

A sunset over rolling hills. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky and reflecting on the water in the foreground. The hills are silhouetted against the bright sky. In the top right corner, there is a large, white, serif letter 'M'.

M

**LOOKING  
FOR THAT  
BLESSED  
HOPE**

EXPOSITION OF TITUS 2:11-14

**THOMAS MANTON**



M

**LOOKING  
FOR THAT  
BLESSED  
HOPE**

EXPOSITION OF TITUS 2:11-14

THOMAS MANTON

# Looking for that Blessed Hope

## Exposition of Titus 2:11-14

by Thomas Manton

### Table of Contents

[Sermon I. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation,"](#)

[Sermon II. "Hath appeared unto all men"](#)

[Sermon III. "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness,"](#)

[Sermon IV. "That denying ungodliness,"](#)

[Sermon V. "And worldly lusts,"](#)

[Sermon VI. "And worldly lusts,"](#)

[Sermon VII. "We might live soberly,"](#)

[Sermon VIII. "We might live soberly,"](#)

[Sermon IX. "Righteously,"](#)

[Sermon X. "And godly,"](#)

[Sermon XI. "In this present world"](#)

Sermon XII. "Looking for that blessed hope,"

Sermon XIII. "Looking for that blessed hope,"

Sermon XIV. "That blessed hope,"

Sermon XV. "That blessed hope,"

Sermon XVI. "And the glorious appearing,"

Sermon XVII. "And the glorious appearing,"

Sermon XVIII. "Of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ"

Sermon XIX. "Who gave himself for us,"

Sermon XX. "That he might redeem us from all iniquity,"

Sermon XXI. "And purifying unto himself a peculiar people,"

Sermon XXII. "Zealous of good works"

## **SERMON I**

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present

world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.—TITUS 2:11–14.

IN the immediate context the apostle had given direction to servants to walk amiably and faithfully in their relations; and the argument which he urgeth to persuade them is, that by this means they would 'adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,' ver. 10; that is, represent it with advantage, and render it acceptable to the respects of others. Duties of relations are of so much use to the quiet and welfare of human society, that, when they are faithfully performed, they do much commend any way or doctrine, and induce others to speak well of it; and therefore, saith he, Be faithful in your relations, that you may make the doctrine of God comely, and adorn the gospel. Now, this adorning the gospel, it is not only an act of policy, but duty; it is but a doing right to the gospel, and giving it its proper lustre. Why? Because the same gospel which calls for duty to God as to his worship, doth also enforce the duties of our relations. A man may put a varnish upon an evil way by a plausible carriage; and though his principle have no tendency to such a practice, he may do it because it is comely in the world. But it is otherwise here. The gospel, that hath appeared to all sorts of men, presseth all sorts of duties. Yea, and which is more, it giveth grace to perform them; for the apostle doth not only argue here, but direct; he doth not only show them what they must do, but how they may come to do their duty in this kind; for saith he, 'The grace of God which bringeth salvation,' &c.

In the words you may observe the teacher, the lesson, the encouragement and inducements to learn.

1. The teacher is the grace of God, described, ver. 11.

2. The lesson is the whole duty of our heavenly calling, set forth ver. 12, and there—(1.) Negatively, in departing from evil, 'denying ungodliness and worldly lusts.' (2.) Positively, in cleaving to that which is good, 'We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' Where you may observe that the duty of the creature is distributed into three ranks and parts, according to the several objects to which it is referred. Soberly we must walk as to ourselves; righteously as to our neighbour; and godly that the Lord himself may not be defrauded of his portion. There are, in a moral consideration, but three things in the world—thyself, thy neighbour, and God; and suitably doth the apostle distribute and parcel out christian offices and duties; soberly as to ourselves, righteously as to our neighbour, and godly as to God.

3. The encouragements to learn, and they are two. If we look forward, there is hope; if we look backward, there is gratitude, or an obligation arising from the death of Christ. In short the two great motives and inducements are the hope of eternal life, and the end of Christ's death. Hope of eternal life: ver. 13, 'Looking for the blessed hope,' &c. The end of Christ's death; ver. 14, 'Who gave himself for us,' &c.

The text being long, I shall forbear exposition till I come to handle the several branches.

I shall first begin with the teacher, described ver. 11, 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men.' The grace of God is described by its property; it is χάρις ἢ σωτήριος, a grace bringing salvation, or tending to salvation, as the word signifies; and by a special adjunct, its present manifestation, ἐπεφάνη, 'it hath appeared;' suddenly broken out, like the light of the morning after a

dark night; and then there is the extent of that manifestation, it hath appeared to all men. Some indeed refer this extent, not to the word ἐπεφάνη, 'it hath appeared,' but to the word, σωτήριος, 'bringing salvation;' and they read it as we do in the margin; 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared;' there is not much difference. To supersede all doubt and dispute about the matter, all men here signifies all sorts of men; for the apostle had spoken of servants and bondmen, that they in their relations should glorify God; and he proves it by this argument: 'The grace of God hath appeared to all men;' that is, to the bondman as well as to the lord and master; therefore they in their places are to discharge their duties as well as others; for the gospel, as I said, hath appeared to all men, and presseth all sorts of duties.

First, I begin with the thing described, 'The grace of God.' It is a term that admits of divers acceptations. Sometimes it is put for God's eternal favour and good-will; sometimes for the effects of this favour, as grace infused and bestowed upon the creature: Eph. 4:7, 'To every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.' Sometimes it is put for the gospel, which is the charter by which we hold this grace; and so it is said, Rom. 6:15, 'You are not under the law, but under grace;' i.e., under the state of the gospel. Here I take it in the first sense, viz., for the gracious will and good pleasure of God to do good to men, or to show mercy to the creature; for God's kindness and bounty to men is expressed by several terms. The most usual are two—grace and mercy. I will show how they agree, and how they differ. They both agree in this, that they are attributes which merely respect the creature. The love and knowledge of God first falleth upon himself. God knows himself, and loves himself, and then the creature. But now the mercy and grace of God are merely transient, and pass out to and respect the creature only. God cannot be gracious to himself and merciful to himself, as

he loves himself and knows himself; and therefore herein they agree. But now in some respects they differ. Grace properly signifies the freeness of God's love; mercy relates to the misery of the creature. God's external motive is our misery, and his internal motive is his own grace. Mercy respects us as we are in ourselves worthy of condemnation: grace respects us as we are compared with others that are not elected. As, for instance, if the question be, Why any are chosen to life? it is out of mercy, because they are lost and undone creatures. But then if the question be, Why these are chosen above others? then the ultimate reason is God's grace. Once more, the angels that never sinned are saved merely out of grace, and not out of mercy. It is not proper to say they are saved out of mercy, for they were never miserable; but men, that were once miserable, are saved, not only out of grace, but also out of mercy. In short, mercy signifies that love of God which helps the miserable, and grace signifies a property in God to give forth things freely and without desert. Grace doth all gratis, freely, and without any merit or precedent obligation or debt. Note then—

Doct. 1. That the original and first moving cause of all the blessings we have from God is grace.

Survey all the blessings of the covenant, and from first to last you will see grace doth all. Election, vocation, justification, sanctification, glorification, all is from grace. There is a clue of scriptures which will lead us through all these steps, and direct us to grace.

1. For election: Rom. 11:5, 6, 'There is a remnant according to the election of grace.' And then he adds presently (for Paul cannot mention grace, but he must run out into the praise or vindication of it), 'And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise



work is no more work.' Mark the context. The apostle's drift in that place is to prove that all Israel are not cast away; that though the nation of Israel were passed by, yet there was a remnant chosen according to the election of grace. Grace is spoken of by the by, but he takes every little occasion to digress into the commendation of grace. And what doth he say? The foundation and ground of salvation is God's election, and the impulsive cause of election is God's grace. Why is there a remnant? There is an election; and why is there election? It is according to grace.

2. Our calling, when election breaketh out in time and becometh actual. Look, as the heirs of salvation are distinguished from others by election in the purpose and bosom of God, so are they actually distinguished from others by effectual calling: 2 Tim. 1:9, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' Why doth God pick and choose, and cull here and there? The only reason is his own grace and his own purpose. When we come to make choice, we cull and pick out those things that are worthy of our love and respect; and we favour none but for something whereby we may be allured to love them; but God saw nothing lovely in us, but yet calleth us with an holy calling according to his purpose and grace. The same gracious purpose that distinguished them from others before all time, doth in time make an actual choice and distinction between them and others by effectual calling.

3. Justification: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace.' Mark, the apostle useth two words; it is τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι, 'by his grace;' and it is δωρεάν, 'freely' by his grace; 'freely,' to note the readiness of his inclination; and 'by his grace,' to exclude the merit of our works; or the mere grace of God, not excited or quickened by any works of

ours, but acting of its own accord. The scriptures do with such emphatical and redoubled expressions inculcate it, because there are deep prejudices in the proud heart of man, rooted in his nature, against the grace of God.

4. Sanctification, all the parts whereof are called the graces of the Spirit; because, *Gratiæ gratis datæ*; they are not only wrought by the Spirit, but freely given us of God. Thus faith is said to be God's gift: Eph. 2:8, 'By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' And it is given of mere grace; Phil. 1:29, 'To you it is given to believe;' the word *ἐχαρίσθη* signifies 'graciously given;' it is the same word that is used, Rom. 8:32, 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' *χαρίσεται*. The same grace that giveth Christ, giveth faith to believe in Christ, that we may be possessed of his grace.

5. Glorification, which is the complement of all salvation. So Eph. 2:8, 'By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' Not only all the means and all the tendencies of salvation are of grace, but salvation itself; from first to last it is all of grace. So that when we come to heaven, this will be our great work, to sing forth the praises of grace, and to admire and glorify the grace of God to all eternity.

Secondly, To limit the point. Though it is of grace, yet not to exclude Christ, not to exclude the means of salvation.

1. Not to exclude Christ. The merit of Christ stands well enough with the grace of God: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' Freely! you will say; how so, when it was not without so great a price and satisfaction as the blood of the Lord Jesus? Yet, however, it is freely in respect of us,

it is by no work of ours; it was the exceeding grace of God to appoint the merit of Christ, that it might be the greater ground of confidence to us. We do not look for things with such certainty which depend upon mere grace, and favour, and good-will, as we do when a thing is established by merit and desert. Now merit in us there could not be without wrong to grace; and therefore the wisdom and love of God hath found out this way of merit in Christ, that we might be more confident of the standing of our privileges, they being bought at so great a price. There was grace in this, that God gave Christ, that the satisfaction is not required of us; and therefore indeed there is nothing doth so gloriously discover the grace of God as the free giving up of Jesus Christ. God might require satisfaction from the party offending, or the person that had so sinned might bear the blame and punishment; but the Lord hath so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, and that not to angels, but to us. Well, then, it is grace to find out the merit, and grace by which we are interested in it. Christ's merit is most free, both on the part of God the Father freely sending Christ, and on the part of Christ taking this office upon him. It was grace that moved God to give Christ, and grace that moved Christ to give himself, 'who loved me, and gave himself for me,' Gal. 2:20. Nay, after all this, it is grace that gives us faith, that so we may be interested in the merit of Christ, that we which sinned with both hands earnestly, might take hold of God with both hands. And our salvation is carried on in such a way that we may confidently expect his mercy without any violation of his justice and truth. So that it doth not derogate from the grace of God, but much amplify and enlarge it. This is a great part of the grace, that he freely sent Christ to make all sure between us and him.

2. Not to exclude the means of salvation; not faith, nor obedience also, if rightly understood.

Not faith; that may well enough stand with grace: Eph. 2:8, 'By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' There is a condition required, and that is faith; but God himself gives the condition that he requireth. Grace cannot stand with anything that is in man, and of man as the condition of the covenant; yet it stands with faith, because it justifies, not as an inherent quality in us, or as a work done by us, but as it layeth hold of Jesus Christ; and it is not of ourselves, but is the mere gift of grace.

And then for obedience, that is also subordinate to faith, as a necessary fruit and effect of it. As faith is the instrument, so obedience is required as a fruit of faith. Though it come not into justification, yet it is an evidence of our interest in salvation. It is required as a testimony of faith, yet not as a condition, which is a cause of the thing promised. It is required, because though it be not of man, yet it is in man; it is given of God, but it is our work.

The papists, to excuse the grossness of merit, say that our works do not merit but as they come from the grace of God, and as they are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. But mark, it is not enough so to ascribe our works to the grace of God; all self-justiciaries will do so, as the pharisee that pleaded his works: Luke 18:11, 'God, I thank thee I am not as other men are.' And yon confound the covenants when you think that a man may merit of God by his own grace. Adam under the covenant of works might then be said to be saved by grace. Why? because he could not persevere in the use of his own free-will, unless he had received it of God. Well then, grace doth not exclude faith, nor works; not faith as the instrument of justification and as the condition of the covenant; not works, as the fruit and testimony of faith. There is a concurrence of works, but not by way of causality, but order. God will first justify, then sanctify, then glorify, and all of grace. Obedience is the *conditio sine qua non*—the condition without

which we cannot be saved. The grace of God is the first moving cause; Christ is the meritorious procuring cause; faith is the instrument; and obedience is the fruit of faith. These are subordinate, not contrary.

Thirdly, My next work shall be to give you some reasons why it must be so that grace is the original cause of all the blessings we receive from God; because it is most for the glory of God, and most for the comfort of the creature.

1. It is most convenient for the glory of God, to keep up the respects of the creature to him in a way suitable to his majesty. Mark, God would dispense blessings in such a way as might beat down despair and carnal confidence at the same time. Man had need of mercy, but deserveth none. Despair would keep us from returning to God, and carnal confidence from ascribing all to God. Therefore, as the Lord would not have flesh to glory, so neither to be cut off from all hope. It is of grace that we may hope, and keep up our respect to God; for there is nothing that keeps up the devotion and respects of the creature to God so much as grace. The psalmist intimates this: 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared,' Ps. 130:4. Mercy in God makes us fear, love, and respect him. And it is of grace, that flesh may not glory: Eph. 2:9, 'Not of works, lest any man should boast;' but that God may have all the glory of his grace. If God did not deal with us upon terms of grace, despair would make us let go all sense of duty, and a guilty creature would stand at a distance, and fly from the sight of God. Some think that the only way to gain men to a sense of religion is by rubbing the conscience, and keeping it raw and sore with terror; but the psalmist saith, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' This is the best way to keep up the creature's respects. False worships are merely supported by terror and fear; but God, that hath the best title to the heart, will gain

it by love and grace. But as despair standeth in the way of God's glory, so doth carnal confidence. Now grace taketh off all boasting: 1 Cor. 1:31, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.' Here is nothing of pre-engagement, merit, and hire; yea, it is for the glory of the supreme Majesty that he should act freely, and that his blessings should come to us not as a thing deserved but as a gift; and that he should entertain us as a king, not as a host: 'He that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price,' Isa. 55:1. Nothing can be more dishonourable to God than the merit of the creature, for it takes off part of his royalty and supremacy.

2. It is most for the comfort of the creature. Grace is the original cause of all the good we expect and receive from God, that we may seek the favour of God with hope, and retain it with certainty.

(1.) That we may seek the favour of God with hope. If we had to do with justice there could be no hope, for justice giveth only what is due, and doth not consider what we need, but what we deserve. Now mark, the apostle, in the behalf of God, makes the challenge, Rom. 11:35, 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?' Come, let me see that man that durst plead desert with God, and claim anything of him by way of merit. Who will enter that plea?—Lord! give me what thou owest; I desire no more than is due to me; let me not have mercy till I deserve it. Merit-mongers are best confuted by experience. Let them use the same plea in their prayers which they do in their disputes, and plead the merit of their works, and say, Lord, give me not eternal life, and grace, and favour, till I deserve it at thy hand. Let them thus dispute with God or with their own consciences in the agonies of death, and under horrors of the Lord's wrath. Surely those that cry up the merits of works are men of little spiritual experience, and seldom look into their own

consciences, Dare they thus plead with God?—Lord, never look upon me in mercy if I do not deserve it. You shall see the best plea that the eminentest of God's children could make is mere grace. The church speaks thus, Hosea 14:2, 'Receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.' It is the form that is prescribed to returning Israel. If you would establish hope with God, this must be your only plea and claim: Grace, Lord! mercy Lord! And David saith, Ps. 13:5, 'I have trusted in thy mercy. There is the ground of my confidence. And Chrysostom hath a sweet gloss upon that place, οἱ μὲν ἄγγοι, εἰ τοι καὶ ἔχοιεν, λεγέτωσαν; ἔγω δε ἐν οἴδα, ἐν λέλω, &c.—If others have anything to allege, let them plead it. Ah, Lord! I have but one thing to say and plead, and upon which to cast all my hopes, and that is mercy and grace: 'Lord, I have trusted in thy mercy.' Thus Ambrose, when he was to die, saith, *Etsi non sic vixi ut pudeat inter vos vivere, &c.*—Though I have not so lived as that I should be ashamed to live, I am not afraid to die. Why? not that I have lived well, but *quia bonum habeo Dominum*, because I have a gracious Lord, and have made grace my confidence. So we read in the Life of Bernard, seeming to be cited before the tribunal of God, when Satan had spoken in his conscience, What! thou look for any favour at God's hand? thou art not worthy. He replies, I confess I am not worthy, nor can I by my own deserts obtain the kingdom of heaven; but I have a double right, *Hæreditate patris, et merito passionis*—by the grace of my father, and by the merit of Christ's passion; hereby I can take hold of God with both hands. by grace and merit; not my own, but Christ's. Thus God's best servants, their hopes have been established this way, by casting themselves upon mercy and grace.

