is “not moved” (Prov. 12:3,12)

3a2e. Those persons are manifestly distinguished from the “good ground”, into which the seed was received (Matthew 13:23), and from an “honest and good heart”, in which they that heard the word kept it (Luke 8:15), and so were not truly good and gracious persons, on whom the good work of grace was begun; were not trees made good, and so they brought forth no good fruit: wherefore the withering and falling away of those are no proofs and instances of the saints so

falling as to perish everlastingly.

3, Another passage of scripture produced to invalidate the doctrine of the saints final perseverance, is in John 15:2, 6. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; if man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned". From whence it is inferred, that men may be branches in Christ, the true vine, and yet so fall as to perish everlastingly. Now it should be observed, that there is a twofold being in Christ, and two sorts of branches in him.

1. There are some who are truly and really in him through the grace of God; not only secretly by electing grace, being chosen in him; but by powerful and efficacious grace in effectual calling; who are created in Christ, and are new creatures in him, and have a vital union with him, and become fruitful by him: these are rooted and built up in him, and are established in the faith of him; and shall never be rooted up, but always have an abiding in him; and these are fruit bearing branches in him; all their fruit is from him, and they are filled with it by him; and continue so even in old age, to the end of life; being under the constant care and culture of Christ's Father, the Husbandman, who purges and prunes them by his word, and by his Spirit, so that they bring forth much fruit, whereby he is glorified.

2. There are others who are in him only by profession; which must be supposed of many of the members of external visible churches, which are said to be "in Christ" (Gal. 1:21; 1 Thess. 1:1), who, in a judgment of charity, are said to be so; though it cannot be thought that every individual member of them were really in Christ, only by profession; and such as these not being truly engrafted into him, though they have a place in his churches; being destitute of the true grace of God, are unfruitful, and wither in their profession; and fall into immoral practices, or unsound principles, and are cast out of the churches; and at last, like withered branches, or chaff, are burnt with unquenchable fire. But what is this to real saints, or true believers in Christ? or what proof of their falling and perishing everlastingly?

4. Another instance of saints falling from grace is that of the broken branches from the olive tree; and the threatening of such who are grafted into it with being cut off, if they continue not in goodness

(Rom. 11:17-22). From whence it is observed, that such who are grafted in the good olive tree, the spiritual and invisible church, may, nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. But,

(1). By the good olive tree is not meant the spiritual and invisible church; that general assembly and church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven; which consists only of elect men; and whose number will neither be increased nor diminished; that church which Christ gave himself for to sanctify, and does sanctify; and whom he will present to himself a glorious church, not one missing; that church of which he is the head, and that his body and the fulness of him, which it would not be should any member thereof perish. But,

(2). This olive tree is to be understood of the outward gospel church state, or the outward visible church, under the gospel dispensation; the national church of the Jews, which is compared to an olive tree (Jer. 11:16), being abolished, and its branches broken off and scattered, a gospel church state was set up in Judea; and therefore called their “own olive tree”. Now out of this, the broken branches, or the unbelieving Jews, were left; not admitted into the church at Jerusalem, nor elsewhere in Judea: and when there was a coalition of believing Jews and Gentiles, which were first made at Antioch, these were left out. So that,

(3). Those; who are signified by the broken branches were never true believers in Christ; but because of their unbelief in him, and reflection of him, were broken off, and were never engrafted into, but left out of the gospel church; these were such who did not belong to the election of grace among the Jews; but were the rest, that were blinded; and so no instances of the falling away of true believers.

(4). Though those who are grafted in are threatened to be cut off, in ease they continued not in goodness; meaning, not the goodness, grace, and love of God; but the goodness of the good olive, the gospel church; not abiding in the ordinances of it, and walking worthy of them, in which they were, then they should be cut off; not from the grace and favour of God, nor from an interest in Christ; but from the church, and the privileges of it; and who might be grafted in again, being restored by repentance; which is sometimes the case, and will

be the case of the natural branches, the Jews; who, when they are converted, and brought to believe in Christ, will be grafted into their own good olive, and then all Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:25, 26).

5. The passage of the apostle Paul concerning himself is wrested to such a purpose; "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). The word *castaway* is not to be rendered "reprobate", as it sometimes is; nor to be understood of such an one as opposed to an elect person; for an elect person, as the apostle was, for he includes himself among such (Eph 1:4), can never be a reprobate in such a sense; for elect persons always obtain righteousness, life, and eternal salvation; though the faith of nominal professors may be subverted, theirs cannot; the foundation stands sure on which they are; and those who are predestinated, or ordained unto eternal life, as they believe, so they shall be glorified, and never be treated as non-elect. The apostle could never fear that he should be a castaway in such a sense as to perish everlastingly; he knew Christ, in whom he had believed, to be an able and complete Saviour, and that he was his Saviour and would keep what he had committed to him; he knew his interest in the everlasting love of God, and was persuaded nothing should separate him from it: he instances in himself, as a proof that God had not cast away his people, whom he foreknew (Rom. 11:1, 2; 8:38, 39; 2 Tim. 1:12).

But as the Greek word used signifies disapproved, the sense of the apostle seems to be this, that he was careful not to indulge to sensual gratifications; but to keep his body under a due decorum and in subjection to proper rules; and not yield the members of it as instruments of unrighteousness; lest while he preached the gospel of the grace of God to others, he might stand reprov'd himself, and be disapproved by men, and his ministry become contemptible and useless; (see 2 Cor. 6:3). And the fears and jealousies of the saints over themselves are not inconsistent with their perseverance in grace, much less disprove it; but are means of their perseverance in it. 3a6. When the apostle says, "Whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4), it is not meant of falling from the grace, favour, and love of God in his heart; for that is everlasting

and unchangeable, as immovable as hills and mountains, and more so; they may depart, but the lovingkindness of God to his people never will depart; there is nothing in heaven, earth, or hell, that can separate from that; and consequently there can be no falling from it: nor of falling from the grace of God wrought in their hearts; for that is an incorruptible seed, which never dies, is never lost, but always remains: but of falling from the doctrine of grace; and particularly that glorious doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law; which some of the Galatians who had formerly embraced it, fell from, seeking for justification by the works of the law. And in like sense are we to understand other similar passages; as when the apostle beseeches “not to receive the grace of God in vain” (2 Cor. 6:1), the love and favour of God cannot be received in vain, being shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of God; nor the grace of God implanted in the heart, which is an abiding seed there; but the doctrine of grace, when it is either dropped, or denied, or turned into lasciviousness, and men walk unbecoming their profession of it: and so in Hebrews 12:15. “Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God”; depart from the gospel, and drop his profession of it, or walk as does not become it. Once more,

7. What the apostle says of Hymeneus and Alexander is produced as a proof of the apostasy of real saints; “holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander” (1 Tim. 1:19). But,

(1). It does not appear that these men were ever truly good men; of Hymeneus it is said, that he was a vain babbler, and increased to more and more ungodliness: and of Alexander, who is supposed to be the same with Alexander the coppersmith, that he did the apostle much evil by reproaching and persecuting him; by hindering him in his ministry as much as in him lay, and withstanding and contradicting his doctrines; and so can be no instances of true believers falling from grace; see 2 Timothy 2:16-18; 4:14,15

(2). Nor is it manifest that they ever had a good conscience; putting it away does not suppose it: persons may put away that with disdain and contempt, as the word here used signifies, which

they never received and had, though presented to them: so the Jews put away the gospel from them, which they never embraced, but despised, contradicted, and blasphemed (Acts 13:45, 46), where the same word is used as here: and so here, when these found the gospel required men should exercise a good conscience, void of offence to God and men; they disliked it, and put it away, and chose rather to relinquish the gospel than to be obliged by it to exercise such a conscience. Besides,

(3). Persons may have a conscience good in some sense, in an external show, and as it may appear by their outward behavior among men in general, and with respect to some particular facts; or in comparison of what they may afterwards appear to have: and yet not have a conscience purged by the blood of Christ; or have their evil hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and so have a pure conscience. It is said, even of the heathens, that their consciences bore them witness of their actions, accusing of some, and excusing others: and the apostle Paul, before conversion, is said to live in “all good conscience”; when, as yet, he had not the grace of God (Rom. 2:14,15; Acts 23:1).