(2.) That we may retain the favour of God with certainty: Rom. 4:16, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed.' We should never else be secured against doubts and fears. Believers, that offend daily, would

be left to a sad uncertainty; but now we can the better expect glory when the foundation of it is laid in grace. I remember the great patron of the merit of works, Bellarmine, concludeth out of Bernard, *propter incertitudinem propriæ justitiæ, et periculum inanis gloriæ, tutissimum est fiduciam totam in solâ Dei misericordia et benignitate reponere*—Because of the uncertainty of our own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, I confess it is the safest course to put our trust in the sole mercy and grace of God.

Use 1. To persuade us, if grace be the cause of all the good we enjoy, not to wrong grace. Why? For this is to close and stop up the fountain; yea, to make grace our enemy; and if grace be our enemy, who shall plead for us? Angry justice must needs take up the quarrel of abused grace, and then there is no help; yea, grace itself would complain of the wrong received to God, and will solicit our judgment and vengeance; the advocate will become an accuser. But how do we wrong grace? I answer—five ways—

1. By neglecting the offers of grace. Such make God speak in vain, and to spend his best arguments to no purpose: 2 Cor. 6:1, 'We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.' By the grace of God is there meant the offers of grace in the gospel. Now, we receive it in vain when all the wooings and pleadings of grace do not move us to bethink ourselves and look after our salvation. It is a great affront you put upon God to despise him when he speaks in the still voice. Look, as when David had sent a courteous message to Nabal, and he returns a churlish answer, it put him in a fury: 1 Sam. 25:34, 'Surely there had not been left by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.' So how angry will the Lord be against those that despise his grace, and all the renewed offers and messages of love, and prefer the profits and pleasures of the world before him! It may be you do not return a



rough and churlish answer, and are not scorers and opposers of the word, but you slight God's sweetest message, when he comes in the sweetest and mildest way. The complaint in the gospel was, Mat. 11:17, 'We have piped unto you, and you have not danced.' It is not, We have thundered unto you, and you were not startled; but, We have piped, and ye have not danced. Not to take notice of these sweet allurements and blandishments of grace, that is very sad: Heb. 2:3, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' The greatness of the benefit aggravates the sin. It is great salvation that is offered; there is an offer of pardon and eternal life, but it worketh not if you neglect it. There is a sort of men that do not openly deny, reject, or persecute the gospel, but they receive it carelessly, and are no more moved with it than with a story of golden mountains, or rubies or diamonds fallen from heaven in a night-dream. You make God spend his best arguments in vain if you neglect this grace. Scourge conscience till it ache. What will you do? 'How will you escape, if you neglect so great salvation?' God sets himself a-work to gain the heart, and grace hath laid open all its treasures, as a man in a shop to draw in custom; now it is grieved and wronged when it doth not meet with a chapman. This is the charge that is laid upon those, Mat. 22:6; when they were invited, 'They made light of it;' they did not take it into their care and thoughts, did not seriously think with themselves, Oh, that God should invite us to the marriage of his Son! They do not absolutely deny, but make excuse; they do not say, non placet, but non vacant—they are not at leisure; and this made the king angry. When all things are ready, and God sets forth the treasures and riches of his grace, and men will not bethink themselves, their hearts are not ready. How will this make God angry? Such kind of neglecters are said to 'judge themselves unworthy of eternal life,' Acts 13:46. You will say. Is there any fault in that? Who is worthy? Should we not judge ourselves to be vile forlorn creatures, unworthy of a look from God, much more of eternal life? I answer—It is not

spoken of self-humbling, or of a holy self-condemning, but of those that turn their back upon grace. Grace comes to save them, and God makes them an offer as though they were worthy; and they judge themselves unworthy, and plainly declare they were altogether not worthy of this grace. All men are unworthy enough of eternal life, and God hath cause enough to condemn them; but they chiefly judge themselves unworthy, that is, in fact declare themselves to be so, that have received the honour and favour of a call. Grace hath spoken unto them, and made them an offer of pardon and salvation, and they turn the back upon it, as if it were not worth the taking up on God's terms; and such are all ignorant sots and deaf worldlings.

2. Another sort of men that wrong grace are those that refuse grace out of legal dejection. Many poor creatures are so vile in their own eyes that they think it impossible they should ever find favour in God's eyes. Oh! but consider, cannot the riches of grace save? When God shall set himself on purpose to glorify grace to the full, cannot it make thee accepted? Wherefore doth God bring creatures to see their unworthiness, but that grace might be the more glorious? Grace would not be so much grace if the creature were not so unworthy; therefore you should be glad you have your hearts at that advantage, to be sensible of your own vileness. It is a wrong to grace if you do not fly to it; you straiten the riches and darken the glory of it. It is as if an emperor's revenue could not discharge a beggar's debt. Our ephah is full, brim-full, but God's mercy is over-full. You can speak of sins, and the scripture speaketh of mercy: 'Hast thou but one blessing, O my father?' saith Esau, Gen. 27:38. So, hath God but one mercy? Grace is a treasure that cannot be spent, an ocean ever full, and ever flowing: 'Where sin hath abounded, grace did much more abound,' Rom. 5:20. There cannot be so much in sin but there is more in grace. The apostle makes new-coined words when he is to speak of the abundance of grace; ἐπλεόνασεν and

ὕπερ ἐπερίσσευσεν. The prodigal could say, There is bread enough in my father's house: Luke 15:17, 'How many hired servants in my father's house have bread enough and to spare!' There is grace enough in God. If we perish, it is not for want of mercy, but for want of faith. Why should we then put away this grace that is revealed to us, yea, offered to us? If it were to be procured by anything in us we might despair. Take heed of slighting the grace of God; it is God's treasure: so far as you lessen grace, you make God a poor God. Mark that expression, Eph. 2:4, 'God, who is rich in mercy.' God is lord of all things, but he counts nothing to be his treasure but his goodness and mercy. He doth not say, rich in power, though he is able to do beyond what we can ask or think; nor rich in justice, though he be righteous in all his ways and just in all his works; nor doth he say rich in creatures, though his are the cattle of a thousand hills; but rich in mercy. Therefore take heed of straitening mercy, for so far you lessen God's wealth and treasure.

3. Grace is wronged by intercepting the glory of grace. It is the greatest sacrilege that can be to rob God of his glory, especially the glory of his grace. Above all things in the world, God's glory is the most dear to him; he cannot endure to have a partner. Especially is the glory of his grace dear to him; it is the whole aim of all his dispensations to glorify grace: Eph. 1:6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' You rob God of his chiefest honour when you take the crown of glory that is due to grace, and put it upon your own head. As, for instance, when you think he accepts you rather than others for some worth or good qualities that he seeth in you more than in others. Alas! in the light of the gospel such thoughts are not expressed, but they lurk secretly in the heart: Deut. 9:4, 'Speak not thou in thy heart, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land.' A man's heart is very prone to these thoughts: God seeth that I would

bring him more glory than another; it is for my righteousness. Grace is wronged also when you are puffed up with anything you have done for God, as if it were done by your own power and strength. A christian in this case should learn the policy of Joab; when he was in a fair way of taking Rabbah, he sent for David to take the honour of winning it: 2 Sam. 12:28, 'Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take it, and it be called after my name.' So, when we have done anything for the glory of God, let us send for God to take the honour. Thus the apostle, 1 Cor. 15:10, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' If there be any excellency, still throw the crown at grace's feet. The industrious servant said, Luke 19:16, 'Thy pound hath gained ten pounds;' not my industry, but thy pound.

4. Grace is wronged by turning it into wantonness. It is a heavy charge, and a black note is set on them: Jude 4, 'Ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness;' when men sin freely that God may pardon freely; when they presume upon grace, as if that should bear all, and use it as a dung-cart to carry away all their filth; or, like riotous children who have a rich father, therefore spend freely; their father's estate shall pay for all. It is a mighty wrong to grace when we make it pliable to such a vile purpose. You dishonour God and disparage grace when you would make it to father the bastards of your own carnal hearts. You are vile and sinful, and you are so under the encouragements of grace, and the rather because of the abundance of grace; and, like the spider, suck poison out of the flower, and turn it into the nourishment of your lust; or as the salt sea turns the sweet rivers and dews of heaven, and all that falls into it, into salt water; so carnal hearts do assimilate all that they meet with, and turn it into fuel for their lusts. Men would fain sin securely and cum privilegio, with licence from heaven; and therefore they

take liberty even from the grace of God. This is a vile abuse; a quite contrary way the grace of God teacheth us, 'to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts;' and not to be more secure and careless because they have so much grace. But they hail it, and wrest it from its natural end and purpose, and sin freely, because God pardons freely. Grace giveth no such liberty to Bin. This is done grievously by the Antinomians, who say grace gives them freedom from the moral law. It is true, grace makes us free, but to duty, not to sin. There is a sad expression, Rom. 6:20, 'When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness;' it is a description of the carnal state; duty hath no awe upon his heart. When men think themselves free from the law rather than sin, and when they expect comfort though they walk in the way of their own heart, they have abused grace, and taken hold of the devil's covenant, and not of God's. There is never any creature freed from the law; God never made a creature to be absolutely sui Juris, at his own disposal. The angels themselves, though they have many immunities and privileges above us, as being exempted from troubles, diseases, and death, and from the clog of flesh which we carry about us, yet they are not exempted from duty or from a law: 'They do his commandments, and hearken to the voice of his word,' Ps. 103:20. Earthly kings may free some of their subjects from their homage; as Saul made a proclamation, He that doth thus and thus, 'his father's house shall be free in Israel,' 1 Sam. 17:25. But God never made any creature to be absolutely freed from a law. But if a man be right in doctrine, though he hold the obligation of the moral law on a believer, yet he may be an Antinomian in practice, and abuse and wrong grace; as thus, if a man slacken any part of his duty for grace's sake, or lets loose the reins of vile affections with more freedom, and saith, God will not be so rigorous, he wrongeth grace. If men be not so watchful and so strict, if men grow more careless, secure and negligent, if they be not so constant in duty, if they lessen aught of their humiliation for sin, or strictness

and watchfulness in their conversation, they are as a spider that sucks poison out of grace. A man hath never the more carnal liberty for being acquainted with the gospel. This is the great thing which puts us upon duty and watchfulness, and melts the heart for sin, and awes it, and disposeth it to obedience.

5. Grace is wronged by slighting it after a taste, as carnal professors do: 1 Peter 2:3, 'If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' A man hath at first a taste, that he may have trial how sweet the ways of God are. Now, if after trial, you are not satisfied, but make choice of the world again, it is a mighty wrong and contempt you put upon grace; for you do as it were declare and pronounce that you have made trial, and upon experience have found the pleasures and profits of the world are better than all the comforts that flowed from the grace of God. The whole aim of the word is to persuade men to make trial of the sweetness of grace: Ps. 34:8, 'O taste and see that the Lord is good,' and that his grace is good. But now your experience is a flat negative and contradiction to the word, and you do as it were say, I have made trial, and I find no such sweetness in it. None wrong grace so much as they that have tasted of grace, and yet have turned aside to the profits and pleasures of the world again, and grow weary after some strictness of profession.

Use 2. To press you to glorify grace. This is the glory God expects from you: Eph. 1:6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made you accepted in the beloved.' If an artificer show you a curious piece of workmanship, he expects to be praised for his skill. A wrestler that hath foiled his adversary expects to be praised for his strength, not for his beauty: that is not a proper praise. A king in his royal gifts expects to be praised for his magnificence. So suitably the Lord who doth all things freely, and according to the motion of his own will, expects to be praised for his grace; therefore you should be

always echoing out, 'Grace! grace!' Zech. 4:7, and admiring the dispensations of God's love. It is a sure sign a man hath received no benefit by grace if his heart be not stirred up to praise grace. Certainly he that is a partaker of it must needs be most affected with it. Let us see a little what cause we have to praise God, above the angels, and above other men.

1. Above the angels. I do not mean the bad angels, with whom God entered not into treaty; he dealeth with them in justice, not in grace; but even the good angels. In some respects we have more cause to bless God than even the good angels. Thankfulness and gratitude looks to the freeness and graciousness of the gift rather than the greatness of it; it looks not to the benefit so much as the good-will of the giver. It is true God hath been exceeding good and bountiful to the angels, in creating them out of nothing, that they are the courtiers of heaven; but mark how good and gracious he is to us above them. The angels never offended him, but he is bountiful and gracious to us, notwithstanding the demerits of our sin; his wronged justice interposed and put in a bar, yet grace breaks out, and is manifested to us unworthy creatures. There was nothing that hindered God from doing good to the angels. A holy God hath a blessed, righteous, holy creature; but justice must be satisfied as to us; we are a generation of sinful men, the wretched children of apostatising Adam. We had forsaken God and cast him off, which the angels never did, that had a long experience of God's goodness and bounty. The very angels wonder at the grace showed to us, especially at that by which justice is satisfied: 1 Peter 1:12, 'Which things the angels desire to look into.'

2. Above other men. There is a common and inferior sort of grace, which is made known to all the world. The whole earth is full of his goodness, but this grace that bringeth salvation, that is peculiar to

the elect, to a few poor base creatures in themselves, a little handful whom God hath chosen out of the world. John 14:22, 'How is it that thou wouldst manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?' Free grace doth pick and choose; and how? It chooseth out things that are in themselves of no account. Look, as when God chose a sacrifice for himself, the lion was not offered, but the lamb and the dove; so God hath chosen not those that are accounted gods, but a few despicable creatures. Free grace many times chooseth the worst, that all the glory might be of God. If a man might choose trees for building, he would not choose crooked ones, but those that are straight and fittest for his use and purpose. But when God comes to look among the sons of men, many times he chooseth the most crabbed pieces, and calls them with a holy calling, according to the purpose of his grace. It is a wonder sometimes to see how grace makes the difference between two persons involved in the same guilt. Justice can make no separation; when men are in a like case, they must look for the same judgment; but grace makes a great separation. Many of God's elect are as deep in sin as those now in hell, yet God makes a difference. Both the good and bad thief were involved in the same condemnation, yet one is taken into paradise, and the other went unto his own place. Thus praise and glorify grace.

Hath appeared unto all men.—The word ἐπεφάνη, appeared, signifies it is broken out of a sudden, like a star, or like a light that was not seen before; and so it refers to the late manifestation of the gospel in the apostle's days. Now on a sudden it broke out. So Luke 1:78, 79, 'Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death.' It is meant of the breaking out of the gospel, as the day doth after a dark night; so here the word ἐπεφάνη implieth the same.



Doct. 2. That grace in the discoveries of the gospel hath shined out in a greater brightness than ever it did before.

This grace appeareth in the gospel; there and there only is it clearly manifested.

In the prosecution of this point I shall show—

1. What darkness there was as to the knowledge of grace before.
2. How much of grace is now discovered.

First, What a darkness there was before the eternal gospel was brought out of the bosom of God. There was a darkness both among Jews and Gentiles. In the greatest part of the world there was utter darkness as to the knowledge of grace, and in the church nothing but shadows and figures.

1. This grace was not known in the world, only a little of it was: Ps. 33:5, 'The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.' Some inferior grace was made known to them in the creation and in the course of providence, by showers of rain and fruitful seasons, grace on this side heaven; but nothing of the secrets of God's bosom, of the incarnation of God, of the expiation of sin by his death, of salvation by faith in the Mediator. This depends not upon the connection of natural causes, but the free pleasure of God; therefore the angels knew it not till it was revealed in the church: Eph. 3:10, 'To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.' The gentiles, by looking into the order of causes, could never find it out. They might find a first being, and the chiefest good, but not a Christ, not a saviour; there they sat in the shadows of death, and did not understand nor desire eternal life: Acts 14:17, 'Nevertheless he left

not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' Much of God may be seen in the known courses of nature, rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, but nothing of Christ. The apostle speaks it there to dissuade them from the worship of Jupiter and Mercury, and other of the vanities of the gentiles; he argues from the grace of nature and common benefits which they had received: this were enough to make them acknowledge a divine power. Pray mark, the apostle saith, 'He left not himself without a witness;' yet he suffered them to walk in their own ways, because he did not reveal his gospel nor give them his Spirit: Ps. 147:19, 20, 'He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them;' Rom. 16:25, 26, 'According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known unto all nations for the obedience of faith;' Eph. 3:4, 5, 'Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;' Col. 1:26, 27, 'Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles, which is Christ in them the hope of glory.' But God suffered them to serve their own lusts, and to carry on that religion which they had feigned to themselves. But then he left not himself without a witness, for they had many corporal blessings, from whence they might easily collect that they should not worship stocks and stones and dead men, but the living God, by whose providence those blessings were dispensed. Though he gave them not the gospel, yet he gave them the light of nature, and the

looking-glass of the creatures. There is much ado whether this were *auxilium sufficiens gratiæ*, a sufficient help to convert them, or to bring them to such a condition that they might gain the grace of God. It was enough to oblige them to seek after God, and to convince them that they did ill in worshipping the creatures, but it was not sufficient to find out the true God and enjoy him. Saving grace is not granted by any promise to the improvement of nature. Well, then, though the whole earth be full of the goodness of the Lord, that is, of the fruits and effects of his common bounty, yet nothing of his saving grace is known, till it appeared and broke out in the gospel.

2. To the Jews this grace began to dawn, but it was veiled in figures and shadows, that they could not see clearly. The substance of their doctrine was the same with ours, but there is a great deal of difference in the manner of dispensation; they had the dark text, and we the exposition. There was grace and shadow by Moses, but 'grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,' John 1:17; because here all the types were revealed, and we have the substance itself. Christ is the light of the world. The sun, the farther off it is from rising, the less light it gives. Christ was not then risen, therefore there was but twilight and full of shadows. Grace is opposed to the condemnation of the moral law, and truth to the shadows of the ceremonial law. Christ's offices, his benefices, his person, were but darkly propounded to them. Take but one place for all. Of all the ministers of the legal dispensation, John Baptist saw the clearest; yet, saith Christ, the least of gospel ministers knows more than he: Mat. 11:11, 'Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.' John drawing nearer to Christ, had a clearer knowledge of the meaning and application of the types than others had; but now those that have lived after the pouring out of the Spirit upon Christ's ascension under the gospel

dispensation, have a clear insight into the doctrine of grace, far more clear than it was in the days of John.

Secondly, What and how much of grace is now discovered? I answer

—

1. The wisdom of grace. The gospel is a mere riddle to carnal reason, a great mystery: 1 Tim. 3:16, 'Great is the mystery of godliness.' There we read of God and man brought together, and justice and mercy brought together by the contrivance of grace; here only we see this mystery, that is without controversy great, for these things could not come into the heads of any creatures. If angels and men had been put to study, and set down their way of reconciliation to God, how it should be, they could never have thought of such a remedy as the bringing of God and man together in the person of Christ, and justice and mercy together by the blood and satisfaction of Christ; this came out of no breast but God; he brought the secret out of his own bosom. When the question was put in the council of the Trinity, how man that was fallen might be brought again to God, from the depth of misery to the height of happiness, grace interposed, and propounded Christ to be God-man in one person. Oh! the strangeness and wonderfulness of this contrivance! If you consider the weakness and vileness of human nature, the infiniteness and excellency of the divine nature, certainly such a plot could not enter into the head of any creature. Upon what grounds could any creature expect such a condescension, that mortal and immortal, infiniteness and finiteness, should come together? And as the person of Christ is wonderful, so also is his work and business, which was to bring justice and mercy to kiss each other, that justice might have full satisfaction for men's sins, and mercy have full content in procuring their salvation, that grace might be glorified, and yet justice be no loser. When God redeemed the world, he had a greater work to do

than to make the world at first. The object of creation was pure nothing, but then, as there was no help, so no hindrance; but now, in redemption, there was sin to be taken away, and that was worse than anything. We deserved ill, his justice and truth had a quarrel against us, and therefore this was the harder work, and needed more of his wisdom, which now is discovered fully to us in the gospel. When God was to make man, though he was to be his noblest creature next the angels, it was nothing to the divine power to make him of the dust of the earth. Now sin makes us worse than earth: Job 30:8, 'They were children of fools, children of base men, they were viler than the earth.' Our condition was worse; here God's justice opposed; but grace found out the contrivance, and sent Christ in the form of a servant, who 'was in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God,' Phil. 2:6, 7.

2. We discern the freeness of grace in the gospel, both in giving and accepting. Whatever God doth is a gift, and what we do, it is accepted of grace. In giving there is a great deal of grace made known there. The Lord doth all freely: John 1:16, 'And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace;' that is, for grace's sake he gives Christ, gives faith, gives pardon; he gives the condition as well as the blessing. Certainly now we have to do with a God of grace, who sits upon a throne of grace, that he might bestow freely to all comers. Out of Christ and in the law, there God is discovered as sitting upon a tribunal of justice, as he is described, Ps. 97:2, 'Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.' But now, saith the apostle, Heb. 4:16, 'Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and grace to help in a time of need;' that we may have mercy for pardon and for acceptance of our persons, and grace to help us against our weaknesses. This was figured out in the law. Under the law it was figured out by the mercy-seat between the cherubims, from whence

God was giving out answers; but there the high priest could enter but once a year, and the way within the veil was not fully made manifest, Heb. 9:8. There was a throne of grace then, but more God's tribunal of justice; there was smoke and thundering about his throne; but now let us draw near that we may obtain grace, take all freely out of God's hand. Then there is grace manifested in accepting as well as giving. God accepts of serious repentance for complete innocence, of sincerity for perfection, of the will for the deed, of a person for Christ's sake, and of the works for the person's sake. Thus God doth both give and accept freely. That we do is not brought to the balance, but touchstone. Many times a good work is not full weight. God doth not look to the measure, but to the truth of grace; he requires truth in the reins.

3. The efficacy and power of grace is discovered in the gospel. Christ sendeth his Spirit to apply what he himself hath purchased. One person comes to merit, and the other to accomplish the fruit of his merit. Mark, to stop the course of grace, divine justice did not only put in an impediment, but there was our infidelity that hindered the application of that which Christ was to merit; and therefore, as the second person is to satisfy God, so the third person is to work upon us. There was a double hindrance against the business of our salvation—God's justice, for the glory of God was to be repaired, therefore Christ was to merit; and there was our unbelief, therefore the Spirit must come and apply it. First, Christ suffered, and when he was ascended, then was the Spirit poured out. Had it not been for the gospel, we should never have known the efficacy and power of grace. The apostle puts the question: Gal. 3:2, 'This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' How did you come to be acquainted with grace? This is the seal which God would put upon the excellency and authority of the gospel, that he will associate and join in assistance with it the

operation of the Spirit to accompany it. Look, as it is with the sun, light increaseth with heat; the morning beams are faint and gentle, but at noon the sun shines out, not only with glory, but with strength; so it is here; the more the light of the gospel is increased, the more is the efficacy and power of it conveyed into the sons of men. The dispensation of the law is called the 'oldness of the letter,' and the dispensation of the gospel the 'newness of the spirit:' Rom. 7:6, 'But now ye are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.' In the mere law dispensation there was only a literal direction, but no strength and ability to perform what is suggested. *Lex jubet, gratia juvat*—The law commands, but all the commands of grace help. There is a Spirit that goeth along with the gospel to qualify us for the duties of it: 2 Cor. 3:6, 'Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' With the dispensation of the gospel God joins the virtue and power of the Holy Ghost. The letter convinceth, and so by consequence obligeth to death, for we cannot perform what it requireth of us; but now there is a spirit goes along with the gospel, and so we are acquainted with the efficacy of grace.

4. We are acquainted with the largeness and bounty of grace. The benefits that come by Christ were not so clearly revealed in the law; there was no type that I know of which figured union with Christ. The blood of Christ was figured by the blood of bulls and goats, justification by the fleeing away of the scape-goat, sanctification by the water of purification. But now eternal life is rarely mentioned in express terms; sometimes it is shadowed out in the promise of inheriting the land of Canaan, as hell is by going into captivity; but otherwise it is seldom mentioned: 2 Tim. 1:10, 'But now it is made manifest' (speaking of the grace of God) 'by the appearing of our

Saviour Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.' The gentiles had but glimmerings and gross fancies about the future state. Life and immortality was never known to the purpose till Christ came in the flesh; and therefore heaven is as sparingly mentioned in the Old Testament as temporal blessings are in the new. In the New Testament we hear much of the cross, of sufferings, and afflictions. Why? Because there is much of heaven discovered. The eternal reward is strong enough, but temporals are not of consideration. Carnal men are of a temper quite contrary to the gospel; they could be content to be under the old dispensation, to have temporal blessings, and let God keep heaven to himself. But this is the great privilege of the gospel, that life and immortality, the blessed hope, the eternal recompenses are now mentioned so expressly, and propounded to our desires and hopes.

5. In the gospel we learn the sureness of grace. God will no more be disappointed; the whole business lies without us, in other hands. In the first covenant, our salvation was committed to the indeterminate freedom of man's will; but now Christ is both a redeemer and a surety. The former covenant depended upon something in ourselves, upon the mutability of our will; but now it is put into the hands of Christ, not only to reconcile us to God, but to preserve and keep us in such an estate. Therefore, Heb. 7:22, he is said to be 'the surety of a better testament.' Christ stands engaged to see the covenant kept on both sides. God hath Christ to challenge for obedience, and we to give us grace to perform that which God hath required of us; so that now grace in all its glory is made known. The apostle saith, Rom. 4:16, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.' This is that which makes it sure to all the elect, because God deals with us upon such gracious and free terms.



## SERMON II

Hath appeared unto all men.—TITUS 2:11.

USE 1. Let us prize these days of grace. We are not apprehensive enough of the mercy that grace is so clearly revealed. The gospel is the light of the renewed world; we can no more be without the gospel than the world can be without the sun. Ps. 19. David first speaks of the sun, then of the law, which signifies there the general doctrine of the scriptures. People would be in a miserable case, and all things would languish and suffer decay, if the sun were gone; and such blackness there would be upon the new creation if we had not the light of the gospel. Oh! how miserable were they that wanted the light of the sun for a few days, as in Egypt! And how barbarous and miserable should we be, were it not that immortality and life is brought to light by the gospel! Tertullian saith, *Gemmæ a sola raritate gratiam possident*—Jewels are commended for their scarceness and rareness. Oh! we should the more seriously regard the gospel, because God hath been so tender of revealing it. For four thousand years in a great measure the gospel lay hid. God kept it for a long time as a precious secret hid in his own bosom, and did not think the world worthy of it, till the Son of God came out from him to take our nature, then was the gospel discovered. Only as a king reveals his secrets to some of his intimates and privy counsellors, and hides from the rest of his subjects, so God revealed it to some prophets and some holy men, and yet they had but a glimpse, and saw Christ at a distance. As when we see a man afar off, we cannot tell his shape, nor colour of his clothes, nor other circumstances, but only we see the substance and bulk of a man, so they saw Christ, but it was at a distance, they could not tell the particular circumstances of his birth, incarnation, death, and resurrection so clearly as now we

can; therefore the prophets are forced to study their own prophecies: 1 Peter 1:10, 'Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.' They saw there was a glorious salvation at hand, but fully what to make of it they could not tell; therefore they studied their own writings and prophecies, that were brought to them by the Spirit of God. The very prophets of God would have thought themselves happy to see the things that we see: Mat. 13:16, 17, 'But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.' We have a far more happy estate, since the manifestation of Christ in the flesh and pouring out of the Spirit, than Abraham and David and the prophets and righteous men had, for God hath dealt more mercifully and kindly with us; they had but a glimpse, and how earnestly did they desire to see more! and therefore were inquiring after it more and more. The usefulness, necessity and rarity of the gospel should make it more dear to us, that we should prize these days of grace more than we do.

Use 2. Let it put us upon trial. What are we the better for these days of grace? Have we more knowledge and clearness of faith? Alas! we are far inferior to those that obtained but the shadows; their eagle-eye discerned more of Christ in a ceremony than we can in the substance. It is said, Zech. 12:8, 'He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.' But we come short, not only of David, but of the meanest believer in the Old Testament, and have little knowledge of the covenant and blessings of it. We lose the benefit of the days of light wherein we live; as good we had never heard of the gospel, nay, in some sense it had been better for us we had never

enjoyed these days of plenty, if we do not profit by them. To stumble in the night is more venial and pardonable; but it is dangerous to stumble there where we have the benefit of the light to see our way. The grace of God hath appeared, breaking out like a clear light, yet we come short of grace offered to us. Trees in a fertile soil should be more fruitful, and cattle in better pasture should thrive more; so we that are led forth by the pleasant streams, and refreshed with the tender grass of the earth, should thrive more. Wherefore hath God set up a candle, a light in the church, but that we should work by it? Therefore have you improved these days of grace? What of power have you got to subdue corruption? Alas! to some the gospel is but a dead letter still; it gives them no strength to master their corruptions; at best it is a directive light, not persuasive; it is only as light, not as fire to consume and burn up their lusts; therefore, what of strength can you speak of for subduing of corruption? what of willingness of heart to do duties? 'The love of Christ constraineth us,' 2 Cor. 5:14. You who are not acquainted with God's love and grace have less constraint. It should not be so; yet there is more recorded of the piety, zeal, and devotion of the saints of the Old Testament than we can imitate. And have we a greater measure of comfort to carry us out against discouragement? Have we a more full joy, to bear us up against all the afflictions of this present life, now there is more grace discovered? John 15:11, 'These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' Is there a greater measure of charity in doing good to them that need it, as more of the bounty of God is discovered to us in these days of grace? Under the law all things were set down in so many positive precepts, the exact proportion what they should give and lay out; the tenth part was the Lord's; but under the gospel it may be there was no such precept (though that be a great question whether the tenth be not the Lord's still), but God knows love will not be backward, for it is trusted much in the days of the gospel. In short,

are we more acquainted with God's covenant? can we subdue corruptions more, bear afflictions better? and have we a greater ability and willingness to good works?

Which bringeth salvation to all men.—That is, to all that accept of grace, bond or free; and that salvation is taken for our complete happiness, for eternal life and salvation, is clear enough. The point then is—

Doct. 3. That the grace of God revealed in the gospel is the great means of salvation, or a grace that tends to salvation.

The gospel is called the power of God unto salvation: Rom. 1:16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation;' that is, a powerful instrument which God useth. Therefore it is called the arm of the Lord: Isa. 53:1, 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' Its force is not in letters and syllables, but it standeth in the co-operation of the Spirit, by which God owneth and honoureth it. It is said to Cornelius, when Peter came to preach the gospel to him, Acts 11:14, that he should tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved. There is no other way to bring men to God but this; this will teach you how you and your little ones should be saved.

Now the gospel, or the grace of God in the gospel, is a means of salvation, because it hath a moral tendency that way, and because it hath the promise of the Spirit's work and assistance.

1. It hath a moral tendency that way; for there is the history of salvation, what God hath done on his part; there are the counsels of salvation, what we must do on our part; and there are excellent enforcements to encourage us to embrace this salvation.

[1.] There is the history of salvation, what God hath done on his part; there all things are ready; there you hear of the love of God, that he hath given his only Son, and of the free election of those whom he means to save in Christ. There you hear of the person of the Mediator, his mission and sending into the world, his incarnation, his unction, or anointing to his office, his abasement, his obedience, his death, his burial, his satisfaction for sin, his purchase of life; and then his exaltation, with all the fruits and effects of it, to wit, his intercession at the right hand of God, his effusion and pouring out of the Spirit to be his deputy here on earth; and there you read of his collection and manner of gathering of a church by the institutions of the word and sacraments; there we hear of the humiliation of Christ, by which salvation was purchased; and of his exaltation, whereby the graces that accompany salvation are distributed and dispensed, and how Christ by his Spirit applies this salvation.

[2.] There is the counsel of salvation, what man must do on his part that he may partake of the righteousness and Spirit of Christ, according to the good pleasure of God, which Christ purchased by virtue of his humiliation, and dispenseth and distributeth by virtue of his exaltation. I call all this the counsel of God, because thus it is called in scripture: Luke 7:30, 'The pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves.' If you will be saved, here is God's counsel, thus you must do. It is dangerous for a sick man to alter the physician's method and receipt, to be tampering, to be taking out and putting in; so it is very dangerous to alter the counsel of God which he hath set down how we may be brought to salvation. Do not, as the young man that came to Christ, and said, Mat. 19:16, 'Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' and yet, when Christ puts him to the trial, it is said he went away sad. So a natural man his heart is raised up to hearken after salvation, but he goes away sorrowful when he cannot win heaven in

his own way, to enjoy Christ and the world, Christ and carnal liberty, and Christ and his carnal pleasures; therefore you must not only look to the history of salvation, what God hath done, but to the counsel of salvation, what you must do. And Peter sums it up, and gives an abridgment of the gospel: Acts 2:37, 38, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do? and Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' Repentance, that implies true and lively grief because of sin and misery, by which a man feeleth the wrath of God, grieveth because he hath offended God, acknowledgeth that he hath deserved condemnation, hungereth and thirsteth after Christ, and then waiteth till his heart be settled in the comfort of the gospel, and he possessed of the righteousness of Christ. Nay, repentance implies more; you must lay down the weapons of defiance, and study thankfulness to God, and walk in new obedience, and love God, and love your neighbour, and bear the cross quietly, waiting for eternal life. This is the counsel of God to you if you would be saved. And then he saith, 'Be baptized,' by which Peter understands a religious use of the seals, and all the means of salvation in which God is wont to meet us, and give us the supplies of his grace by his Spirit.

[3.] There are excellent enforcements to encourage us to embrace this salvation. God is very impatient of being denied, now he speaks in the gospel, and useth all kinds of methods. As a man who cannot undo a door, and having a bunch of keys in his hand, tries one after another, till the lock doth fly open, so the Lord tries all kind of methods, beseecheth, threateneth, promiseth, that the heart of the sinner might fly open. He beseecheth; God falls a-begging to his own creature, and deals with us as importunately as if the benefit were his own; thus doth he pray us to be reconciled. And then God threatens eternal death, to stir us up to take hold of eternal life; he tells us of a

pit without a bottom, and a worm that never dies. Sometimes he seeketh to work upon our hope, and sometimes upon our fear. He not only tells us of the loss of happiness, which is very grievous to an ingenuous spirit: Heb. 12:14, 'Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;' but he tells us of those eternal torments that are without end and ease, of a worm that never dies, and of a fire that shall never be quenched. Oh! whose heart doth not tremble at the mention of these things? Then, on the other side, we have promises as great as heart can wish for, and more: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.' It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive of these things. Who ever hired a man to be happy, or a thirsty man to drink, or a hungry man to eat? Salvation is so acceptable, and the heavenly and blessed hope so glorious, that we should purchase it at any rate; but God taketh all methods to awaken man. Thus the gospel may well be said to be a powerful instrument of our salvation, because it hath a powerful tendency that way.