(4). The faith these men made shipwreck of was not the grace of faith they never had, but the doctrine of faith which they had professed; for this phrase, “concerning the faith”, is only used of the doctrine of faith (Acts 24:24), and the particular doctrine made shipwreck of, and which particularly Hymeneus erred concerning, was the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which he said was passed already (2 Tim. 2:18).

(5). Supposing the grace of faith was meant, the phrase of making shipwreck of it is not strong enough to express the entire loss of it; since a person may be shipwrecked and not lost; the apostle Paul “thrice” suffered shipwreck, and yet was saved each time. Besides, as there is a true and unfeigned faith; so there is a feigned and counterfeit faith, which may be in men who have no true grace, and may be shipwrecked so as to be lost; and such an instance is no proof of the saints falling from grace.

3a8. Another passage usually brought to prove the apostasy of real saints, and against their final perseverance, is Hebrews 6:4-6.

But,

(1). The persons here spoken of are distinguished from the believing Hebrews, who are compared to the earth that drinks in the rain that comes frequently on it, and brings forth herbs fit for use, and receives the blessing of God; when these are compared to the earth that bears thorns and briers, is rejected, is nigh unto cursing, and its end is to be burnt (Heb. 6:7, 8), and then adds, with respect to the saints he writes to, “But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak” (Heb. 6:9), and goes on to take notice of their work and labour of love; and to excite them to diligence and industry; and encourages them, by the promises made unto them, and the immutability of them, and by the firm hope that God has given them; and by the glorious forerunner, who was entered into heaven for them.

(2). Admitting true believers are meant, the words are only conditional; if they fall away; and are but a supposition of it, and prove no matter of fact, that ever any did fall away; and at most, only express the danger of their falling; as there may be, through the power of indwelling sin, the force of temptations, and the frowns and flatteries of the world, and the difficulty of restoring them from a partial fall; a total and final one being prevented by the power and grace of God.

(3). The words are, in some versions, so rendered, as to assert the impossibility of their falling; so the Syriac version, “it is impossible they should sin again”; as to die spiritually, and lose, the grace of God, and stand in need of a new work of grace upon them; which would require the crucifying of Christ again, and a re-exposing him to open shame; things impossible to be done, and so the former; which sense agrees with the words of the apostle (1 John 3:9), “and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”: and this is confirmed by the Arabic version; and according to these versions, the several other things mentioned, are connected with the word “impossible”; as that they should be renewed again to repentance; and that they should crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame.

(4). There is nothing said of them that is peculiar to believers: not a word of their faith in Christ; nor of their being begotten again

to a lively hope; nor of then being sanctified by the Spirit of God; nor of their being justified by the righteousness of Christ; nor of their being the sons of God by faith in Christ; nor of their being sealed by the Holy Spirit of God; nor of their being made meet to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance.

(5). What is said of them are what may be found in persons destitute of the grace of God. As,

1. That they were “enlightened”; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it “baptized”; and it will not be denied, that some such, as Simon Magus, may totally and finally fall away: but not to insist on this sense, there are two sorts of enlightened persons: some are savingly enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state and condition, and salvation by Christ, and their interest in it, and who shall never perish: others are only enlightened into the doctrines of the gospel; though some to such a degree as to be able to preach them to others; and yet be strangers to the true grace of God. And when such fall away, they are no proofs nor instances of the apostasy of real saints.

2. That they “tasted of the heavenly gift”; whether by it is meant the gift of a justifying righteousness, or of remission of sins, or of eternal life; men destitute of the grace of God may have some speculative notions about them, and desires after them, arising from a principle of self-love: or if Christ, the gift of God himself, is meant, “tasting” may stand opposed to eating his flesh and drinking his blood; which is proper to true believers, who feed upon him and are nourished by him; while hypocrites and formal professors only taste of him, have a superficial knowledge of him, and gust for him.

3. That they “were made partakers of the Holy Ghost”; not of the Person of the Spirit, and of his indwelling in their hearts, as in his temple, and as the earnest of the heavenly inheritance; nor of his grace, as implanted in them, which are connected with eternal life: but of his gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary, both of which Judas was made a partaker, and yet devoid of true grace.

4. That they “tasted the good word of God”; had a superficial knowledge of it, had the bare form, without the power of it; were pleased with it for awhile, as Herod was with the ministry of John the

Baptist; and Christ's hearers were with his doctrines at first, though they presently sought to kill him.

5. That they tasted, also "the powers of the world to come"; meaning either the miracles and mighty works done in the former part of the gospel dispensation; which some were able to perform, who were not true believers in Christ, as Judas and others; see Matthew 7:22, 23 or the joys and glories of heaven; which natural men may have some self-pleasing notions of and desires after, as Balaam had (Num. 23:10). Now when such persons as these fall away from a profession of religion, and into sin, they are no instances of true believers falling from real grace.

9. Another scripture brought as a proof of falling from grace, is Hebrews 10:26,29. "For if we sin wilfully", &c. From whence it is inferred, that one that has the knowledge of the truth may in such sort sin as that there remains no sacrifice for it; and one that is sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall away as to perish everlastingly. But,

1. These words are not said of true believers; for though the persons described are such who,

(1). Had knowledge of the truth; yet whether we understand this of Christ, who is the truth; or of the gospel, the word of truth, and of the several truths in it; as salvation by Christ, justification by his righteousness, &c. persons may have a notional and not a saving knowledge of these things; the devils know much of Christ, and so do many natural men; yea, the apostle says, men may have "all knowledge", or knowledge of all truths, that which is notional and speculative; and "all faith", which is historical, and yet be without grace (1 Cor. 13:2).

(2). Though said to be "sanctified by the blood of the covenant", this is not to be understood of the expiation of their sins, and of their justification from them by the blood of Christ; for such are most certainly saved from wrath to come, and shall never enter into condemnation or perish eternally; but of their profession of their being thus sanctified; they were thought to be so by themselves and others when they really were not; and by their profession of religion were externally sanctified and separated from others, submitting to

baptism, and partaking of the Lord's Supper; when they outwardly eat the bread and drank of the cup, the external symbol of the blood of the New Testament, or covenant, though they did not spiritually discern the body and blood of Christ, but counted these symbols as common things. Though after all, it is the "Son of God" himself that is intended, and not the apostate; for the immediate antecedent to the relative "he", is the "Son of God"; who was sanctified, or set apart, by the blood and sacrifice of himself, for the discharge of the other part of his priestly office, his intercession for his people in heaven; which is mentioned as an aggravation of the sin of such a person, who counted his blood an unholy thing.