2. Because it hath the promise of the Spirit's assistance. Rom. 1:16, the gospel is said to be 'the power of God unto salvation,' not only because it is a powerful instrument which God hath appropriated to this work, but this is the honour God puts upon the gospel, that he will join and associate the operation of his Spirit with no other doctrine but this. And therefore the apostle saith, Gal. 3:2, 'Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' How come you to receive the Spirit? Either by endeavouring to get acceptance with God according to the terms of the law, or by the doctrine of the gospel. The assistance of the Spirit is joined with no other doctrine. This is the authentic proof of the excellency of that doctrine, that God hath reserved the power of his grace to go along with it; he will not associate and join his Spirit with any other doctrine. The law, as it is contradistinguished from the gospel, it is

called 'the ministration of condemnation,' 2 Cor. 3:9, and 'the ministration of death' to fallen man, ver. 7. It is the office of the law to condemn a man, not to save him. Not as if preaching of the law did make us guilty, but shows us to be guilty. To him that is guilty of death, it puts the guilt before his eyes, that knowing it, and feeling it, he may be terrified, and despair in himself, and beg for deliverance. To this end the apostle gives us an account of his own experience: Rom. 7:9, 'I was alive without the law once;' that is, I thought I was alive, and did not know myself, or feel myself guilty of death; I thought myself to be in as good a condition towards God as any man; 'but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;' then I counted myself to be lost and utterly undone. A sinner, before the law comes, is like a beggar, that dreams he is a king, and that he wallows in ease and plenty; but when he awakes, his soul is empty, and he feeleth his poverty and his hungry belly, and his rags confute all his dreams and false surmises. So we thought ourselves to be alive, in a good condition towards God; but when the law comes, then we see ourselves to be dead and lost. Therefore the law, as it is opposed to the gospel, is not the means of salvation, so it is only the law of sin and death: Rom. 8:2, 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.'

Object. You will say, These seem to be hard expressions, to call it the law of sin and death; but you must understand it aright. To man fallen the law only convinceth of sin, and bindeth over to death; it is nothing but a killing letter; but the gospel, accompanied by the power of the Spirit, bringeth life. Again, Ps. 19:7, it is said there, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;' therefore it seems the law may also be a word of salvation to the creature. I answer—By the law there is not meant only that part of the word which we call the covenant of works, but there it is put for the whole word, for the whole doctrine of the covenant of life and salvation; as Ps. 1:2, 'His



delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.' And if you take it in that stricter sense, then it converteth the soul but by accident, as it is joined with the gospel, which is the ministry of life and righteousness, but in itself it is the law of sin and death. Look, as a thing taken simply would be poison and deadly in itself, yet mixed with other wholesome medicines it is of great use, is an excellent physical ingredient; so the law is of great use, as joined with the gospel, to awaken and startle the sinner, to show him his duty, to convince him of sin and judgment; but it is the gospel properly that pulls in the heart.

Use. To press you to regard the gospel more, as you would salvation itself, for it bringeth salvation. By way of motive and encouragement —

1. Consider the greatness of the salvation: Heb. 2:3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' It is not a slight matter. In the gospel God doth not treat with you about trifles; your eternal life lies upon it; we preach to you a doctrine that tends to salvation. That so the argument may be more operative, consider what is salvation. Salvation implieth a deliverance from danger and distress, and a preservation in a condition of safety. Sometimes he is called a saviour, *qui quod semel factum est conservat, ne pereat*, that keepeth a thing in a condition of safety, though it were never lost. In this sense God is said to save man and beast: Ps. 36:6, 'O Lord, thou preservest man and beast;' as he doth preserve them from decay and ruin; so he is 'the saviour of all men,' 1 Tim. 4:10. There is not a creature but may call God saviour. But this salvation I speak of is a salvation proper but to a few creatures, not a general preservation or act of providence. Here is not only safety, but glory; it is a translation to a place of happiness. Again, he is said to save that delivers out of danger and destruction, as the shepherd that snatcheth the lamb out

of the teeth of the lion saveth him; and in common speech we call him a saviour that delivers from evil. But mark, this salvation is not only privative, but positive. Christ doth not only deliver us from evil, from sin, from the wrath of God, the accusations of the law, and eternal death, but positively he gives us grace, and righteousness, and everlasting life; he is not only a saviour to defend us, but a saviour to bless us, 'a sun and shield,' Ps. 84:11; not only a shield to keep from danger, but a sun who is the fountain and cause of vegetation and life; it is not preservation merely, but preferment. If Christ had only delivered us from wrath to come, and been a saviour privatively, it had been more than we could expect; or if he had procured some place where we might have been unacquainted with pain or trouble, yet then he had been a saviour; but here is not only a ransom and deliverance, but an inheritance, an exaltation; heaven and everlasting glory are included in this salvation. Instead of horror and howlings, here are everlasting joys, and we shall ever be with God, praising his grace in the midst of all his saints. The blessing is so excellent, that we cannot neglect it without great danger: Heb. 2:3, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?, For what can we expect but that God's mercy and patience abused should be turned into wrath and fury? And we cannot despise it without a great deal of sin and profaneness: Heb. 12:16, 'Lest there be any profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.' The birthright was a pledge of the blessing, and a right of priesthood and ministration before the Lord depended upon it. This was Esau's by birth; and he is called βέβηλος, 'a profane man,' for parting with it at so low a rate, and thinking so meanly of spiritual privileges. Oh! but what profaneness is this, to despise the great salvation that will cause us ever to be before the Lord, and minister in his presence! We count him a profane man that is guilty of murder, theft, adultery, perjury, because those sins bring public shame and contempt, and because these sins are most destructive to human society; but he is a profane

man indeed that despiseth the gospel, because it offereth such an excellent salvation; that is profaneness, to slight God's best provision, to scorn his bowels, and, when the Lord hath made the bait an allurement so strong to gain man's heart, yet to turn his back upon it.

2. Consider the completeness of the Saviour. Jesus Christ is so by merit, and by efficacy and power, and so every way fitted to do us good. He doth something for us, and something in us. Look, as in the gospel there is the history of salvation, and there Christ doth all, he is a saviour by merit; and there is the counsel of salvation, and there he is a saviour by power, he helps us to do the duty on our part. We have the merit of his humiliation and the power of his exaltation; for us he prevails by the merit of his death, and in us by the efficacy of his Spirit. When Christ was to save us, there were several hindrances—one on God's part, and another on ours; there was hindrance put in by God's justice, and a hindrance by our unbelief. Justice requires merit, and unbelief power; Christ was a saviour both ways. Again, there are different enemies to our salvation, which were of several qualities—God and the law, and sin and death, and Satan and the world. Now God and the law are to be considered in a distinct rank from sin and death, from Satan and the world. God was an enemy that could not be overcome, therefore must be reconciled. The law was an enemy that was not to be disannulled and destroyed, but to be satisfied; the precepts of it were not to be relaxed or repealed, but fulfilled; the curses of it were not to fall to the ground; some must be made a curse, that the authority of it might be kept up. Now Jesus Christ he is made a curse for us, and by his merit he satisfies the law and the justice of God. Then, among the other enemies, look to Satan; he is not only a tempter, but an accuser. As he is a tempter, so Christ is to overcome him by his power; as he is an accuser, so Christ is to overcome him by his merit. Certainly so far as Satan is an

enemy, so far must Christ be a saviour, that the plaster may be as broad as the sore; and therefore against the accusations of Satan he interposeth as our advocate, by representing his merit, and by bringing his blood unto the mercy-seat. Once again, consider, that our comfort may be full, Christ saves us by merit and by power. By his obedience and merit he gives us *jus ad rem*, a right and title to salvation; but by his efficacy and power he gives us possession, *jus in re*. He was first to buy our peace, our comfort, our grace, our glory of God, and then to see that we be possessed of it; and therefore we are said to be reconciled by his death, and saved by his life. He died that we might rely on his merit, and ransom, and blood, which was a price to reconcile us to God; and he lives that we might wait for his power, and so be saved by his life.

3. Consider, as the greatness of the salvation, and the completeness of the Saviour, so the excellency of the gospel; how it manifests and sets out this saviour, not in shadows and types, but with clear and express explication. God bestowed many benefits upon the old church, which were great enforcements to godliness, but not so powerful and effectual, because they were but shadows of salvation. Things that grow in the shade come not to such perfection as things that grow in the sun. In the Old Testament they had many blessings, but they were typical ones, and lasted but for a while; they had many saviours, that delivered them from the house of bondage, led them through the Red Sea, and through the desert into Canaan; delivered them from their enemies, destroyed the nations round about them; but now these were shadows of good things to come. The New Testament shows what is the meaning of all these; that we are delivered from the devil, and led into heaven, and brought to the possession of eternal life by Jesus Christ. The Old Testament speaketh of calling Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and separating his seed as a people to God. We can speak of election, that

we may obtain the adoption of sons. The Old Testament speaks of multiplying the seed of the Jews as the sand of the sea; the New Testament speaks of the multitude of converts, a great number which none can number. The Old Testament speaks of the bringing out of Egypt; the New, of bringing sinners out of the power of darkness. The Old Testament mentions the Red Sea; the New, the grace of baptism, or Red Sea of Christ's blood. The Old Testament speaks of God's providence in the wilderness, how the people of Israel were led up and down for forty years, and fed, and clothed, and delivered; the New Testament speaks of God's providence over his church during the whole state of the present world; how he guides us by his counsel, till he brings us to his glory: Ps. 73:14, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.' They were led into the land of Canaan by Jordan, and we have entrance into heaven by death; they could speak of judges and kings that were glorious, and did worthily in their generations, but the New Testament shows all that have an interest in Christ shall judge the world together with Christ at the last day: 2 Cor. 6:2, 'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?' and as kings shall reign with Christ for evermore, and be far more glorious than Solomon in all his glory. Their piety was like a plant that grows in the shade; now the sun is risen, which scattereth his light, heat, and influences.

4. Consider what should be God's aim in the designation of his providence, that he hath brought it and laid it before you: Acts 13:26, 'To you is the word of this salvation sent.' The apostle doth not say, We have brought it to you, but, God sent it. God hath a special hand in bringing the gospel. If you accept it, it will be God's token sent to you in love; for the present it is God's message, sent for your trial. There is a mighty providence that accompanieth the preaching of the gospel. You will find the journeys of the apostles were ordered by the Spirit, as well as their doctrine; as Acts 8:26, 'The angel of the Lord

said to Philip, Arise, go towards the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.' If they went north or south, it was not by their own good affection, or by the inclination and judgment of their own reason, but by the direction of the Spirit. So Acts 16:7, 'They assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.' They were not left to their own guidance and direction, but still they were carried up and down by the Spirit: 'As prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,' 2 Peter 1:21. So also the delivery of it, to what people it should be disclosed, was not by the direction of men, but by the Holy Ghost. The apostles had not only their commission what they should do, but where they should preach it. If God send a minister to you to preach this grace that bringeth salvation, do not look upon it as a thing of chance. The gospel doth not run by chance, and merely according to the intention and designment of men, nor in an orderly stated course as the sun, but by the special direction of God. You would stand admiring, and think it a special benefit in a time of drought if the rain should fall on your garden and upon none else, as it did upon Gideon's fleece; or if the sun should be shut up to others and shine in your horizon, as it did in Goshen. Such a distinction hath God made in sending of the gospel; it is darkness to others, but a sun to you. God hath a special hand in the progress of the gospel; certainly the preaching of it in power, there is much of God in it. The word goes from place to place; if you accept it not, God will go to another. When the Jews refused the salvation of God, it is sent to the gentiles: Acts 13:46, 'The salvation of God is sent unto the gentiles, and they will hear it.' It is not tendered unto you out of necessity, but by way of trial, out of God's choice. God cannot want clients; when you yourselves are thrust out, others may get in. You may want salvation, but God cannot want guests at the feast he hath prepared.

5. Consider of the great judgment that will light upon them that despise an offer of salvation. That which by its natural tendency is a grace bringing salvation, by your neglect may bring certain condemnation and ruin. Observe, God did never utterly cast off the people of the Jews for contempt of the law, but when once they came to despise the gospel, God would have no more to do with them. Indeed for the contempt of the law the Jews were punished; they went into captivity, but still a stock did remain, and it budded again. But when those glorious appearances of grace were discovered to them, and they despised them, then the wrath of God came unto them, εἰς τὸ τέλος, 'to the uttermost,' 1 Thes. 2:16. When salvation itself cannot save them, condemnation must needs take place; and so persons perish Upon a double ground—as guilty sinners, and as despisers of the remedy; as a man that is deadly sick, and will not take physic, perisheth both as he is sick and as he will not take physic; or as a man condemned by the law, and being reprieved for a short time, yet neglects to sue out his pardon.

But you will say, Who are those contemners of this salvation offered in the gospel? The gospel is the remedy, and contemning the gospel may be explained by refusing the counsels of physicians. You know some are utter enemies to physic, and cannot endure anything that is bitter and tart: and so carnal men, given up to pleasure, cannot endure the severities of the gospel, which are God's counsels and receipts for sick souls. If a few good hopes and wishes will carry them to heaven, that is all they mind. Some see that the endeavours of physicians do not always succeed, and that there is great uncertainty in that art, therefore slight all. Thus do men slight the gospel out of pure unbelief. Every one that hears the word is not saved; there are but few to whom it is manifested in power; and so they contemn it, having no such high thoughts of the word of God. Some, out of pride, refuse physic; they know as much as the physician; and so they throw

away themselves by depending upon their own counsel. So some, out of mere pride and conceit, slight the gospel; they know as much as can be taught them; they think themselves alive, and need nothing, when they are stark dead. Others, out of negligence, they are sick, but are not at leisure to take physic, do not mind the condition of their body till it proves deadly. Thus it is in the sickness of the soul; some are slightsers: Mat. 22:5, 'They made light of it,' ἀμελήσαντες; others distrust, others cannot endure God's terms, others are self-conceited; but all neglect this great salvation, and contemn the greatest gift God ever offered to men; therefore they shall meet with the greatest judgment.

6. Besides the wrong done to God and yourselves, consider the wrong you do to God's messengers. This is the spiritual honour God hath put upon them, that they are instrumental saviours: 1 Tim. 4:16, 'In doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.' We are employed in a subserviency to his grace, that so we might be saviours unto you. Oh! do not rob us of the honour God hath put upon us, let not our employment be in vain. The apostle urgeth this argument, Phil. 2:16, 'Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.' Discover that it is a word of salvation in your lives. This would be the minister's crown and rejoicing, to see the fruits of the word of life, now in your conversation, and hereafter in your glorification, when a minister shall present himself and all his converts to God, 'Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me,' Heb. 2:13. Therefore do not rob us of the honour God hath put upon us to be instrumental saviours.

What shall we do? Take these directions—



1. Get a sense of your dead and lost condition by nature. The killing letter makes way for the word of life; the law shows us that we are dead, and then we inquire after the way of life and salvation: 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost,' Luke 19:10. We must be lost in our own sense and feeling before we can be saved. It is very notable that only those that were pricked in heart said, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Acts 2:37, 'Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' so Paul: Acts 9:6, 'And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' So the jailer: Acts 16:29, 'He came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' Till we are pinched in conscience we trouble ourselves with other questions; as the disciples had many superfluous questions: John 9:2, 'Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' and nice disputes: Acts 1:6, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' they were taken up with terrene expectations. Such a question Peter propounded to Christ: John 21:21, 'Lord, and what shall this man do?' But when we are soundly humbled, we say, Lord, what must I do to be saved? I see I am a lost creature; an hunger-bitten beggar will seek relief. Such questions are rare now, because the law has not a kindly work. Men think the gate of heaven wide, and the way easy to find; they never came to see how far off they were. But those that know themselves to be lost are inquisitive after a remedy, and more pliable to God's counsel. Oh! where is the word of salvation? what shall we do? They are ready to submit to any terms God shall prescribe. Others make dry confessions of sin, and give in a narrative, but are not so solicitous about the remedies and redresses; but poor wounded spirits, that are sensible of their misery by nature, say, Good sir, show us the way; let God write down what articles he

pleaseth, we would be glad to subscribe to them. Bonds of iniquity are much more sore than bonds of duty.

2. Let us attend more conscionably both upon the reading and hearing the word of the gospel, for both are instituted. Upon the reading of it; we should often consult with it; it is the counsel of God to poor lost souls, and the charter of our salvation. Do not think reading will be altogether unprofitable. The eunuch was reading, and wanted an interpreter, then God sent Philip, Acts 8:33. He that sent Philip to the eunuch will send the Spirit to thee. Then attend more upon the hearing of the word, of this salvation. Hearing is necessary. He that refuseth God's ordinance refuseth life and salvation. When men think they can get as much good by reading at home as by hearing sermons, they set up their foolish judgment against God's wisdom, as if they could tell a better means of salvation than God himself. God's word read is an ordinance, and God's word taught is an ordinance. Are we so wise as to be above the help of church gifts? yet we are not above God's ordinance. When God hath instituted two things, we should observe both. He hath instituted baptism and the Lord's supper. We must not, because we have been baptized, neglect the supper; so we must not neglect hearing because we have reading. As God hath instituted prophets and apostles to write scripture, so likewise pastors and teachers to open, explain, and apply scripture; and therefore the ministry must not be contemned.

Object. But you will say, God's blessing goeth with the gospel; and when we read the scriptures at home, we are sure of pure gospel; but we cannot say so of the sermons of men, who are liable to miscarriage and error.

Ans. The scripture is pure gospel of itself and by itself, and the sermons of men for the scripture's sake, for they are but comparing

one scripture with another; they differ but as the cloth and garment; scripture is the cloth, and sermons make it up into a garment for use; or as corn and bread, the same substance remaineth in both. An apothecary, when he tempers several ingredients to make a medicine, he doth not destroy the nature of the simples, but compounds them, to make the medicine more effectual; so by gifts in the church, the gospel is not destroyed, but ordered and compounded, that it may be more useful. Indeed you must look to it that there be no sophistication in the composition; a spiritual man hath a distinguishing appetite; therefore be much in reading, much in hearing. When the wind is laid, the mill stirs not, and a ship under sail goes the swifter for oars, so the hearing of the word moves the affections; but when we cannot come to hear it, our affections are laid and stir not.