2. The sins ascribed to the persons spoken of are such as are never committed by true believers; such as,

(1). To "sin wilfully", after the knowledge of the truth is received; for this is not to be understood of common infirmities, or of grosser sins, which may be voluntarily committed by the saints after regeneration, as were by Lot, David, and others; but of a denial of that great and fundamental truth of the gospel, the atonement of sin by the blood, sacrifice, and death of Christ, after a man has known it and professed it: this is never done by one that has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and to whom his blood is precious; nor can it be: Peter denied his Master, and that he knew him; but he did not deny him to be his Saviour; nor deny the virtue of his blood and sacrifice for the atonement of sin; when, and by whom, this is done knowingly and wilfully, there "remains no more"; there is no other "sacrifice for sin"; and therefore such a man must be eternally lost.

(2). To "tread underfoot the Son of God"; doing as much as in them lies to strip him of his equality with God, and to reduce him to the class of a mere creature, and deny him to be the eternal Son of God: this can never be done by such who have once believed, and are sure that he is "the Son of the living God"; for "whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father"; he denies both the one and the other; and in effect says that there are neither (1 John 2:22, 23), he is antichrist.

(3). To "count the blood of the covenant an unholy" or "common thing"; as if it was the blood of a mere man, when it is "the blood of

Jesus Christ his Son”, the Son of God, “which cleanses from all sin”; that blood with which the church of God is purchased; that blood by which it is redeemed from sin, Satan, and the law; that blood by which the covenant of grace is ratified and confirmed; and by virtue of which the covenant ones are delivered from their captive state.

(4). To “do despite unto the Spirit of grace”, who has been a Spirit of grace and supplication to them; such who have had such an experience of him, can never do despite unto him, treat him with malice, scorn, and contempt; deny his divine Person, and his special operations of grace; nor deny him to be the Spirit of grace, and reproach him as such; true believers in Christ, who have been sanctified and sealed by him, can never do such things as these.

3. Truly sanctified persons are distinguished from the apostates, whose custom had been to forsake the assemblies of the saints (Heb. 10:25), and the apostle declares for himself, and other true believers, who were just men, and lived by faith, that they were not of the number of such men, and to be ranked with them (Heb. 10:38, 39). So that these apostates are no instances of true believers falling from grace.

10. The passage just referred to, though it makes clearly for the doctrine of the saints final perseverance, is brought as an objection to it (Heb. 10:38). “Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him”. From whence it is inferred, that those who live by faith, and are justified persons, may not endure to the end, may draw back to perdition, and everlastingly perish. But,

(1). He that is truly a just man can never die spiritually and eternally; “Whosoever liveth and believeth in me”, says Christ (John 11:26) “shall never die: believest thou this?” It ought to be believed: and if such shall never die, they cannot perish everlastingly; a believer in Christ, and justified by him, can never be condemned; “he hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed death to life”; and therefore shall be eternally saved and glorified (John 5:24).

(2). The just man, and he that draws back, are not the same; as is clear from the next verse; “but we are not of them that draw

back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving the soul". There are two sorts of persons mentioned; one that were maxecoq, "of faith", that had true faith in Christ, and lived by faith on him, and did not draw back to perdition, but went on believing till saved; of this number were the apostle, and every truly just and righteous man, included in the word "we": the other were o7100x0AT|; of the "withdrawing", or separation, who forsook the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25), withdrew from their society and communion, and apostatized from the ways and worship of God: by which distinction it appears, that those that truly believe do not draw back to perdition; but continue in the faith of Christ, and in the true worship of God, and are everlastingly saved; and that those that drew back to perdition were not of the faith, or true believers in Christ, nor ever just ones that lived by faith; and so their apostasy is no proof of the falling away of true believers as to perish everlastingly.

(3). The passage in Habakkuk 2:4 which is referred to, plainly shows who the man is that draws back, as opposed to the just man that lives by faith: he is one whose "soul is lifted up, and is not upright in him"; one that is proud and haughty, and is lifted up with a vain conceit of his own righteousness, in which he trusts; to which he betakes himself, as to a tower and fortified place, as the word used signifies, and imagines himself safe; and whose heart is not right with God nor humble before God; and that such a man should withdraw himself from the communion of the saints and apostatize is not to be wondered at.

(4). God's taking "no pleasure in him that draws back" does not intimate that he took pleasure in him before his drawing back; since it is not said, "my soul shall have no more, or no further pleasure in him"; but, "shall have no pleasure in him"; which does not necessarily suppose that he had any pleasure in him before; but that he should have none in him hereafter. Besides, such who are the objects of God's delight and pleasure are always so; he "rests in his love towards them, and rejoices over them with singing" (Zeph. 3:17; Ps. 149:4; Rom. 8:38).

11. To the doctrine of the saints final perseverance is objected the passage in 2 Peter 2:20-22. But there is nothing said in those

words which show that the persons spoken of were true believers; but the reverse.

(1). The knowledge they had of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was not a spiritual, experimental, saving knowledge of him; for then they would have followed on to have known him, and to have known more of him, and it would have issued in eternal life (Hosea 6:3; John 17:3), but it was only a speculative notional knowledge of him, such as devils and Christless persons may have.

(2). “Escaping the pollutions of the world” through it, designs no other than an external reformation of life and manners, joined with an outward conformity to the commands and ordinances of Christ, and an outward walk for a time in the ways of religion, they professed a knowledge and liking of.

(3). Nor does it appear that they ever were any other than dogs and swine; and therefore when they apostatized, it was only a returning to their former state, and they only appeared to be what they always were; their case seems to be the same that is observed by Christ (Matthew 12:43-45).

12. The falling away of real believers is argued, and their perseverance objected to, from various exhortations, cautions, &c. given unto them. As,

1. When he that thinks he stands is exhorted “to take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12), but supposing a true believer is here meant, which yet is not clear and certain, since it is one o 8OKCOV, who “seemeth” to himself, and others “to stand”; but admitting it, the exhortation is not superfluous; since, though he cannot finally and totally fall away, yet inasmuch as he may so fall as that God may be dishonored by it, the doctrines ways of Christ spoken evil of, the Spirit of God grieved, weak believers stumbled, and the hands of the wicked strengthened, and a man’s own peace and comfort broken; there is good reason why he should take care of falling; for though there is no danger of his perishing eternally; yet if he falls to the breaking of his bones, and wounding his own soul, it behooves him to take heed lest he fall.

2. When believers arc cautioned “to take heed, lest there be in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God” (Heb.

3:12), it shows that believers ought to be upon their guard against the sin of unbelief, to expose which is the design of the words; since it is a sin which easily besets good men, bereaves their souls of much comfort and God of much glory; and therefore believers should be careful of giving way to it and encouraging it, since it leads to a partial departure from Christ, the living God; though God has put his fear into the hearts of such persons, “that they shall not depart him” finally and totally.

3. When the apostle Peter exhorts those he wrote to, who had obtained like precious faith with him, to “beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, they should fall from their own steadfastness” (2 Pet. 3:17), his meaning is not, as though there was a possibility of their falling from the precious grace of “faith” they had “obtained”; but from some degree of the steady exercise of it; or rather from their stedfast adherence to the doctrine of faith, through the sleight and cunning of men who lay in wait to deceive; who might be able to stagger them, though they could not finally and totally deceive them; and therefore it became them to be upon their guard against them.

4. When the apostle John exhorts, saying, “Look to yourselves, that ye lose not those things which we have wrought” (2 John 1:8), he speaks not of what the Spirit of God had wrought in them, as if that could be lost; nor even of what they themselves had wrought, under the influence of divine grace; but what we, the ministers of the gospel, had wrought, by teaching and instructing them, lest their labour in the ministry among them should be in vain, they giving heed to the doctrines of deceivers, mentioned both before and after (2 John 1:7,9,10)

5. And when the apostle Jude says, “Keep yourselves in the love of God” (Jude 1:21), it is not to be understood of the love which God has in his heart towards his people, an interest in which can never be lost, and from which there is no separation; but rather of the love which they bear to him, the fervour of which sometimes abates; and therefore they should make use of all means to maintain, increase, and inflame it, in themselves and others; “keep” ΕΟΥΤΟ’ΥΟ, “one another” in it, by the means directed to in the preceding verse: or

it may chiefly respect, love, peace, and concord among themselves; called “the love of God”, as it is “the peace of God” (Col. 3:15), which is of him, taught by him, and he calls unto; and so is of the same import with Ephesians 4:3. Or, admitting that the love of God, in the first sense, is meant; it may design exercise of faith on it, meditation upon it, a constant keeping of it in view, in order to preserve themselves by the love of God from Satan’s temptations, the snares of the world, and the lusts of the flesh; against complying with which, the love of God, shown in what he has done for his people, is a strong argument (Gen. 39:9), and that the apostle could have no thought of the possibility of the saints falling totally and finally, appears from what he says of Christ with respect to them (Jude 1:24). “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling”, &c. And in like manner other cautions and exhortations, similar to these, may be understood; and it should be observed, that such cautions and exhortations as these are used and blessed as means of the perseverance of the saints, and are not to be improved against the doctrine of it.

Secondly, objections are raised against the doctrine of the saints final perseverance from the sins and failures of persons eminent for faith and holiness; as Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, Peter, and others. But these are no proofs of their final and total falling away. As to Noah and Lot, though guilty of great sins, they have after this the character of truly good and righteous men. As for David, though by his fall his bones were broken, and the joy of his salvation was taken from him, and grace lay some time unexercised by him; yet the Spirit of God was not taken from him, as appears from his own words, when most sensible of his case (Ps. 51:11, 12). As for Solomon, though his backsliding was great, attended with aggravated circumstances, yet not total, see 1 Kings 11:4, 6 nor final, as to perish everlastingly; which would have been contrary to the promise of God, that his mercy should not depart from him (2 Sam. 7:14,15). Besides, he was restored by repentance; and the book of Ecclesiastes was penned by him in his old age, as an acknowledgment and retractation of his former follies; and some persons, after his death, are spoken of with commendation, for walking in the way of Solomon, as well as in the way of David (2 Chron. 11:17). As for Peter, his fall was not total;

Christ prayed for him, that his faith failed not; nor final; for he was quickly restored by repentance. And these various instances are recorded in scripture, not as instances of final and total apostasy, but of the weakness of the best of men in themselves; and for our caution and instruction, “to take heed lest we fall”: Demas is sometimes mentioned as an instance of apostasy; who, very probably, was a good man, since he is mentioned with such who were so (Col. 4:14; Philem. 1:24), and what the apostle says of him, that he had “forsaken him, having loved this present world”, is not sufficient to prove him an apostate, any more than Mark’s departure from the apostle Paul, and others at Pamphylia; for his too much love of the world, which is to be observed in many, otherwise good and valuable men, would prove them to be so. As for Hymeneus, Alexander, and Philetus, they do not appear to have been good men, as before observed; and so no instances of the apostasy of real saints.

Thirdly, some ill consequences, supposed to follow the doctrine of the saints final perseverance, are urged against it. As,

1. That it tends to make persons secure and indifferent, as to the use of means to preserve them from sin and apostasy. But this is not true in fact, any more than in other cases similar to it; but is rather an encouragement to the use of them: Joshua, though he was assured that not a man should be able to stand before him, but all his enemies should be conquered by him; this did not make him secure, nor hinder him from taking all the proper precautions against his enemies; and of making use of all means to obtain a victory over them. Hezekiah, though he was assured of his restoration from his disorder; yet this did not hinder him, nor the prophet, who assured him of it, from making use of proper means for the cure of it: and though the apostle Paul had a certainty of the saving of the lives of all that were in the ship, yet he directed them to the proper means of their preservation; and told them, that except they abode in the ship they could not be saved; and taking this his advice, though shipwrecked, they all came safe to shore.

2. It is said, that this doctrine gives encouragement to indulge to sin, and to commit such gross sins as Lot, David, and others; upon an opinion that they are the children of God; and upon a presumption,

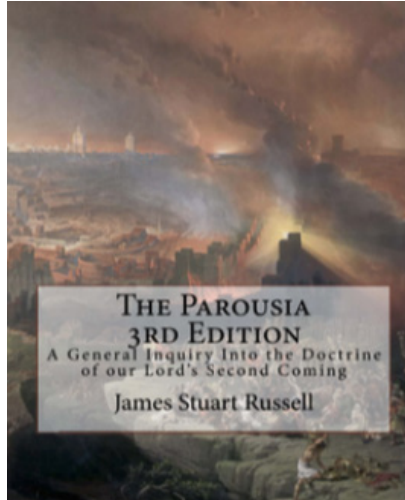
that they cannot so fall as to perish everlastingly. To which it may be replied, that such sins mentioned, committed without repentance towards God, and faith in the blood and sacrifice of Christ, those who are guilty of them shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but, according to the law, die without mercy; and even those good men who did commit such sins, though they had true faith, and genuine repentance, their sins were so displeasing to God, and resented by him, that he visited their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes; though his lovingkindness was not taken away from them. And the above instances of sin are recorded, not to encourage sin; but to caution against it; and to show the weakness of the best of men, and to set forth the pardoning grace and mercy of God to such offenders; in order to relieve souls distressed with sin, and to give them hope of the pardon of it. And whatsoever ill use such persons may make of these instances, who have only an "opinion" of their being the children of God; such who are really so by faith in Christ, neither can nor will make such an use of them.

3. It is objected, that this doctrine lessens the force of the prohibitions of sin, and of exhortations to avoid it; and of motives offered to persevere in righteousness and holiness. But these prohibitions of sin, and motives to holiness, are used by the Spirit of God as means of perseverance; and so they are considered by good men. And it would be absurd and irrational to judge otherwise; for can a man believe he shall persevere to the end, and yet indulge himself in sin, as if he was resolved not to persevere? and nothing can be more stronger motives to holiness and righteousness, than the absolute and unconditional promises of God to his people; and the firm assurance given them of their being the children of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb; see 2 Corinthians 6:18; 7:1; 1 Peter 1:17-19.