3. In reading and hearing the word, receive all the parts of it: Acts 20:27, 'I have not shunned, to declare to you all the counsel of God. The receipts of a physician must not be altered, neither by the apothecary nor patient; so we must not alter God's receipts, nor you neither; we must not shun to declare, nor you to receive, the whole counsel of God. For instance, there is the history of salvation; the doctrinal and historical part must be kept pure, that is the foundation. You read, in Gen. 26:20, there was a great strife between Isaac's herdsmen and the herdsmen of Gerar about wells. Oh! certainly we should earnestly 'contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints,' Jude 3; these are wells of salvation. Take away one of the natures of Christ, or destroy one of his offices, and you lose a fountain of comfort; there is a well of salvation dammed and stopped up. So the promissory and hortatory part is necessary to quicken us, that we may not look for more than God hath promised, an earthly kingdom without the cross, or imperfect justification that needs our merit, or perfect sanctification without the relics of the

flesh. But especially let us have regard to the mandatory part of the gospel; there we are apt to flinch and start aside; but we must hearken not only to what God hath done for us, but what he requires of us, that we may obey the counsels as well as believe the history of the gospel. The covenant is mutual; there is an obligation upon God, and an obligation upon us; therefore we read, *Exod. 24:7–9*, that half of the blood was sprinkled upon the altar, to note God took upon him his part of the obligation, and half upon the people, to note they must take upon them their part of the obligation. It is true that God in the covenant of grace gives the condition as well as the blessing promised, but our obligation is to be acknowledged; though it be wrought of God, yet it is to be done by us. And there must be a restipulation, 'the answer of a good conscience towards God,' *1 Peter 3:21*. What answer do you make to God's proposals and articles? It is an allusion to the manner of admitting persons to baptism in those days; they were to answer to questions. *Credis? dost thou believe?* The person to be baptized was to answer, *Credo, I do believe. Abrenuncias? dost thou renounce the world?* he answered, *Abrenuncio, I do renounce. Spondes? dost thou undertake to obey God?* *Spondeo, I undertake, I promise so to do.* We must not only regard what God and Christ have done, but there must be something in us before we can make use of what God and Christ have done for us. There is a mutual consent of both sides; the gospel is as it were an indenture drawn between God and us; therefore, as we look to God for eternal life and salvation, which is made over to us in the promises of the covenant, so God looks for obedience and faithfulness from us, which is required of us in the precepts of the covenant.

To all men.—That is, to all sorts of men, bond or free, to servants as well as others; for in the context he doth discourse of servants. I shall only in brief observe this note—

Doct. 4. That this salvation which the grace of God bringeth is free for all that will accept of it.

God excludes none but those that exclude themselves. It is said to appear to all men—

1. Because it is published to all sorts of men; they all have a like favour in the general offer: John 6:37, 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.' There are two things in that description—there is the doctrine of election, and the offer of grace. It is certain the elect shall come; but then, in the offer or tender of grace, they have all alike favour. Therefore be not discouraged, for whoever comes shall be sure of welcome; by this means the reprobate are left without excuse. The gospel is wisely contrived; it gives no ground of despair to any; one hath as fair ground to believe as the other; there is no monopoly in the offer. God doth not say, Come you, and not others, and I will not cast you out; but, Whosoever comes. The wicked have as fair a ground to believe as others; in the general offer God speaks promiscuously.

2. All that accept have a like privilege; therefore this grace is said to appear to all men. There is no difference of nations, nor of conditions of life, nor of lesser opinions in religion, nor of degrees of grace. See all summed up by the apostle: Col. 3:11, 'There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.' We are taken with the admiration of outward privileges, and are altogether for empaling and enclosing 'the common salvation,' as it is called, Jude 3. The Lord accepts of all, be they Jew or Greek, &c. To go over these distinctions: The several conditions of life make no difference, bond or free, rich or poor. Servants or bondmen in those times were in a miserable case; they

were but *animata instrumenta*, used as living instruments; every master had *potestatem vitæ et necis*, power over the life and death of his servants, as over his cattle. But now free grace doth overlook this distinction; bond or free are all one in Christ. In the account of God there is none poor but he that wants the righteousness of Christ. Then, for other differences in moral excellences, some nations are more civil than others; but, saith he, 'neither Scythian nor barbarian;' that doth not vary the case. He doth not mention only the barbarian, but the Scythian, which were of all people most rude and savage, the very dross and dregs of barbarism itself; they had little knowledge in the arts, letters, and civilities of other nations, yet all these are one in Christ. Then there is no difference of nation, Greek or Jew; some may live in a colder, some in a warmer climate, as they are nearer or further off from the sun; but all are alike near to the Sun of righteousness. God hath broken down the partition wall, and enlarged the pale of the church. Indeed, Rome would fain rear up a new partition wall, and confine God to their own precincts, as if out of their church there was no salvation. Envious nature cannot endure to hear that all nations should stand upon the same level. So again for some lesser differences in religion, that do not destroy the foundation; circumcision and uncircumcision, all is one in Christ, provided they submit to the main duties of Christianity. They were the two known parties and factions in those times, but yet such as did not exclude from the benefit of the common salvation. When there was a schism at Corinth, 1 Cor. 3:4, 'One saith, I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos;' Christ is only ours, and not yours; Paul writeth to them, 1 Cor. 1:2, 'To all that call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.' We anathematise one another, and impropriate Christ by sacrilegious censures. It is very natural to us to confine grace within the circuit of our own opinions; and the worst sort of christians for the most part do so, as if none should go to heaven but those of their party. Tertullian, speaking of the times in

which he lived, It is holiness enough with some, saith he, to be of such a party, as if none could be saved but men of their own persuasion. Now, saith the apostle, 'neither circumcision nor uncircumcision;' all have the same common privilege. Once more, though there be a difference in the degrees of grace, yet all have an interest in the common privileges of christians. Some have a stronger, some a weaker faith; but saith the apostle, Rom. 3:22, 'The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all that believe; for there is no difference;' they all take hold of the same righteousness. Look, as a jewel held by a man and by a child, though the man holds it more strongly than the child, yet it is the same jewel, and of the same worth and value; so the righteousness of Christ is of the same worth before God; the stronger believer holds it faster than the weaker believer; but though he cannot be so high in faith as Abraham, and as other worthies of God, yet he hath his holdfast upon God. Differences of nations and outward condition do neither help nor hinder salvation, and different degrees of grace, though they occasion some accidental difference in the spiritual life, as some have more comfort than others, yet as to the main, all that accept have a like privilege. The reasons of it are partly because the same grace is the cause of all. Free grace acts for the good of all upon the same terms: Isa. 43:25, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' God doth not take notice of differences in them whom he forgives. God may pardon the sin of Andrew and Thomas, as well as of Abraham and Paul; grace's motives lie within itself. And partly, because they have the same Redeemer, Jesus Christ, theirs and ours. Under the law you shall find the rich and poor were to give the same ransom: 'The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel,' Exod. 30:15, to signify the price of Christ's blood for all souls is equal; they have not a nobler Redeemer, nor a more worthy Christ than thou hast. And partly because your

faith is as acceptable to God as theirs; 2 Peter 1:1, 'To them who have obtained like precious faith with us;' that is, for kind, though not for degree. It is of the same nature, worth, and property with the faith of the apostles, though every one cannot believe as Strongly as Peter, nor come up to his height.

Use 1. If the grace of God hath appeared to all men, then let us put in for a share. Why should we stand out? Are we excepted and left out of the proclamation of pardon and free grace? If persons be excepted by name when a pardon is offered to rebels, they stand off, and will not come within the verge of such power; but if it be offered to all, why should we stand out? We must not add nor detract. If God hath said, Christ died for sinners, believe him upon his word, and say, I am chief; do not say, I am a reprobate; God hath no favour for me. Will you leave that word and hazard your salvation for a groundless jealousy and scruple? Therefore confute your fears, and put all out of question by a thorough believing.

Use 2. For comfort to weak believers. Though your faith cannot keep time and pace with Abraham's, nor your obedience with the worthies of God, yet you are 'followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises,' Heb. 6:12. A little faith is faith, as a drop is water, and a spark is fire; it is free to all that have or will accept. Say, then, as he, Mark 9:24, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.' The least drachm of gospel faith gives a title and interest. Indeed, you must strive to make it more evident; you cannot have comfort till then, and consider, endeavours of growth do better than idle complaints, therefore follow on still with hope.



## SERMON III

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

THE next thing to be considered is the lesson that grace teacheth us, 'Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.'

But before I enter upon the discussion of the particular branches, I shall observe some things in the general.

Obs. 1. Grace teacheth us holiness. It teacheth by way of direction, by way of argument, and by way of encouragement.

1. It teacheth by way of direction what duties we ought to perform, and so it maketh use of the moral law as a rule of life. The law is still our direction, otherwise what we do cannot be an act of obedience. Certainly the direction of the law is still in force; for where there is no law there is no transgression, and duty without a rule is but will-worship. If the law were blotted out, the image of God would be blotted out; for the external law is nothing but the copy of God's image, that holiness and righteousness which is impressed on the heart. Now grace doth not blot out the image of God, but perfects it. In the new covenant God promiseth to make the law more legible: Heb. 8:10, 'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.' Well, then, we are not freed from the authority and directive power of the law. Grace adopts, it doth not abolish, the law. The commands of the law sway the conscience, and love inclineth the heart, and so it becometh an act of

pure obedience. Obedience respects the command, as love doth the kindness and merit of the lawgiver.

2. It teacheth by way of argument; it argueth and reasoneth from the love of God: Gal. 2:20, 'The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' There is grace's argument; Christ loved me. We should not, then, be so unkind as to deny God his honour or worship, or cherish his enemies: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us.' What will you do for God, that loved you in Christ? The gospel contains melting commands and commanding entreaties. The law and the prophets do not beseech, but only command and threaten; but the grace of God useth a different method in the new testament.

3. It teacheth by way of encouragement, as manifesting both help and reward. The gospel doth not only teach us what we ought to perform, but whence we may draw strength, and how kindly God will accept us in Christ. The law is a schoolmaster, and the gospel is a schoolmaster, but in the discipline and manner of teaching there is a great deal of difference. The law can only teach and command, but the gospel is a gentle schoolmaster; it pointeth to Christ for help: Phil. 4:13, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;' and to God for reward and acceptance: Heb. 11:16, 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' I do but mention these things, because I shall handle the encouragements hereafter.

Use 1. Of information. It showeth us—

1. What is true holiness, such as cometh from the teachings of grace, obliging conscience to the duty of the law, inclining the heart to obey out of the sense of God's love, and encouraging us by faith, drawing strength from Christ, and looking to God for our acceptance from

him. Some works of the unregenerate are materially good, but it is not the matter maketh the work good, but the principle. The works of unregenerate men are done by God's enemies, out of the strength of a corrupt will for carnal ends, without any conscience of God's will, or respect to his glory; but ἑχθρῶν δῶρα ἄδωρα, they are giftless gifts. But now those done by persons in a gracious state are as good fruit growing on a good tree. Grace teacheth; he speaketh not of the external direction of the gospel, but the internal working of grace in the heart; it worketh by faith, love, and obedience. Obedience owneth the obligation, love inclineth to discharge the duty, and faith looketh up to God for help and acceptance, that we may do it in Christ, and for Christ's sake to God's glory. There is a free loving subjection of the whole man, inward and outward, to the whole will of God, with a desire to please him.

2. That grace and corruption draw several inferences and conclusions from the same premises. A bee gathereth honey from whence a spider sucketh poison. Corrupt nature is out in conclusions: Prov. 26:9, 'As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.' Let us do evil that grace may abound, gays a corrupt heart. Let us deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, says a gracious person. God doth all, says a corrupt heart, therefore we need but lie upon the bed of ease, and expect his help. No, says a gracious soul, Phil. 2:12, 13, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.' The epicure says, The time is short; 'Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die,' 1 Cor. 15:32. The apostle argues otherwise: 1 Cor. 7:29, 'Brethren, I say unto you, The time is short; it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none,' &c. So 2 Sam. 7:2, 'Then the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains;' compared with Hag. 1:2, 'This people say,

The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.' Eli said, 1 Sam. 3:18, 'It is of the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.' The king of Israel said, 2 Kings 6:33, 'Behold, this evil is of the Lord; why should I wait for the Lord any longer?' We are apt to stumble in God's plainest ways. Carnal logic is one of our greatest corruptions.

3. That it is the greatest wrong one can do to grace to slacken any part of our duty for grace's sake: Jude 4, 'Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,' μετατιθεντες; they hale it besides its purpose. There is no such teacher of holiness as grace; it teacheth and giveth a heart to learn. They know not what grace meaneth that grow wanton, vain, and sensual. To make grace sin's lackey, is a vile abuse: Rom. 6:15, 'What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.' You are under grace, therefore 'yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God,' ver. 13. As Fulvius said to his son when he slew him, I begot thee not for Cataline, but for thy country. God justified us, not that we might live to Satan, but to himself.

Use 2. Of trial. Whether we are made partakers of the grace of God in the gospel? Have we these teachings and arguings? Many can endure to hear that grace bringeth salvation, but that it teacheth us to deny ungodliness, there they flinch. Men would have us offer salvation, and preach promises; but when we press duty, they cry out, This is a hard saying. The cities of refuge under the law were all cities of the Levites and schools of instruction, to note that whoever taketh sanctuary at grace meeteth instruction; it is no benefit to thee else. In the general, doth it persuade you to make a willing resignation of yourselves to God? Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,

holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' Every time you think of mercy, do ye find some constraint in this kind? More particularly—

1. Doth it press you to deny lusts? Ezra 9:13, 14, 'Seeing thou hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments?' Doth it recoil upon you? Gen. 39:9, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' Is this your kindness to your friend?

2. Doth it press you to good? 1 John 5:3, 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.' When God maketh a motion by his word or the counsels of his Spirit, Well, I cannot deny it; what a small service is this I owe to God? as Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and 'they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her,' Gen. 29:20; and Shechem underwent the pain of circumcision for Dinah's sake.

Obs. 2. Grace teacheth us, both to depart from evil, and also to do good: Ps. 34:15, 'Depart from evil, and do good;' Isa. 1:16, 17, 'Cease to do evil, learn to do well.' We must do both, because God hates evil and delights in good; we must hate what God hates, and love what God loves. That is true friendship, *eadem velle et nolle*, to will and nill the same thing. I durst not sin, God hates it; I durst not omit this duty, God loves it. Again, our obedience must carry a proportion with the divine mercy. Now God's mercy is not only privative, but positive. God not only spares and delivers us from hell, but saves and brings us to heaven: 'The Lord God is a sun and shield,' Ps. 84:11; not only a shield to keep us from danger, but a sun to afford us comfort and blessing. Therefore it is fit our obedience should be both privative and positive; not only cease to do evil, but learn to do well; as the description of a godly man runs, Ps. 1:1, 2, 'Blessed is the man that

walketh not in the counsels of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but that is not enough, 'but his delight is in the law of the Lord.' Again, we must have communion with Christ in all his acts, in his death, and in his resurrection; and therefore we must not only mortify sin, but be quickened to holiness of conversation. He that hath communion with Christ in one act hath communion with him in all; and therefore, 'if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection,' Rom. 6:5. We shall be dead to sin and alive to God. The same divine power that kills the old man quickens the new. Again, I might argue from the word, which is our rule, for there we have not only restraints, but precepts; therefore we must not only escape from sin, but delight in communion with God; we must eschew what God forbids, and practise what God commands.

Use. Let it press us not to rest in abstaining from sin merely. Many are not vicious; but they are not sanctified, they have no feeling of the power of the new life. The pharisee's religion ran upon negatives: Luke 18:11, 'God, I thank thee I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.' To enforce this, consider, both are contrary to the new nature; it hates evil and loves good. Where there is regeneration, there is a putting on and a putting off: Eph. 4:22–24, 'That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' The new nature makes conscience of abstaining from sin and obeying God's precepts. And both are serviceable to the work of grace. Grace is obstructed by sins of omission and commission, for sins increase as well as unfitness for duty. The motions of the Spirit are quenched, and lusts grow prevalent in the soul, and both are

odious to God. A barren tree cumbereth the ground, and is rooted up as well as the poisonous herb.

Obs. 3. We must first begin with renouncing evil; that is the first thing grace teacheth. Since the fall, the method is analytical, to unravel and undo that which hath been done in the soul. So it is said of Christ, 1 John 3:8, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' Sin is the first occupant in the soul, and claimeth possession. Six thousand years ago it thrust out grace, which was the right owner; therefore first there must be a writ of ejectment sealed against sin, that grace may take the throne; Dagon must down, ere the ark be set up. It cannot be otherwise, it must not be otherwise; there must be mortifying and subduing of sin by acts of humiliation and godly sorrow before there will be experience of grace.

1. It cannot be otherwise, for the devil hath a right in us as long as we remain in sin; therefore there must be a rescue from his power: Col. 1:13, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.' Christ and Satan cannot reign in the same heart, nor God and the world. Joseph was taken out of prison, and then preferred to Pharaoh. This is the method: Luke 1:73, 'That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.' Deliverance hath the precedence; first the thorns must be rooted out, and then the corn is sowed.

2. It must not be otherwise. God will have nothing to do with us till we have renounced sin. A plausible life is but a counterfeit varnish, like gilding over a rotten post, or a moral integrity, till sin be renounced. The prodigal left his husks, and then returned to his

father. This is the method at our first conversion. Indeed afterwards there is some difference; when once grace is once planted in the heart, it hath the advantage of corruption, and worketh first. Thus it is said of Job, chap. 1:1, 'That man was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.' First fearing God, then eschewing evil. Grace having taken possession, and being seated in the heart, it works first. Like a man possessed and seated in his house, he seeketh to expel his enemy. So at first way is made for the operation of grace, and then all the work afterwards is the destruction of sin.