4. Whereas we argue, that the doctrine of the saints apostasy, obstructs the peace and comfort of believers; it is objected to that of their perseverance, that it is not therefore true, because it is comfortable to carnal minds, which are opposite to the doctrine according to godliness. To which it may be answered, that our argument does not proceed upon the comfortableness of the doctrine

we plead for; but upon the uncomfortableness of the opposite to it; for though a doctrine may not be true which is seemingly comfortable to a carnal mind; yet that doctrine is certainly not true, which is really uncomfortable to a sanctified heart; or which manifestly breaks in upon the true peace and comfort of a believer; as the doctrine of the saints apostasy does; since the whole scripture, and all the doctrines of it, are calculated for the comfort, as well as for the instruction and edification of the saints: and though their perseverance does not depend upon their comfort; for if they believe not, and are without comfort, God is faithful to his counsel, covenant and promises, and will preserve and save them.

However, this is certain, that the doctrine of the saints falling away from grace finally and totally, is a very uncomfortable one, and therefore to be rejected.

THE PAROUSIA**James Stuart Russell**

James Stuart Russell's, 'High Praise For The Parousia', is an excellent work that looks at the New Testament teaching of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and the book of Revelation tells of those events leading up to and including his coming. Luke 23, verse 28. But Jesus turning into them said. 'Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for your selves and for your children. 29. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. 20 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains fall on us and to the hills cover us. 30. For if they do these things in the green tree what shall be done in the dry? The book of Revelation is a prophecy that Jesus gave to the Apostle John before the Neuronic persecution in 66 .A.D. He was told to write and inform the seven churches in Asia about those things that were shortly about to come to pass in his day. It relates to those things leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and immediately afterwards. It told of the judgment God, styled the Day of Vengeance, on the city called Babylon for her sins and breach of the first Covenant. This Babylon was the city

of Jerusalem who's people and leaders had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and turned their back on the Mosaic covenant. The day of vengeance was day when the cup of God's wrath that was poured out on her who was called Mystery Babylon, The Mother of Harlots and this was to bring an end of rule of the Mosaic Law, bringing it to its fulfillment as Jesus had said I come not to destroy the law but to fulfill the Law and to bring in the New Covenant order called the law of Christ. It is impossible to understand the book of Revelation if one takes for granted that the date of its writing was after the fall and destruction by Titus, in 70 A.D. Most scholars assume the book was written about 96 A.D. 16 years after the event and so it has become impossible for them to establish a correct interpretation of the book.

Ed Stevens

FOREWORD BY EDWARD E. STEVENS

The word "Parousia" (**par-oo-see-ah**) is not a household word, but students of end time prophecy know it is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ. It comes from two Greek words ("**para**" beside, and "**ousia**" state of being) and literally means "to be beside" (present with someone). It came to be a more specific reference to important people coming for an extended (but not long-term) visit to one of their subject territories (a "visitation"). It can refer either to the initial arrival or the afterward presence. It is used in the New Testament almost exclusively of Christ's Second Coming.

Russell examines every significant New Testament text about Christ's return, to see when it would occur and what it would be like. Since he believed the Second Coming occurred in the first century at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, his view is labeled "Preterist."

The word "Preterist" is another prophetic term with which many are unfamiliar. According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, a Preterist is "a theologian who believes the prophecies of the Apocalypse have already been fulfilled." A Preterist is the opposite of a Futurist. Futurists teach that the three major end time events (parousia, resurrection, judgment) are still future in fulfillment, whereas Preterists teach these events have already been fulfilled. Some may wonder what difference it makes?

Everything crucial to Christianity is at risk. The Deity of Christ, the integrity of the apostles and prophets, and the inspiration of the New Testament is at stake. How so?

Jesus and the NT writers repeatedly make time- restricted predictions about His return and the other end time events. They do not merely suggest that Christ's Parousia might occur in their lifetime, they unequivocally affirm it.

Liberals, skeptics, and Jewish/Islamic critics use those "time statements" to discredit Jesus and the New Testament. Inspired men cannot make mistakes. Since Jesus and the NT writers predicted Christ's return to occur in their lifetime, and it supposedly didn't happen, they assume Jesus and the NT writers were mistaken.

Indeed, if we cannot trust their prophetic utterances, we cannot trust anything else they say. Christianity is totally discredited if those predictions failed to materialize exactly as they prophesied.

You might wonder what these "time texts" are? Matthew 16:27-28 is a good example. This book deals with every one of them. They were not mistaken when they predicted Christ's return in their lifetime. It really occurred, at AD 70.

Theologians who study end time prophecy consider Russell's book a classic defense of the Preterist view. It is this book, more than any other during the past 125 years, which has moved so many toward Preterism.

Many in the Reformed faith (e.g., R. C. Sproul, Sr., David Chilton, Gary DeMar, Ken Gentry, Gary North, Jim Jordan, et al) credit Russell's book as having a significant impact on their eschatological views. R. C. Sproul, Sr. says he looks favorably at Preterism because it is the only view of prophecy which effectively counters the liberal-skeptic-critic attack. He has written much to recommend Russell's book and encourage the spread of Preterism, even though he does not go as far as Russell does. In his Foreword to the 1999 Baker Books reprint of *The Parousia* (pp. ix-x), Sproul says:

Russell's work is valuable chiefly for his analysis of the time-frame references of New Testament prophecy and his understanding of the main reference to the parousia. ...Russell's book has forced me to take the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem far more

seriously than before, to open my eyes to the radical significance of this event in redemptive history. It vindicates the apostolic hope and prediction of our Lord's close-at hand coming in judgment.... I can never read the New Testament again the same way I read it before reading *The Parousia*.

Until this book appeared in 1878, Preterism had little systemization. This book began that process, and remains one of the most consistent and comprehensive explanations of Preterism available. The Preterist view flourished in Germany and Britain. But America, still recovering from civil war, took little notice. In global terms, its impact is still marginal, but it has seen significant growth in the past ten years, and the Internet is one of the big factors stimulating that. What the Gutenberg printing press did for the Protestant reformation, the Internet did for the Preterist reformation.

The Internet is the perfect place to publish helpful material like this. One of the first books to be posted on Preterist websites was Russell's *Parousia*. Even though the electronic version has had many readers in the short five years it has been available, it has not diminished demand for printed copies. This book is destined to remain a Preterist classic.

Russell did a remarkable job of interpretation compared to previous centuries. He pointed the way in a number of areas that we are only just now beginning to develop further. He devoted over 170 pages to the book of Revelation. One of his best statements is there. He uses the "time" statements in the first three verses of Revelation to show how crucial the date of writing is to the interpretation of the book:

It may truly be said that the key has all the while hung by the door, plainly visible to every one who had eyes to see; yet men have tried to pick the lock, or force the door, or climb up some other way, rather than avail themselves of so simple and ready a way of admission as to use the key made and provided for them. (*Parousia*, p. 367)

Russell leaves no excuses for Futurism. His survey of all the "Parousia" (second coming) references is a tour de force in Preterist exegesis. This book was the first wave of what has become a whole storm of books defending the AD 70 fulfillment of end time prophecy.

Futurists and Partial Preterists for too long have hidden behind the excuse of wanting explicit “time indicators” before assigning a text to AD 70. Russell and modern Preterists have exhaustively shown that all NT end time texts have first century “audience relevance” written all over them, which functions as an implicit time indicator. The New Testament was not written to us originally. We are reading someone else’s mail. The primary task of a Bible interpreter is to discover what the original author intended to communicate to his original audience, not just to ask what it “could” mean to us today.