Obs. 4. It is not enough to renounce one sin, but we must renounce all; for when the apostle speaks of denying ungodliness, he intends all ungodliness. Compare this with 1 Peter 2:1, 'Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies;' and James 1:21, 'Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness.' All sins must be renounced, little sins and great sins. Great sins, as adultery, drunkenness, and the like, are manifest, Gal. 5:19; that is, nature doth abhor them, they stink and smell rank in nature's nostrils, even to a natural conscience. Then for little sins: Mat. 5:19, 'Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so to do, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.' It is spoken of ministers principally; whoever shall give license by the gospel to the least sin, either break it himself, or teach men so to do, shall have no place, no room among gospel ministers. No sin can be little that is committed against the great God. Sins are not to be measured by the smallness of the occasion, or by the suddenness of the act, but by the offence done to God, to an infinite majesty. The less the sin, the greater many times it is. It argues much malice to break with God upon every slight occasion; there is more unkindness in it, and the more contempt of God; and it argues the greater depravation of nature. As a little weight will make a stone move downward, because of its natural inclination, so it is a sign we have



an inclination that way when a small matter can draw us from God. Again, secret sins must be eschewed as well as public: Isa. 55:7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;' the thought as well as the way is to be forsaken. By way is meant his outward course of life; by his thoughts is meant the hidden workings of his spirit. Nothing more transient and sudden than the thought; therefore, as we must not do evil before men, so we must not think evil before God. God seeth the thought, as well as man the actions, and infinitely more. The thoughts are visible to him, and these fall under a law as well as our actions. Again, sins of temper, to which we are more incident, as well as other sins to which we have less inclination, they must be mortified: Ps. 18:23, 'I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.' That sin which we call ours should be most watched against, and most hated above all others. As a man should be afraid of the meat of which he hath once surfeited, so the sin that hath once prevailed over us we should be more cautious against. It is nothing for a sordid spirit to be less proud, or a proud man to be less covetous, or a covetous man to be less sensual, or a sensual man to be less passionate; still a christian is tried by the revenge he takes upon his own sin, his master-lust. Again, not only sins which lie at a distance from our interest, but sins that bring us most profit and advantage. In these things God tries us; it is the offering up of our Isaac, our darling. In a corrupt world some things bring credit and profit; but as for the right hand, the right eye, we must pluck out the one and cut off the other: Mat. 5:29, 30, 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.' Cannot we do so much for God and for grace's sake.

I might give you several reasons. One sin is contrary to God as well as another. There is the same aversion from an eternal good in all things, though the manner of conversion to the creature be different. Again, one sin is contrary to the law of God as well as another; there is a contempt of the same authority in all sins. God's command binds, and it is of force in lesser sins as well as greater; and therefore they that bear any respect to the law of God must hate all sin: Ps. 119:113, 'I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love.' God hath given a law to the thoughts, to the sudden workings of the spirit, as well as to actions that are more deliberate; and therefore, if we love the law, we should hate every lesser contrariety to it, even a vain thought. And all sin proceedeth from the same corruption; therefore, if we would subdue and mortify it, we must renounce all sin. He that hateth any sin as sin hates all sin, for there is the same reason to hate every sin. Hatred, philosophers say, is to the whole kind. A man that hates a toad as a toad hates every one of the kind; with the same kind of hatred must we hate every sin. Again, one sin let alone is very dangerous. One leak in a ship, if unstopped and neglected, may endanger the vessel. One sin let alone, and allowed and indulged, may quite ruin the soul. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. A man may ride right for a long time, but one turn in the end of his journey brings him quite out of the way. If you do many things, yet, if you commit any sin with leave and license from conscience, you are guilty of all sin: James 1:10, 'Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,' as one condition not observed, forfeits the whole lease. There is an indenture drawn between us and God, and every article of this covenant must be observed. If we willingly give way and allowance to the least breach, we forfeit all the grace of the covenant.

Use 1. Direction what to do in the business of mortification. We must deny all ungodliness, not a hoof must be left in Egypt. Grace will not

stand with any allowed sin; and in demolishing the old building, not one stone must be left upon another.

1. In your purpose and resolution, you must make Satan no allowance; he standeth hucking, as Pharaoh did with Moses and Aaron; first he would let them go three days into the wilderness; then he permitted them to take their little ones with them; but they would not go without their cattle, their flocks and their herds also; they would not leave anything, no not a hoof behind them. So the devil would have a part left as a pledge, that in time the whole man may fall to his share: 2 Kings 5:18, 'In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.' We would grant Christ anything, so he would excuse us in our beloved sins. We complain of the times, and set up a toleration in our hearts; some right hand or right eye that we are loath to part with. Something there is wherein we would be excused, and expect an allowance; either outward, as in fashions, customs, ways of profit and advantage; or inward, some passions and carnal affections that we would indulge. Grace will not stand with any allowed sin. Herod did many things, but he kept his Herodias still. He turneth from no sin that doth not in his purpose and resolution turn from all sin; he doth not break off an acquaintance with sin, but rather make choice what sin he will keep, and what he will part with. The apostle speaks, Col. 2:11, of 'putting off the body of the sins of the flesh.' We must not cut off one member or one joint, but the whole body, totum corpus, licet non totaliter, the whole body of sin, though we cannot wholly be rid of it. Dispense not there where Christ hath not dispensed.

2. We should often examine our hearts, lest there lurk some vice whereof we think ourselves free: Lam. 3:40, 'Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.' Complete reformation is grounded upon a serious search and trial. As those that kept the passover were not to have a jot of leaven in their houses, and therefore they were to search their houses for leaven, such a narrow search should there be to discover whatever hath been amiss. Commune with yourselves. Is there not a jot of leaven yet left? somewhat that God hateth, some correspondence with God's enemies? Is there nothing left that is displeasing to God? Thus should we often bring our hearts and our ways and the word together.

3. Desire God to show you if there be anything left that is grievous to his Spirit: Job 34:32, 'That which I see not, teach thou me.' There are many sins I see, but more that I do not see; Lord, show them to me. So David appealeth to God, who must judge and punish conscience: Ps. 139:23, 24, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' Can you thus appeal to God, and say, Lord, I desire not to continue in any known sin?

4. When any sins break out, set upon the mortification of them. Do not neglect the least sins; they are of dangerous consequence; but renew thy peace with God, judging thyself for them, and mourning for them, avoiding temptations, cutting off the provision for the flesh: 1 Cor. 9:27, 'But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.' The leper was to shave off his hair, and if it grew again, he was still to keep shaving. Corruption will recoil, but still we must use the razor of mortification, though it be such a sin as the world taketh no notice of, and others would not make conscience of.

Use 2. Of trial. Do we renounce all sin? But you will say, 'Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?' Prov. 20:9. I answer—

1. It must be done in purpose and resolution. In conversion there is an entire surrender of the soul to God. To reserve any sin is to part stakes between him and Satan, not to leave sin, but to choose it. But now in vow and purpose we must forsake every sin: Ps. 119:57, 'I have said that I would keep thy word.' And this purpose must be entire, without exception and reservation; so that if they sin, it is beside their purpose.

2. There must be a serious inclination of the will against it. Carnal men will profess a purpose and faint resolution, but there is no principle of grace to bear it, no bent of the will against it: Ps. 119:104, 'I hate every false way.' A child of God doth not escape every false way, but he hateth it, the inclination of the new nature is against it, and therefore sin is not committed without resistance; there are dislikes and denials in the renewed part; there is a fear of sin beforehand, and a present striving against it, and an after grief for it: the consent is extorted by the violence of a temptation, and retracted by remorse; for remorse is as the withdrawing of the consent, so that it is besides the inclination of the will.

3. There must be endeavours against it. The case of obedience must be universal, though the success be not answerable; Ps. 119:6, 'Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments;' not when I have kept them, but when I have a respect to them all. We should never be able to look God in the face if our acceptance lay upon keeping all his commandments; but we must respect them all, and endeavour to keep them all, and dispense

with ourselves in no known failing, and still the work of denying all sin must be carried on by degrees.

Thus much for the general observations.

Denying ungodliness.—Having observed something from the general view of this verse, I come to handle the particular branches; and here let me first speak of the privative part, 'Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;' and the first thing to be denied is 'ungodliness.'

First, I shall open the terms of the text; and, secondly, the thing itself.

First, In the explication of the terms, I shall show—(1.) What is meant by 'ungodliness;' (2.) What by 'denying' it.

1. What is meant by 'ungodliness,' a sin much spoken of, but little known. The word ἀσέβεια in its native signification implies a denial of worship. Worship you know is the chiefest and most solemn respect of the creature to God; and therefore, when we deny any part of that service, respect, honour, and obedience which we owe to God, it is called ἀσέβεια, want of worship; as εὐσέβεια, right worship, is put for the whole subjection and obedience of the creature to God.

[1.] Ungodliness is sometimes applied to pagans, and to men that never acknowledged the true God: 1 Peter 4:18, 'If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?' The ungodly, being there opposed to the righteous and to the house of God, must needs be those that live without the pale, pagans and heathens that were never acquainted with the true God.

[2.] Ungodliness is sometimes put to imply the unjustified estate, or our condition by nature. And thus the apostle, when he speaks of

Abraham and David, gives God this title and appellation: Rom. 4:5, 'God, that justifieth the ungodly;' and Rom. 5:6, 'Christ died for the ungodly.' The reason why ungodliness is put for the natural state before conversion and justification, I suppose is because the Septuagint always renders רשעים by άσεβεις. Now רשע signifies restless, turbulent; but usually it is translated ungodly: Ps. 1:1, 'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel רשעים of the ungodly.' Now, because such kind of persons are usually brought forth to judgment and condemned, therefore it is put for condemned persons; as Ps. 109:7, 'When he shall be judged, let him be condemned.' In the Hebrew it is יצא רשע, exeat impius: let him go out guilty or wicked, as in the margin of our bible. Certainly in that place, Rom. 5:6, 'Christ died for the ungodly,' the apostle, to amplify the love of Christ in dying for us, alludeth to the custom of the Jews, who were wont to divide the people into three parts, חסידים טובים, or άγαθοι, good and gracious men; צדקים, δίκαιοι, just men; and רשעים, άσεβεις, wicked men. For the good men, a man would even dare to die; by which are meant not only the just, but the bountiful soul, that did good in his place, and deserved love and respect. For a just man one would scarcely die: by the just men are meant those of a rigid innocency and strict justice as to matters external. But now, saith the apostle, we were neither good nor righteous men, but were of the other sort, ungodly, wicked, liable to the process of the law, and yet 'Christ died for the ungodly.'

[3.] The word is yet more specially used for the transgressions of the first table: Rom. 1:18, 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' There all sin is distinguished into two branches and kinds—ungodliness and unrighteousness. Ungodliness, that respects their carriage towards God; and unrighteousness, their carriage towards men: and in this sense it is taken here. Ungodliness is put for that part of sin whereby

we rob God of his honour, respect, and service established by the first table; and worldly lusts for all those sins by which we wrong ourselves and others. Ungodliness, then, is not giving God his right and due honour; and therefore, that you may conceive of it aright, let me tell you that there are four particular notions ingrafted in the heart of man which are the ground and foundation of all religion—(1.) That God is, and is one; (2.) That God is none of those things which are seen, but something more excellent; (3.) That God hath a care of human affairs, and judgeth with equity; (4.) That this God is the maker of all things that are without himself. These are grafted in the heart of man by nature, and are the sum and foundation of all religion. Now to these four principles are suited the four commands of the first table. The first principle is, that God is, and is one; and in the first commandment there is God's unity clearly established: 'Thou shalt have no other gods besides me.' The second principle is, that God is none of those things which are seen, but something more excellent; and in the second commandment we have God's invisible nature; for images are forbidden upon that ground, because God cannot be seen: Deut. 4:12, 'You saw no similitude, only you heard a voice.' The third principle is, that God hath a care of human affairs, and judgeth with equity; and in the third commandment you have the knowledge of human affairs, and even of a man's thoughts ascribed to God, for that is the foundation of an oath, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.' The chief intent of that commandment is to forbid perjury; it also forbids rash swearing, and mentioning the name of God without reverence; for in an oath God is invoked as a witness, as one that hath knowledge even of the heart; there his omniscience is acknowledged; and in an oath God is appealed to as a judge and avenger; there his justice and power is acknowledged. For the fourth principle, that this God is the creator and governor of all things that are without himself, that is established in the fourth commandment by the law of the sabbath;



for the sabbath at first was instituted for this very purpose, to meditate upon God as a creator; a day on purpose is instituted to keep up the memorial of the creation of the world.

Well, then, you see what is the foundation of godliness. Now out of these speculative notions practicals flow of their own accord, to wit, that God alone is to be worshipped, obeyed, honoured, trusted; and as far as we set up other confidences, or are ignorant of the excellency of the true God, or so far as we deny God his worship and service, or serve him after an unworthy manner, by superstitious or idolatrous worship, or carelessly and hypocritically, or so far as we have gross opinions of his essence, or exclude the dominion of his providence, or cease to call upon his name, so far we are guilty of ungodliness, as will appear more fully hereafter.

2. What it is to deny ungodliness? Denying is a word that properly belongs to propositions. We are said to deny when we contradict what is affirmed; but by a metaphor it may be applied to things which the will refuseth; as some are said 'to deny the power of godliness,' 2 Tim. 3:5, when they check and resist it and will not suffer godliness to work, though they take up a form of it. Now there is a great deal of reason for that phrase, whether we look to the inward workings of the heart, or to the outward profession which they made in those days.

[1.] If you look to the inward workings of the heart, all things are managed in the heart of man by rational debates and suggestions; and we deny when we refuse to give assent to ungodly thoughts, suggestions, and counsels. Before sin be fastened upon the soul, there is some ungodly thought, some counsel, which, when we suppress, and will not hearken to those thoughts which sin stirs up, we are properly said to deny it. Every corruption hath a voice. If envy

bids Cain, Go kill thy brother, he hearkens to it. Ambition speaks to Absalom thus, Go, rise up against thy father; and covetousness speaks to Judas, Go, betray thy Lord. So ungodliness hath a voice. Carnal affection, urged by Satan, bids us neglect God, or serve him in a slight manner, mind thy own business, favour thyself. Corruption awakened by Satan will solicit to evil. Now suppressing and smothering such thoughts and suggestions with hatred and detestation is fitly expressed by refusing to hearken to sin's voice, or 'denying ungodliness.'

[2.] Some ground there is for the expression, if we look to the custom of those times. In making an outward profession, probably here is some allusion to the ancient manner of stipulation. When any came to be admitted into the church, there were questions propounded to him, Abrenuncias? dost thou renounce? Credis? dost thou believe? Spondes? dost thou promise to walk before God in all holy obedience? And the person answered, Abrenuncio, I do renounce; Credo, I do believe; and, Spondeo, I do undertake. This was that which Peter calls, 'the answer of a good conscience towards God,' 1 Peter 3:21, when in the presence of God they can answer to all these demands.

## **SERMON IV**

That denying ungodliness, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

Now let me open the thing itself. In ungodliness there is something negative, and that is denying God his due honour; and something

positive, and that is putting actual contempt upon him.

First, For the negative part, when God is denied his honour. Now to find out how this is done, let us a little inquire what is the special and peculiar honour which God challengeth to himself. It stands in four things—to be the first cause, the chiefest good, the supreme authority and truth, and the last end. And therefore, when we do not acknowledge him to be the first cause, the chiefest good, the supreme authority and truth, and the last end, we rob him of the glory of his Godhead, and are guilty of this which the apostle calls ungodliness. I shall go over these branches.

First, God must be honoured as the first cause, which giveth being to all things, and hath his being from none; and so we are bound to know him, to depend upon him, to observe his providence, and to acknowledge his dominion over all events or things which happen in the world; and so far as any of these are neglected, so far are we guilty of ungodliness. Well, then, under this head—

1. Ignorance is a branch of ungodliness; and I name it in the first place because it is the cause of all our disorder in worship and conversation. This is the first cause of all wickedness, to be ignorant of God. The apostle seconds the observation: 3 John 11, 'He that doeth evil hath not seen God.' Certainly he that makes a trade of sin hath not a right sight and sense of God; he knows not God. A true sight and sense of God keepeth the soul from sin. There is nothing that keeps in the fire of religion, nor maintains respect between man and man, nothing that preserves honesty and piety so much, as right thoughts and apprehensions of God. But now generally people are ignorant of God; they know him as blind men do fire. A man that is born blind can tell there is such a thing as fire, because he feels it warm; but what kind of thing it is he that never saw it cannot tell. So

the whole world and conscience proclaim there is a God; the blindest man may see that; but little do they know of his nature and essence, what God is according as he hath revealed himself in the word. Look, as the Athenians built an altar, and the inscription was Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, 'To the unknown God,' Acts 17:23, so do most christians worship an unknown God; and as Christ taxed the Samaritans, John 4:22, 'Ye worship ye know not what,' so generally do people worship they know not what. Ask them what God is and whom they worship, they cannot tell; they are carried on by custom and dark and blind superstition, and they mutter over their prayers to an unknown power; such blind and wild conceits have they of the nature of God till they see him by the light of his own Spirit. This ignorance is sad, because it is a sign of no grace, and it is a pledge of future judgment. In these days of gospel light, it is a sign of no grace: Jer. 31:34, 'They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.' God hath no child so little but he knows his Father. In the days of the gospel, now it is so clearly preached, it is required of the meanest sort as well as those that have the advantages of better education. And it is a pledge of future judgment: 2 Thes. 1:8, Christ will come 'in flaming fire, to render vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.' We have low thoughts of the guilt of ignorance, and think God will not be severe against such. Many ignorant creatures are harmless, and do no wrong; but to live and die in ignorance, is a matter of sad consequence. There is vengeance for pagans that know not God by showers of rain and fruitful seasons; and indeed they principally are intended. Divide men into two sorts, those that have only the light of nature, sense, and reason to guide them, and those that have the light of the gospel: there is vengeance for pagans, that have no other apostles sent to them but those natural apostles of sun, moon, and stars. They had light shining to them in God's works, and they had sense and reason, eyes to see the light; and so they were bound to know the first cause,

and might see God working and guiding all things in the world; but there is much more vengeance for christians, for those that have God's word, the light of faith, and yet shut their eyes against the light. Usually come and talk with men, they will acknowledge they are poor ignorant creatures, and God that made them will save them, though the scripture speaks quite contrary: Isa. 27:11, 'This is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.' God is exceeding angry when all advantages of light are lost. A pagan is ignorant of God, but you are worse, being unteachable. He that hath only sun and moon to teach him shall be damned for his ignorance of God; but if you do not profit by the light of the gospel, to conceive more worthily of the nature and glory of God, your judgment will be greater.

2. We do not honour God as the first cause when we do not depend upon him; that is ungodliness. Trust and dependence is the ground of all commerce between us and God, and it is the greatest homage and respect which we yield to the Creator and first cause. Now, when men can trust any visible creature rather than God, their estates rather than God, they rob him of his peculiar honour. That there is such a sin as trusting in the creature, excluding God, is clear from Job 31:24, 'If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.' Job, to vindicate himself from hypocrisy, reckons up the usual sins of a hypocrite; among the rest this is one, to make gold his confidence. Men are apt to think it the staff of their lives, and stay of their posterity, and ground of their welfare and happiness; and so their hearts are diverted from God, and their trust is intercepted. It is a usual sin, though little thought of, for men to entrench themselves within a great estate, and then think they are safe and secure against all the changes and chances of the present life, and so God is laid aside. Let God offer to entrench us within the

promises, and leave his name in pawn with us, yet we are full of fears and doubts: Prov. 18:10, 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe;' but ver. 11, 'The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.' Such as think themselves safe in a great estate do not acknowledge God as the first cause, which gives being, and sustains all things; and therefore covetousness is called idolatry, Col. 3:5, and a covetous man is called an idolater, Eph. 5:5, not so much because of his love of money, as because of his trust in it. The glutton counteth his belly his god: Phil. 3:19, 'Whose god is their belly;' he mindeth the gratifications of his appetite, yet he doth not trust in his belly cheer; he thinks not to be protected by it; therefore he is not called an idolater, as the covetous, who robbeth God of his trust. We are all apt to make an idol of the creature, and poor men think if they had wealth this were enough to make them happy; they trust in those that have it, which is idolatry upon idolatry. Therefore it is said, Ps. 62:9, 'Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie.' To appearance men of low degree are nothing, and men of high degree are a lie, because we are apt to trust in them. But chiefly it is incident to the rich; they that have riches are apt to trust in riches: Mark 10:23, 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!' compared with ver. 24, 'Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!' Now this is a secret sin. A man doth not think that he makes money his idol, if he doth not pray or offer sacrifices to it, or give it some perceivable worship, and if he use it as familiarly as anything in a house; but this idolatry lies within. Though a man doth not entertain his gold with ceremony, yet there is his trust and confidence that he shall be safe and do well, because he hath such an estate, which he depends upon, and not upon God. We smile at the vanity of the heathens, that worshipped stocks and stones, and idols of gold and silver; and we do worse, but more spiritually, when our trust is

terminated in the creature. Though we do not say to gold, Thou art my confidence, or, You shall deliver me, or, I will put my trust in you, or use any such gross language, yet this is the interpretation of our carriage. A covetous man may speak as basely of wealth as another; he may say, I know gold is but refined earth; but his heart resteth on it as his only refuge and stay, and he thinks he and his children cannot be happy without it; which is a great sin; it sets up another god, chains the heart to the world, and keeps it from good works.

3. We do not honour God as the first cause when we do not observe his providence, either in good or evil, either in our crosses or blessings. The blind world sets up an idol called chance and fortune, and does not acknowledge God at the other end of causes, as swaying all things by his wisdom and power. If evil come to them, they think it is by chance and ill-luck; as the Philistines said, 1 Sam. 6:9, 'It is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.' So profanely do most men judge of providence, and of the evil of the present life, that it is a chance: Isa. 26:11, 'Lord! when thy hand is lifted up they will not see.' Men look to instruments and second causes, and do not regard God. If things go ill, they snarl at the stone, but do not look at the hand of him that throws it; as if all this while God were but an idle spectator and looker-on, and had no hand in all that befalls us. Job doth better: chap. 1:21, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' Chrysostom hath a sweet gloss upon it; he doth not say, ὁ κλέπτης ἀφείλατο, ὁ Χαλδαῖος ἀφείλατο, the thief, the Chaldean, the Sabean, hath taken away, but the Lord. In all afflictions we should look beyond the creature, and not complain of ill-fortune, or chance, or stars, or constellations, or altogether of men, or instruments, or anything on this side God; he is the first cause in any evil that befalls you, therefore see God's hand in it. So also in mercies and blessings, it is ungodliness when we do not see God in them. Wicked men receive

blessings and never look up. They live upon God every moment; they have life, breath, motion, health, and hourly maintenance from him, yet God is not in all their thoughts; as swine raven upon the acorns, and never look to the oak from whence they fall, and so they may enjoy the comfort of the creature, they are content, but never look higher than the next hand. The spouse's eyes are compared to dove's eyes, Cant. 4:1; and some make this gloss upon it (which is pious, though it doth not interpret the place), doves peck, and look upward. When we sip and peck upon every grain of mercy, we should look up and acknowledge God. The Lord complains of this ungodliness in his people: Hosea 2:8, 'For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold.' There cannot be a greater sign of an ungodly spirit than this unthankful profaneness. We all live upon the mere alms of God, have all our comforts and blessings from him; and all that God expects is but acknowledgment, that we should take notice of him as the author of all the good we enjoy. Other creatures live upon God, but they are not capable of knowing the first cause; but he hath given us a mind to know him, and capacities and abilities, therefore this is the rational worship which he expects from us. God hath leased out the world to the sons of men: Ps. 115:16, 'The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men?' But what is the rent God hath reserved to himself? Glory, praise, and acknowledgment. But too usual is that observation true, *Qui majores terras possident, minores census solvunt*—Those that hold the greatest lands usually pay the least rent; so those that enjoy most mercies seldomest acknowledge God; their hearts are full and at ease, and they forget God. Men are most led by outward enjoyments; they love their bodies best, and the comforts of the body most. Now, that we may not want arguments to love and praise God, God tries us by these worldly enjoyments which concern the body, to see if we will acknowledge him; but usually we raven upon the sweet of comfort,



but look not from whence it comes. This was the trial God used to the gentiles, showers of rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness: Acts 14:17, 'Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' Every time thou eatest and drinkest thou shouldst think of God. But alas! seldom do we give God the honour of his providence; we forget God when he remembers us. None more unworthy of any good, and more unthankful to God for it, than man.

4. Another piece of ungodliness is when we do not acknowledge his dominion over all events. If he be the first cause, he will have his government to be acknowledged. How so? By using and undertaking nothing in the course of our affairs till we have asked his leave and blessing. The apostle saith, 1 Tim. 4:4, 5, 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer;' that is, by the word we know our liberty, and in prayer we ask God's leave and blessing in all things that we use. To use another mans goods without his leave is robbery; and so it is to use food, physic, or any creature till we have asked God's leave; all should be sanctified by the word and prayer. When we go about any business, or undertake a journey, or fix our abode in the world, we ought to be inquiring of God; for things that seem to be most trivial and casual, God hath the greatest hand in them, therefore we must still inquire at the oracle. It is a piece of religious manners first to inquire of God; and therefore they are taxed: James 4:13, 'Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; for that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that,' ver. 15. You forget to bid yourselves good-morrow or good-day, or good-speed, when you forget to consult and advise with God in prayer. The heathens would begin nothing

weighty but they would still consult with their gods; for their principle was, the gods regarded greater matters, but took no notice of those of a smaller consequence. Now by this means would the Lord preserve a constant remembrance of himself in the heart of the creature. It keeps up the memory of God in the world to acknowledge him as one that hath an overruling hand in all the businesses and affairs of this world: Prov. 3:6, 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.' The children of God dare not resolve upon any course till they have asked counsel of God. Thus God will be acknowledged as the first cause; and so men are guilty of ungodliness if they do not know him, depend upon him, observe his providence, and acknowledge his dominion over all events in the world.

Secondly, God will be acknowledged as the chiefest good; and so, if we do not often think of him, and delight in communion with him, fear to offend him, and care to please him, all this is ungodliness.

1. If we do not often think of him; if we did not want hearts, we cannot want objects to put us in mind of God: 'He is not far from every one of us,' Acts 17:27. But though God be not far from us, yet we are far from God; and though he be everywhere, where we walk, lie, and sit, yet he is seldom found in our hearts. We are not so near to ourselves as God is to us. Who can keep his breath in his body for a minute if God were not there? But though he be present with us, we are not present with him. There is usually too great a distance between him and our thoughts. God is round about us in the effects of his power and goodness, yet afar off in regard of our hearts and the workings of our spirits: Ps. 10:4, 'God is not in all his thoughts.' Oh! consider how many there are that live upon God, that have daily and hourly maintenance from him, yet regard him not. Wicked men abhor their own thoughts of God, and hate any savoury speech and mention of his name. Look, as the devils believe and tremble, the

more they think there is a God, the more is their horror increased, thus do carnal hearts; and therefore they do all they can to drive God out of their mind. How many trifles do occupy our mind! We muse of nothing unless it be of vanity itself; but God can seldom find any room there; we would fain banish God out of our minds. When David beheld God's works, and looked upon the creation, he cried out, Ps. 104:34, 'My meditation of him shall be sweet.' Oh! it is the spiritual feast and entertainment of a gracious soul to think of God. We cannot put our reason to a better use. None deserves our thoughts more than God, who thought of us before the world was, and still thinks of us. Saith David, Ps. 139:17, 'How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!' It is a great part therefore of ungodliness and ingratitude not to present God with so reasonable a service as a few thoughts, not to turn the thoughts, and set the mind a-work upon the glory, excellency, and goodness of God, that is everywhere present to our eye.

2. We do not honour him as the chiefest good, if we do not delight in communion with him. Friends love to be often in one another's company; and certainly if we did value and prize God, we would say, 'It is good to draw nigh to God,' Ps. 73:28. We would preserve a constant acquaintance between him and us. God hath appointed two ordinances to preserve acquaintance between him and the soul, the word and prayer, which are as it were a dialogue and interchangeable discourse between God and the creature. In the word he speaks to us, and in prayer we speak to him. He conveys his mind to us in the word, and we ask his grace in prayer. In prayer we make the request, and in the word we have God's answer. In prayer we come to inform God with our wants, and seek for his grace, and God answers by his word to salvation. Well, then, when men neglect public or private prayer, or fit and meet opportunities of hearing, they are guilty of ungodliness, for so far they break off communion with God.

Especially if they neglect prayer; that is a duty to be done at all times, a sweet diversion which the soul enjoys with God in private; it is that which answers to the daily sacrifice; and therefore it is said, Ps. 14:2, 'They seek not God;' and ver. 4, 'They do not call upon the Lord.' When men are loath to come into God's presence, whether it be out of love to ease or carnal pleasure; when men care not though God and they grow strange, and seldom hear from one another, this is ungodliness. Our comfort and peace lies in access to God. So for family-worship; when God is neglected in the family, it is a sign men do not delight in God as the chiefest good. Many families call not upon God's name: Jer. 10:25, 'Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name.' From one end of the week to another there is no prayer or worship in the family; the house that should be a church is made a sty; yea, there is not a swine about the house but is better regarded than God; morning and evening they shall have their attendance, but God is neglected and not worshipped.

3. If we do not fear to offend, God will be served with every affection. Love is of use in the spiritual life, so is fear: 2 Cor. 7:1, 'Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' They are both of great use. Love sweetens duties, and fear makes us watchful against sin; love is the doing grace, and fear is the conserving or keeping grace; and therefore this is the honour that God constantly expects from us, that we should always walk in his fear. Oh! think of the pure eyes of his glory that are upon us: Eccles. 12:13, 'Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man;' that is, the sum of all practical godliness. The internal root of all duty and worship is a holy filial fear and reverent awe of God, when as obedient children we dare not grieve God, nor affront him to his face; as Ahasuerus said concerning Haman, Esther 7:8, 'Will he force the queen also before me in the house?' God is

always a looker-on; and can we grieve our good God when he directly looks upon us? But now, when you are secure and careless, and sin freely in thought and foully in act, and without any remorse, you deny God his fear. Fear is a grace of continual use; we cannot be always praying or praising God, or employed in acts of solemn worship and special communion with him, but we must be always in the fear of God. You have not done with God when you have left your requests with him in the morning; you must fear him all the day long: Prov. 23:17, 'Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.' A man hath done with his devotion in the morning, but he hath not done with God. A man should think of him all the day long, in the shop, in the streets; especially when corruptions arise, and we are tempted to folly and filthiness, or any unworthy act, remember God looks on. Thus must we be in the fear of God continually, rise in fear, walk in fear, feed in fear, and trade in fear; it is a grace never out of season.

4. If we do not care to please him, it is ungodliness. If we make it our work and the drift of our lives to find out what may be pleasing and acceptable to God in order to practice, and value our lives for this end only, that we may serve God, it is a sign grace is planted in the heart. But now ungodly men neither care to know the ways of God, nor to walk in them. They that are willingly ignorant, and do not search to know how God will be served and pleased, and make this their work, they do not count God their chiefest good; they search not, that they may not practise; they err not in their mind only, but in their hearts: Ps. 95:10, 'It is a people that do err in their hearts; they have not known my ways.' To err in the mind may be through invincible ignorance; but a man errs in his heart when he doth not desire to know God, and to know his will, and what he must do in worship and conversation, but saith, I do not desire to know God: Job 21:14, 'Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we

desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' Therefore he that doth not make it his great work and the business of his life to find out what God would have him do, he is ungodly. Usually this is found in men half convinced; they have not a mind to know that which they have not a mind to do, and so they are willingly ignorant. But now a godly man makes it the business of his life still to follow God foot by foot, to know more of his mind and will: Rom. 12:2, 'That you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;' Eph. 5:12, 'Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.' A true christian always practiseth what he knows, and still searcheth that he may know more; he would be always more useful for God, and more according to his heart; that is the study, the great business and project of his life, to find out God's will, and then practise it. What shall I do more for God?

Thirdly, God must be acknowledged as the supreme truth and authority; and there, if we be not moved with his promises, with his threatenings and counsels, as the words of the great God, as if he had spoken from heaven by an audible voice; if we do not yield him reverence in his worship, and subject our hearts and lives unto his laws, it is ungodliness.

1. We must receive the counsels of his word with all reverence and veneration, as if God had spoke to us by a voice from heaven. This is to receive the word as the word of God: 2 Thes. 2:10, 'They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.' The heathens received the oracles of their gods with great reverence, and were much moved when they had an oracle; but when the word comes with a mighty convincing power upon the heart, and you are not moved and affected, this argues your ungodliness. So when we can drowsily hear of the great things of heaven, and the death of Christ, and the covenant of grace, and the glorious salvation offered, and are

no more moved than with a fable, or with a dream of rubies dropping down from heaven in the night, this is ungodliness. That there is a great deal of ungodliness in this kind is clear by our neglect of these precious things. If a man should proffer another a thousand pounds for a trifle, and he should not accept it, you would not say it was because he prized that trifle that is not profitable, but because he did not believe the offer. So when God offers heaven and Christ to us upon such easy terms as to part with nothing but our sins, which are better parted with than kept, we do not honour him as the eternal truth, if we do not accept it, but count him a liar; and this is the greatest affront you can put upon God; for 'he that believeth not, God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son,' 1 John 5:10. He that doth not regard the offer of the gospel, certainly he believes it is not true, and so he dishonours God as the supreme truth.

2. If we would honour God as the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, we must reverence him in his worship. God is not only terrible in the high places of the field, and there where he executes his dreadful judgments; and not only so in the depths of the sea, where the wonders of the Lord are seen; but he is also terrible in his holy places: Ps. 68:35, 'O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places.' Then are the hearts of his people filled with most awful apprehensions of his glorious majesty and of his excellent holiness, and this makes them tremble. But now, when we do not come with these awful apprehensions, we do not own God as the supreme majesty; and therefore when they brought him an unbeseeming sacrifice, saith the Lord, Mal. 1:14, 'Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great king, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathens.' This is not becoming my majesty. And the saints of God never feel such self-aborrency and

loathing of themselves as when they are worshipping God. God is even dreadful then when he is most comfortable to his people: Deut. 28:58, 'That thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord thy God.' Thy God! this is the comfortablest name in all the scripture; this is the foundation of our hope, and this puts the saints upon a holy reverence. But now ungodly men come with slight, cold, and careless hearts; their thoughts are upon the shop, and the cart, and the plough, and anywhere else than upon God; 'They draw nigh to him with their lips, but their hearts are removed far from him.' They do not come to him as a great king and supreme majesty and authority of all, and so they dishonour God exceedingly. Our thoughts in worship should be more taken up with his glory.

3. If we would honour God as supreme, there must be a willing subjection of our hearts and lives to his laws. Usually here we stick in a want of conformity thereto. Men that love God as a creator naturally hate him as a lawgiver. Men love him as a giver of blessings, but they would fain live at large. Thoughts that strike at the being of God and doctrines of liberty are welcome to a carnal heart; therefore it is tedious to them to hear of one to call them to account; and it is pleasing to them to think (which is an argument of the highest hatred that can be) that there were no God to call them to a reckoning, that they might let loose the reins to vile affections. We would be absolute, and lords of our own actions. And this subjection must be in heart and life. There must be a subjection of the heart. God's authority is never more undermined than by a mere form of godliness: 2 Tim. 3:5, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' This is the greatest ungodliness that can be; they will not own his authority in their hearts, nor suffer him to have any dominion in their conscience, nor own him without in their actions before men. The heart is his chair of state and chamber of presence; but hypocrites and wicked men rob God of his dominion over the



conscience, therefore hypocrisy is practical blasphemy: Rev. 2:9, 'I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.' Men pretend to obey God, yet blaspheme him in their heart, and refuse the power of that to which they pretend. And the life must be conformed to God's laws. God will be honoured in our conversation, as well as have his throne set up in the conscience; his laws must be visibly obeyed in the sight of men. It is the glory of a commander to be obeyed: Mat. 8:9, 'I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.' So God will have all the world know that he hath his servants at a beck. If he bids them deny and abstain the flesh, oh! they durst not meddle with it; or if he bids them practise holiness, they must do it. His honour is much promoted by your lives. God will have all the world see that he hath called you to his foot, and that he hath an absolute authority and power over the sons of men; they are a people formed for his praise; he looks for glory in this kind.