THREE DIFFICULT TEXTS SIMPLIFIED

There are three scriptures which most partial preterists think are yet to be fulfilled: Acts 1:11, 1 Cor. 15:20-57, and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. Russell shows that an AD 70 fulfillment is the most consistent interpretation of these texts. However, he does not deal very much with Acts 1:11. As a result, many Futurists and Partial Preterists have used this text to teach another major return of Christ still in the future. Modern Preterists have now shown that these three texts contain implicit time indicators and contextual clues which connect them inseparably to the Parousia and final consummation in AD 70. For a fuller explanation of these three texts from a Preterist perspective, see the three books written by this author (Stevens Response To Gentry, Questions 5 About The Afterlife, and Expectations Demand A Rapture).

https://www.preteristarchive.com/Hyper/2002_stevens_rapture.html

In those books, we deal especially with the typological imagery of Christ’s ascension into the cloud-filled heavenly Holy of Holies to present His own blood to make final atonement, and His “second appearance” back out of the heavenly temple to announce atonement to His anxiously waiting saints. The Acts 1:11 reference to the return of Christ is easy to apply to AD 70 when we realize it is speaking of the reverse of the visible ascent of Christ in Theophany form. His descent would follow the same Theophany pattern as His ascent, meaning that it would be visible like His departure. He ascended visibly with clouds and angels in the presence of a few disciples, and the two angels (Acts 1:10-11) promised that He would descend visibly “in

like manner” in that same Theophany pattern to only those disciples whom He wished to see it. Both the going away and the return were “cloud comings” (Theophanies) accompanied by angels. He left the same way He would return (in clouds with the angels) to appear to his anxiously waiting disciples (“How long, O Lord?” and “O, our Lord, come!”). They expected His return before all of that generation died. Some of them were promised to remain alive until His return, and that they would literally “see” it before they all died (Matt. 16:27-28 and John 21:22f).

Even some partial preterists (e.g. Kenneth Gentry in his book, *Before Jerusalem Fell*) have agreed that Rev. 1:7 (which mentions a “cloud coming” or Theophany which “every eye would see”) was fulfilled in AD 70. Since most expositors connect Rev. 1:7 with Acts 1:11, it seems reasonable to assign both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 to the visible Theophany that was seen by the Jewish people just before the war in AD 66. Notice what R. C. Sproul, Sr. said about the angelic appearances in the sky in AD 66 and its connection to Rev. 1:7 – “... theop Old Testament prophets, when speaking of a real historical visitation of God in judgment upon cities and nations, used exactly this kind of language in a metaphorical way to describe that coming of divine judgment.... As some 19th century scholars...Jonathan Edwards...B. B. Warfield and others have suggested, what Jesus is talking about here on the Mount of Olives [Matt. 24:3] ...is the end of the Jewish age. And that the coming that he’s talking about, and that he’s warning these contemporaries about over and over again... that was coming on that generation...was the judgment of God that was coming on Jerusalem and the temple in the year 70 AD.... Was Jesus visible? Did “every eye see him” [Rev. 1:7] and all of that? No. Although, one of the weirdest passages you ever read in ancient history is the paragraph that is found in Josephus [Wars, Bk 6, Ch 5, Sect. 3]. I quote it in my book [The Last Days According to Jesus, p. 124]... After talking about some remarkable, astonishing celestial events that some people had reported, he said, “Besides these a few days after that feast, on the one-and-twentieth day of the month Artemisius ...before the setting of the sun, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds....”

...The overwhelming testimony of the contemporaries (and he was there as an eyewitness) was that people did see something in the clouds. And what is it they saw? They saw chariots. Is that the first time the chariot throne of God is seen in the clouds over Palestine? What took Elijah to heaven? What were the whirling merkabahs [chariots] Ezekiel beheld? Was not the basic symbol in the Old Testament of the movable judgment throne of God, his chariots of fire? And here we have the testimony of many, many people saying they saw these chariots running about the clouds right before the end of Jerusalem. ...It lends credence to the further application of Jesus' predictions of what would come in this judgment of the nation of Israel and of the city of Jerusalem..." [R. C. Sproul, Sr. "Last Days Madness" speech, 1999 Ligonier Ministries National Conference in Orlando. Bracketed material inserted by the author of this Foreword.]

Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History, Bk 3, Ch 8, Section 5) quotes this same material from Josephus, and Tacitus (Histories, Book 5, "About The Jews") alludes to the same events. Sproul's comments stimulate several thoughts. If Rev. 1:7 was fulfilled by the appearance of angels and chariots in the sky at AD 66, and if Acts 1:11 is speaking of the same judgment coming (or cloud coming, Theophany) of Christ, then what text teaches a still future visible coming of Christ? If the angelic armies literally seen in the clouds at AD 66 were the fulfillment of "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7) as Sproul has allowed as a possibility, then it was also the fulfillment of Acts 1:11! In Matt 16:27-28, which R. C. Sproul, Sr. affirms is AD 70, it states that some of those disciples would not taste death until they saw Christ return. It therefore seems logical that the visible coming of Christ at AD 66-70 which is mentioned in Matt. 16:27-28 must be the same coming dealt with in both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11.

The commander of the angelic hosts (Christ) was present with His angelic armies on that occasion (AD 66), just like Rev. 19:11-21 pictures for us. This was the visible return of Christ with His angels to judge His enemies and reward His saints, as both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 had predicted. Matt. 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28 also indicated there would be visible "signs" accompanying the return of Christ with His angels to raise the dead out of Hades, perform the judgment, and

reward His faithful saints. This fulfills the “in like manner” terms of the Acts 1:11 text. Both Rev. 1:7 and Acts 1:11 fit the Matt. 16:27-28 “visibility” pattern.

It is also clear from the similarities between 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thess. 4 that these two “parousia” texts are speaking of the same AD 70 return of Christ. Since both texts state that the resurrection will occur in connection with the “parousia” (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:15-17), and since the NT does not distinguish between two different parousia’s separated by thousands of years, and since this parousia is said to occur in the lifetime of some who would “live and remain” until it occurred (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:15), then it is clear that these two texts were fulfilled in AD 70. This forces some adjustment in our concepts about the nature of fulfillment once we get the time of fulfillment straightened out. All three of these difficult second coming texts have been explained from a consistent AD 70 fulfillment. This leaves partial preterists nowhere to hide. We can thank Russell for pointing the way toward this approach to these three texts.

A LITERAL RAPTURE

Another area in which Russell greatly served the interests of future generations was the rapture. Four other scholars within a generation of Russell also taught the idea of a literal rapture in AD 70 (Milton S. Terry, E. Hampden-Cook, Richard Weymouth, and William S. Army). There are minor differences in the way each of these men described it, but all agreed there was a removal of some true Christians in connection with the return of Christ in AD 70. Modern advocates of a literal AD 70 rapture (such as Garrett Brown, Walt Hibbard, Arthur Melanson, Ian Harding, Ed Stevens, and others) go further to assert that all true Christians (and nothing but true Christians) alive at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem were “snatched away” to be with Christ in the spiritual realm. Russell suggested that only some Christians were caught up – a “partial rapture” with the sleepers or unwatchful Christians left on earth. But it seems from Jesus’ sharp criticism of that group in Matthew 25 (and in the book of Revelation) that the sleepers or unwatchful were not true Christians. The tribulation and apostasy eliminated the insincere. By the time of the rapture the only watchful, awake,

and “worthy ones” were the true Christians. There would have been few (if any) pretenders and “mere professing Christians.” So in either view, the group of saints actually raptured is basically the same, whether we see it as only the watchful Christians, or as true Christians only.

The arguments we all use to establish the necessity of a literal rapture in AD 70 are exactly the same. The strongest arguments are the Biblical “expectation statements.” Scripture alone is our standard, not scripture plus history, tradition or anything else. The only authoritative material that we can use to make any final decisions about what did or did not occur in AD 70 is the Bible. If it says the Parousia was going to occur in AD 70, that should be enough. We shouldn’t have to be convinced by history or any external arguments. If the text of scripture says something is going to occur within a certain time frame, then we are bound to believe it, regardless of whether we can find external historical or traditional support for it, and regardless of whether our credulity is stretched to the breaking point. The same thing happened in the field of archaeology in regard to the Hittites and Darius the Mede. The Bible was the only evidence we had for the existence of these people for a long time, yet that did not make advocates of sola scriptura doubt the veracity of the Bible. So for sincere believers, the question boils down to this: What did the NT writers believe, teach, and expect to see, hear, and experience at the Parousia? Did they expect to experience the Parousia in any conscious way? Did they expect to “know” it had occurred afterwards? Or did they expect it to happen totally in the invisible realm without being consciously aware of it in any way? It is these Biblical “expectation statements” that also need to be examined, not just the “time statements.”

We Preterists have pressed Futurists with the “time statements,” and rightly so, because they are “sola scriptura” arguments. They are Biblical statements that need to be dealt with. So are the “expectation statements.” What the “time statements” do for Preterism in general, the “expectation statements” do for the rapture view in particular. The time statements nail down the “time” of the parousia and its related events, while the expectation statements reveal the content

and “nature” of those events in the experience of the Church.

Just because the Parousia may not have been validated historically in the way some might have preferred, it never stopped us from seeing it as a fulfilled “fact.” The “time statements” forced us to believe that it must have occurred, regardless of a lack of historical confirmation. Even if we are unable to find external historical proof for a literal rapture in AD 70, it does not invalidate the Bible’s affirmation of it. Our concern is simply, “What does Scripture actually teach?”

Rapture advocates have been accused of teaching a rapture based only on external historical “arguments from silence.” Not so! Scripture is the driving force. The expectation statements are Biblical arguments, just like the time statements. The time statements help establish the time of fulfillment, while the expectation statements help determine the nature of fulfillment. As you study the following list of Biblical passages, find the answers to these two questions: (1) What does Jesus say is actually going to be seen and experienced by His saints at the Parousia? (2) What do the NT writers and pre-70 Christians indicate that they were expecting to actually see and experience at the Parousia? (Matt. 16:27-28; 19:28; 24:31; John 14:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-4; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:1; and 1 Jn. 3:2). These texts show clearly what the first century Church expected to experience at the Parousia.

Paul said that when Christ would come to cast His enemies “away from His presence” and gather His saints (2 Thess. 1:6-2:1), that the saints would “marvel at Him” in His presence and in the presence of all who have believed, and Christ would be glorified by their collective presence with Him “on that day.” That doesn’t sound like a very silent occasion to me. Did they fail to “recognize the time of His visitation” and remain silent (as if it had not occurred). They should have been celebrating and proclaiming the fulfillment of His Parousia (if they were still around). There is a strange silence here, at the very time when we would have expected anything but silence, when they said they would be marveling at Christ in His presence. Their silence does not match their expectations, unless they were doing those things in the heavenly realm (no longer on the earthly scene).

If all living Christians remained on earth after AD 70, why didn't some of those who saw these incredible events in AD 70 say something about it? Why the silence, if they were still around? Russell and the other four scholars mentioned above proposed the literal rapture to explain that silence. Silence is not a significant argument all by itself. But as Sherlock Holmes would agree in the case of the dog that didn't bark when a supposed outsider broke in, sometimes silence is significant, especially when the circumstances would force us to expect otherwise. Expectations demand our attention even in the case of silence, if the Bible clearly teaches us to expect something other than silence. And it does.

For more in depth studies of the rapture at the parousia in AD 66-70, see this author's book entitled, *Expectations Demand A Rapture*, and the excellent series of articles written by Ian Harding.

THE MILLENNIUM

Russell was uncomfortable with any view of the Millennium which ended at AD 70 (p. 514). He considered such a short duration of the millennium (40 years or less) to be "so violent and unnatural that we cannot hesitate to reject it" (p. 514). He suggested the millennium only began at AD 70 with a limited "first" resurrection and judgment (of the righteous only), and is still ongoing in history and moving toward a yet future final resurrection and judgment of the rest of the dead (the wicked only – p. 518). It seemed to him that the Millennium was "introduced parenthetically" as an exception to the AD 70 time limits of the rest of the book (p. 514).

He noted that some people (such as myself) consider the idea of a Millennium after AD 70 as challenging the imminent time indicators throughout the book of Revelation. We would prefer a 40-year millennium (AD 30-70) which stays within those time limits.

Russell places a flashback to AD 70 at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:10), so that the white throne judgment in Rev. 20:11ff takes place in AD 70. Preterists who take the 40-year approach cannot disallow his flashback, since we insert one at the beginning of the millennium.

Russell's millennium interpretation deserves careful consideration. He acknowledged his understanding of it might not

be perfect, and held out the hope that succeeding generations “will soon correct what is proved to be erroneous, and confirm what is shown to be right.” (p. 535)

In conclusion, I have to repeat how impressed I am with Russell’s exegetical work here. Many thousands of Bible students all over the world have been, and will continue to be, blessed by this book. We send this reprint forth with strong encouragement to seriously and objectively consider everything he has to say, and to “search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are so.” (Acts 17:11)

Edward E. Stevens

Bradford, Pennsylvania July, 2003.

Don Preston

Editors Comment: We don’t agree with Don Preston’s view of the death of Adam but he is right in this article

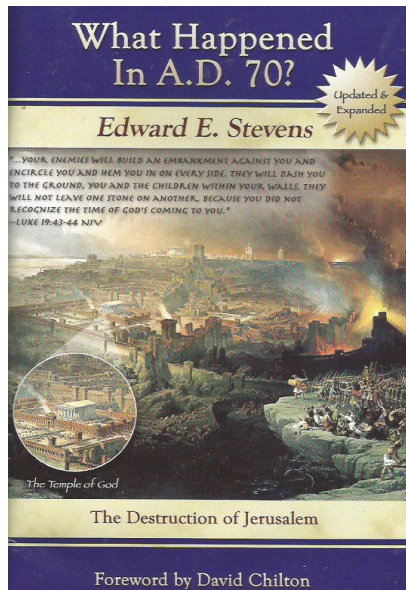
A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This “new” movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is fulfilled. The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the “final” conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ’s coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions. This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative. The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read

of Russell's work in the footnotes of the commentaries. Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these "skeptical" authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions. This is where Russell's work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement. Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority. Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of "the end," he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that "the end" that Jesus and the N.T. Writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age. Russell's work is a stunning rejection - and corrective -- of what the "Orthodox" historical "Creedal" church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the

“divines” missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell’s main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

Don K. Preston.

WHAT HAPPENED IN A.D. 70



Edward E. Stevens

This book introduces a view of Bible prophecy which many have found extremely helpful in their Bible study. It explains the end time riddles which have always bothered students of Bible prophecy. It is a **consistent view** which makes the book of Revelation much easier to understand. It establishes when the New Testament canon of scripture was completed, demolishes the liberal attack on the inspiration of the New Testament, and is more **conservative** on most other issues than traditional views. And there is **no compromise** of any essential Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith.

The key to understand any passage of scripture has always been a good grasp of the historical setting in which it was originally written (**audience relevance**). Two thousand years from now our history, culture, politics and language will have changed dramatically.

Imagine someone then having to learn the ancient language of “American English” to read our USA newspapers! If they saw one of our political cartoons with a donkey and elephant, what would they think? How would they go about understanding it? Not only would they have to study the language, but also our culture, history, politics and economics. The same applies to Bible study. If we are really going to understand what all the “donkeys and elephants” (beasts, harlots, dragons, etc.) Symbolize in the book of Revelation, we will have to seriously and carefully study the language, history, culture and politics of the First Century. Of course, the truths essential for salvation are couched in simple language that everyone can grasp. But there are numerous scriptures in the Bible which are “hard to understand” (cf. 2 Pet 3:16), and Bible prophecy is one of those things which must be approached with much more focus on the original historical art cultural context (audience relevance)

One of the main purposes of this book is to provide a closer look at the historical framework behind the New Testament. Many have found it helpful to lay aside (at least temporarily) the legion of speculative opinions about the book of Revelation, and look at a more historical alternative, which is that **the book of Revelation was written to the first century church and had primary relevance to them.** It warned of events that were about to happen in their lifetime, and prepared them for the tribulation and other events associated with the End of the Jewish Age. Atheists, skeptics, Jew, Muslims, and liberal critics of the bible use the supposed failure of those end times events to occur in the First Century to undermine the integrity of Christs and the inspired NT writings.

Non-Christian Jews laugh at this supposed non-occurrence, and use it as evidence that Jesus is not the Messiah. Their forefathers in the flesh rejected Jesus in His first coming because He did not fulfill the Old Testament prophecies in the materialistic and nationalistic way that they were expecting, even though Jesus told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, and that it would be within them instead. Yet it seems that many futurists today are expecting that same kind of materialistic and nationalistic kingdom to arrive at a future return of Christ Are they making the same mistake about the

Second Coming that the Jews made about His first coming? Jesus repeatedly said His Kingdom is “not of this world” and that it would “not come with observation.” It is a spiritual entity, and it has arrived. We live in it. Both futurist Christians and non-Christian Jews need to realize this. Christians are finally beginning to seek alternatives to the fatally flawed **futurist** interpretation. This book introduces the Preterist view.

“Preterist” simply means past in fulfillment. It means that Christ has already fulfilled His promise to return and consummate redemption in Himself and His ongoing spiritual kingdom (the church). We should be like the noble-minded Bereans and “search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are true” You might want to have your Bible open alongside as you read.

Edward E. Stevens

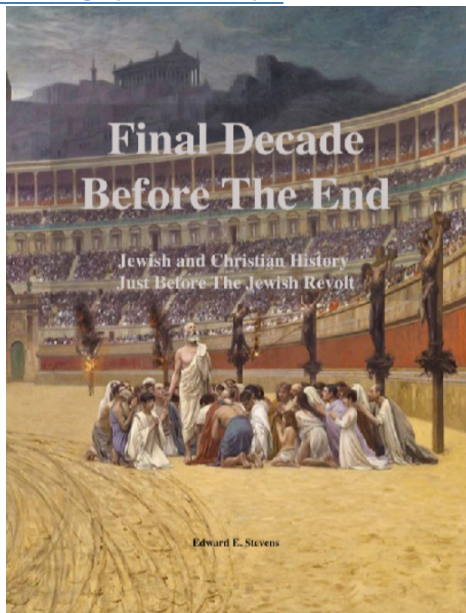
INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

<https://www.preterist.org/>

Bradford, Pennsylvania

April 17, 2010

FINAL DECADE BEFORE THE END



Edward E. Stevens

Ever since the booklet, **What Happened In AD 70?** Was published in 1980, there have been constant requests for more detailed information about the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish, Roman, and Christian history associated with it. Over the years since then I have studied Josephus, Yosippon, Hegesippus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Eusebius, the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, Pseudepigrapha, Church Fathers, Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish/Christian writings, trying to determine exactly what happened, when it happened, and the effect it had upon the Church. Then in 2002, after I began to promote J. S. Russell's view of a literal rapture, the demand for historical documentation of the fulfillment of all eschatological events dramatically increased. That forced me to dig much deeper. So in 2007 I put together a 21-page chronology of first century events. Two years later in 2009, we published a more substantial 73-page manuscript entitled, *First Century Events in Chronological Order*. That helped fill the void, but it did not go far enough. It only increased the appetite for a more detailed and documented historical reconstruction of first century events. The book of Acts does not give a lot of details about the other Roman and Jewish events that were happening while Paul was on his various missionary journeys. For those events, we have to go to the other contemporary Jewish and Roman historians such as Josephus and Tacitus. The closer we get to AD 70, the more important all of those Jewish and Roman events become. They form an important backdrop behind the Christian events, and show how all the predictions made by Jesus were literally fulfilled. Every High Priest and Zealot leader that we encounter from AD 52 onwards are directly connected with the events of the Last Days. Things are heating up, not only for the Christians, but also for the Jews and the Romans. Paul on his missionary journeys was clearly following a plan which was providentially arranged for him by Christ: (1) to plant new churches among all nations and not just Jews, (2) appoint elders and deacons in every church (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 4:17), (3) write inspired epistles to guide them, (4) instruct his fellow workers to "teach these things to faithful men who would be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2), and (5) establish the Gentiles in the Church and make them one united body with the Jews (Eph 4).

Everywhere Paul went, he followed this pattern. We see this clearly as we study the historical narrative in Acts and Paul's other epistles that were written during this time. These are essential patterns that the apostles evidently bound upon both Gentile and Jewish Christians, and which were intended to be the pattern for all future generations of the eternal Church (Eph 3:21; 2Tim 2:2).

We begin our study by looking at the most likely dates for Matthew (AD 31-38) and Mark (AD 38- 44), and then proceed to the first three epistles of Paul (Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians), which were written on his second missionary journey (AD 51-53). Including these five books in our study allows us to date all twenty-seven books of our New Testament, and show how the NT canon was formed and completed before the outbreak of the Jewish War in AD 66. The study of New Testament canonization in itself is a good reason for reading this work, without even looking at the historical fulfillment of all of the end time prophecies that we document here. After looking at the dates for those first five books, we then move on into the third missionary journey of Apostle Paul which began in AD 54. It was during this final dozen years (from AD 54 until AD 66) when the birth pangs and signs of the end started increasing in both intensity and frequency, along with a quickening pace of NT books being written. We show how 19 of our 27 NT books (70 percent) were written during those last five years just before the Neronian persecution (AD 60-64). The Great Commission was finished, and the rest of the end time events predicted in the Olivet Discourse were fulfilled during that time of "tribulation" upon the church and the "days of vengeance" upon the unbelieving Jews (Luke 21:22).

Edward E. Stevens

INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

April 17,2010