Fourthly, God will be honoured as the last and utmost end, and so in all acts, natural, moral, and spiritual. If we do not aim at God's glory, we are guilty of ungodliness. This is the proper work of godliness, to refer all we do to the glory of God; and this is the distinction between godliness and holiness; holiness minds the law of God, and implies only a conformity to the law; godliness minds the glory of God, and is the aim of the soul to exalt God: 2 Peter 3:11, 'What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' You see godliness is distinguished from holiness. Godliness refers all we do to God's glory. But more particularly—

1. In natural acts we must have a supernatural aim: 1 Cor. 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the

glory of God.' If we are to take a meal to sustain the body and refresh nature, it is that we may be more serviceable to God. And he that eats and drinks to himself, to his own pleasure, to satisfy his own appetite, and hath no respect to God, he doth but offer a meat-offering and a drink-offering to an idol. And he that traffics for himself, merely to get wealth, and doth not aim at usefulness and serviceableness to God, he is a priest consecrated to mammon, his eating is idolatry: Phil. 3:19, 'Whose God is his belly, and his trading is idolatry,' Mat. 6:24, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'

2. In your moral actions, Eph. 6, where all moral duties are reciprocally set down, as duties of husbands and wives, masters and servants, parents and children. The apostle presseth them 'to do all as in and to the Lord;' not merely that they may live together in contentment and peace, but they must walk in their relations so as God may have honour. A christian by an excellent art turns his second-table duties into first-table duties, and makes his civil commerce a kind of religious worship.

3. So in all spiritual acts. The whole ordination of the spiritual life must be to God; 'I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God,' Gal. 2:19. All the motions and tendencies of the soul are to advance God and glorify God. In the very spiritual internal actions and reachings forth of the soul after God, why do I desire to have grace and pardon? That God may be glorified, that must be the last end. Our desires can never be regular in asking grace till they suit with God's end in giving grace. Now what are God's ends in giving grace? Eph. 1:6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.' All that God aims at is to make grace glorious, and that grace may carry away all the praise. So in your desires of pardon, heaven, and salvation, you are to desire them that God may be glorified in your salvation, and in the

pardon of your sins. So in our external actions, prayer, worship, preaching, whatever we do. In sacred things it is dangerous to look askint, and to serve ourselves, our own lusts, our covetousness or pride, upon the worship of God; this is to put dung in God's own cup. It were a mighty affront to a king to fill his cup full of excrements. Nothing alienates the heart from God so much as self-respect. God hath given us many things, but he hath reserved the glory of all to himself; as Pharaoh said to Joseph, Gen. 41:40, 'Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou.' This is the first branch of ungodliness, the negative part, when we deny God his due honour.

Secondly, For the positive part. Positive ungodliness is more gross when we put an actual contempt and scorn upon God. We are guilty of this when we slight his providence and disobey his laws.

1. When we slight his providence: Heb. 12:5, 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.' Men harden themselves against corrections, and count light of them. Men cannot endure to have their anger despised. When the three children despised Nebuchadnezzar's threatenings, it is said, Dan. 3:19, 'Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.' It is a mighty affront to God and a contempt of him when we provoke him while we are under his afflicting hand, if in despite of God we break out into sin when he hedgeth up our way with thorns: 2 Chron. 28:22, 'And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord; this is that king Ahaz.'

2. When we are disobedient to his laws. Open irreligion is a despite to God, when we cast off his yoke. This is ungodliness in the height, when God is not only neglected, but rejected: Jer. 2:31, 'We are lords; we will come no more unto thee.' We would be absolute masters of our own wills. This was the first bait: Gen. 3:5, 'Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' This endeth in open profaneness, which groweth upon men by degrees; as Lactantius said of Lucian, *Nec diis nec hominibus pepercit; ad impietatem in deos in homines adjunxit injuriam*—He spared neither the gods nor men; to his impiety against the gods he added injuries to men; he was both ungodly and unrighteous.

Use. Would we not then be counted ungodly, let us take heed of all these sins, deny them all.

1. How else will you look God in the face at the day of judgment? Ps. 1:5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' He shall not be able to lift up his head: 2 Peter 3:11, 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' The day of judgment is to take vengeance of ungodliness: Jude 15, 'To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they I have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.' It is the day wherein God, that is now hidden behind the curtain of the heavens, cometh forth to vindicate his honour.

2. Great judgments shall befall them in this world: 2 Peter 2:6, 'And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them examples unto those that should live ungodly;' and 1 Peter 4:18, 'And if the righteous scarcely

be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?, 'God's jealousy is great: Isa. 59:17, 'For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for a clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.' God is not only jealous of his honour, but he will be known and plainly profess himself so to be; the cloak of a man being his outward garment. No such visible providences as against ungodliness. So Exod. 34:13, 'The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.' That is fit to make the name of a thing which distinguisheth it from all other things of the same kind. This distinguisheth the true God from all gods whatsoever. Others are so far from being jealous gods, that though their worshippers went to never so many gods, yet to them it was all one; they were good-fellow gods, and would admit of partners; when they brought their gifts, like common whores, they received them without more ado. The true God will admit of no partners; this he will severely punish, and do them as much harm as ever he did do them good.

3. It is the great aim of the gospel to promote godliness: 1 Tim. 3:6, 'And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness;' 1 Tim. 6:3, 'If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to whole some words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine that is according to godliness.' So far men are christians as they are godly. Men might be ungodly at a cheaper rate when they had not so much means. As the angel said to Jacob, Gen. 32:26, 'Let me go for the day breaketh.' Now grace appeareth, we should deny ungodliness.

4. Ungodliness is the root of all irregular courses: Gen. 20:11, 'I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake.' Godliness is the bulwark of laws and of all honest discipline; there can be no honesty without piety. The first

part of the law provideth for respects to God, as being the proper foundation for respects to our neighbour. Without the knowledge of the true God the heart cannot be clean: Prov. 19:2, 'Also that the soul be without knowledge is not good.'

The means are these—

[1.] Purge the heart from all principles of ungodliness. There are many gross maxims, as, that it is folly to be precise; that they have a good heart towards God; that it were better when there was less knowledge; that it is an easy matter to repent, and have a good heart towards God; that it is in vain to serve God; that thoughts are free; let us carry it fair before men, and all will be well; when men have done their best, petty sins are not to be stood upon. These are the implicit thoughts and maxims of ungodly men, which are the ground of all sottish practices. Purge your hearts from them.

[2.] Suppress all ungodly thoughts and motions, all gross thoughts of God: Ps. 14:1, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' Shame may lay a restraint upon the tongue, but such thoughts and whispers do arise in the heart. Again, that God is not so harsh as he is represented: Ps. 50:21, 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.' That God cannot see through the dark cloud: Job 22:12, 13, 'Is not God in the height of heaven, and behold the height of the stars how high they are? And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?' These are the thoughts of carnal and ungodly men. Have a care of giving them the least entertainment; suppress them when they first rise in the heart.

[3.] Mortify vile affections. As the air in some countries is seldom clear, but dark and foggy, so it is with the minds of carnal men. Vile affections steaming in the heart cloud the understanding and

judgment, and beget ungodly thoughts; as a filthy stomach sends up fumes to the head.

[4.] Keep close to God's institutions; these keep up his honour and preserve his memorial. Divine truths breed godliness. False worship and multitude of ceremonies darken the nature of God. Images beget a gross opinion of God, as if he were a poor senseless thing that could do little good or harm. God knows what is best, and how he will be worshipped; do not presume to be wiser than God; his own institutions keep up the repute of his nature and essence.

[5.] Let us exercise ourselves unto godliness: 1 Tim. 4:7, 'But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.' Give God the honour due to him; let him have your love, delight, trust, and fear; do all things with an aim to his glory; and worship him not out of custom, but out of conscience. So should we exercise ourselves unto godliness.

## **SERMON V**

And worldly lusts, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

GRACE, that teacheth us to deny ungodliness, doth also teach us to deny worldly lusts. These are fitly coupled. Ungodliness feedeth worldly lusts, and worldly lusts increase ungodliness.

1. Ungodliness feedeth worldly lusts, because when we leave God, the chiefest good, then our hearts go a-whoring after every base comfort: Jer. 2:13, 'My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewn them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.' If men are ignorant of God, or do not seek after God, the heart lies open to every object; as when

a worthy match is refused upon some groundless dislike, in a fond humour the next suitor is entertained, how base and unworthy soever. It cometh to pass partly by man's wickedness. When God is refused, anything serves the turn instead of God, to put the greater affront and despite upon him. And partly by God's just judgment. To evidence our baseness and folly, God suffereth us to match our affections with anything that comes next to hand.

2. On the other side, worldly lusts cause ungodliness, for they withdraw our hearts from God, and deliver them up to the creature; as a sensual man that loveth his pleasure maketh his belly his god: Phil. 3:19, 'Whose god is his belly;' and a base-hearted worldling, who suffereth outward profits to intercept his care, his delight, and his trust, makes mammon his god; and therefore he is fitly called 'an idolater,' Eph. 5:5; and a proud man makes himself his god, and so is both idol and idolater; as the sea sendeth forth waves, and then sucketh them into itself. All their esteem, all their restless projects, are to exalt themselves and set up themselves; and so 'they set their heart as the heart of God,' Ezek. 28:2. All that they think, speak, and do, is to set up the idol of self, their own worthiness and esteem. So that if we would deny one, we must deny both; not only ungodliness, but worldly lusts. A man that is given to worldly lusts will surely be ungodly; and a man that is ungodly will be given to worldly lusts.

I shall prosecute this second branch in this method. I shall inquire—

1. What are worldly lusts.
2. How they are to be denied.
3. The difficulty of denying them.



4. The grounds or encouragements so to do, or what course grace teacheth to draw us off from them.

First, What are worldly lusts? Two terms are to be explained lusts, and worldly.

1. By lusts are meant carnal affections, or the risings of corrupt nature, or all sorts of evil desires; for it is usual in the New Testament to express sins by lusts; partly because lusts are more corrupted than the thoughts, or than the counsels are, as appears by constant experience. There is more light left in the heart of man concerning God than there is love to God; and many are convinced of better that do worse; they see more than they are able to perform, because they are overset by their lusts. Reason giveth good counsel, but it is overmastered and disregarded; as in a mutiny the gravest cannot be heard. And we see that, when we give counsel to another in a thing in which we have no interest, we give commonly good counsel; but when the matter concerneth ourselves, we act otherwise, because our desires carry us another way. Therefore the scripture expresseth sin rather by lusts than by counsels and imaginations; partly because lusts are the most vigorous commanding and swaying faculty of the soul. The desiring part of the soul is as the stern to the whole man; it is either the best or the worst part of the man. A man is as his lusts are; for it is desire that draws us to action. We do not act because we know, but because we desire; as the eye doth not carry the body to a far country, but the feet. All affections have their rise from some inclination and tendency of the desire towards the object. *Amor meus pondus meum*—It is love or desire that poiseth and inclineth the heart. We are directed by the judgment, but pressed and carried to a thing by the heart. So Austin, *Non faciunt bonos vel malos mores, nisi boni vel mali a mores*—A man is not good or evil by his thoughts, but by his desires. It is true, before man sinned his

desires and appetites were under rule, and did not stir but at the command of reason; but now since the fall desire doth all in the soul, and man consulteth with his desires rather than anything else, and there all action and pursuit beginneth. Thus you see the reasons why the word lusts is used in this case.

2. The next term is, 'Worldly lusts.' Sometimes they are called fleshly lusts, and sometimes worldly lusts. Fleshly lusts: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.' They are so called because they are most of all manifested in those things that belong to the body or the flesh. But here they are called 'worldly lusts,' and that for three reasons. Partly because they are cherished by the greater sort of men, which greater sort of men is counted by the name of the world: 1 John 5:19, 'The whole world lies in wickedness;' that is, the opposite malignant world. In this sense these lusts are called worldly, because they are most rife in the multitude, or greater part of the world, who only regard the present life. Partly because they are stirred up by worldly objects, by pleasures, honours, and profits: 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,' 2 Peter 1:14. He doth not name the objects, but the lusts, because the world becometh hurtful only by our own lusts. The world affordeth the object, and we find the sin; as the garden yieldeth the flower, and the spider sucketh the poison out of it. Partly because they serve only for a worldly use and purpose, to detain us in the employments of the present life; so that we have no heart, no desire, no leisure to think of any other, or to apply ourselves to better things. Lusts depress the heart, and sink it down to the present world, and the contentments thereof, and therefore called 'worldly lusts.'

You see now what is meant by the terms here used. But that you may conceive a little better of the thing itself, let me give you a distinction

or two.

First, These worldly lusts are sometimes carried out, either to things simply unlawful, or else to lawful things in an unknown manner.

1. There are some desires altogether evil, in what sense soever you take them; as a desire of murder, theft, adultery, revenge: 'The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness,' &c., Gal. 5:19; that is, these gross and brutish lusts are easily discerned, not only by grace, but by the light of nature; therefore they must not be regulated, but extinguished, as a venomous plant must be plucked up by the roots. You cannot qualify them; it is a sin to be moderate herein, to be a moderate adulterer, a moderate drunkard; here the least is too much, these lusts must be wholly destroyed.

2. There are other desires, that are natural and necessary for the preservation of mankind, as to eat and drink, lawfully to provide for our families and posterity. Here men do ordinarily sin by excess, by desiring these things otherwise than they should and more than they should, and not for the causes that they should. Now these natural and necessary desires are not to be extinguished, but governed, and to be kept under the coercion of prudence and honesty. Honesty must restrain them, that they may not exceed their bounds, and so degenerate, lest a desire be turned into a lust, and its vehemency withdraw the heart from God. As we know natural heat from unnatural; it is so temperately dispersed that the constitution of nature is not disturbed or oppressed by it, but unnatural heats oppress nature; so desires, as long as they do not disturb the soul, they are not hurtful; but when they exceed their bounds, they are to be under the coercion of reason: 1 Cor. 6:12, 'All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.' He that will do

all that he may will do more than he should. It is good to keep at a distance from the power of sin, not always to walk on the brink, lest we become slaves to lust.

Secondly, Take one distinction more of these lusts. It is intimated by the apostle, 1 John 2:16, 'All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;' this is the sum and contents of the corrupt world. Let us see the meaning, and then make some observations on the place, 'All that is in the world.'

You will say, How can the apostle speak thus? There are sun, moon, and stars, and glorious creatures in the world; why doth the apostle instance only in the sink and kennel of the world?

I answer—The world is taken for the corrupt world; all that is of price, all that is of account with carnal men, all that takes up their care and thoughts, is lust and vanity; either the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, or the pride of life. He doth not speak of the natural world, which is full of glorious creatures, but of the corrupt world, which is opposite to the kingdom of Christ, that is full of lusts and sins.

But let us see a little particularly what are the contents of this world —(1.) The lust of the flesh; (2.) The lust of the eyes; (3.) The pride of life.

1. 'The lust of the flesh.' Flesh is sometimes taken in a large sense for corrupt nature, for the whole dunghill of corruption that we brought with us into the world; and the lusts of the flesh for the workings of this corruption, the reeking of this dunghill, whether in the understanding by thoughts or carnal counsel, or in the will by carnal desires; so it is taken at large. But here it is taken more strictly for the corruptions of the sensual appetite, or for the immoderate desire

of soft and delicate living, and for sensuality, or the intemperate use of pleasures, meats and drinks, and such things as gratify the flesh.

2. 'The lusts of the eye,' some expound by curiosity, others by wantonness. Indeed the eye is the usual broker of temptations. The eye lets out the lust, and lets in the temptation; all kind of lusts make use of it. But I suppose covetousness is here intended, or an inordinate desire of profit. When we look upon the bravery of the world, or upon money, or anything that pleaseth this kind of corruption, the eye seduceth the heart as soon as we look upon a thing. This is charged upon the eye: Eccles. 1:8, 'All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing;' Prov. 27:20, 'Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.' All strong desires look out by the eye, especially insatiable avarice.

3. The next part of the corrupt world is 'pride of life,' so called because it cannot be kept in, but is manifested in our lives; or rather, because it is a sin of a diffusive nature, that spreads itself throughout the whole life of man. Whereas other sins are confined and limited, he ascribeth a universal and unlimited influence to pride. The lusts of the flesh, they are but for the flesh, to content the body; the lusts of the eye, there he noteth the instrument, the eye purveyeth for the heart; but pride of life, there he ascribes a universal and unlimited influence, and calls it 'pride of life,' because it taints every action, it serves itself of every enjoyment, it mingles with other lusts, the whole life is but sphere enough for pride to discover itself. Other vices destroy only their contraries; covetousness destroys liberality; drunkenness, sobriety; but pride destroyeth all; it runs through all enjoyments, wit, strength, beauty, riches, apparel, learning, grace. There is nothing so low but it yields fuel to pride; the hair, which is but an excrement, is often hung out as a bush and ensign of vanity.

And there is nothing so high and sacred but pride can abuse it; like mistletoe, it groweth upon any tree, but most upon the best. Well, then, all worldly lusts are reduced to these three heads, for he says, 'All that is in the world.' Usually we understand by worldliness nothing but covetousness, or an inordinate desire of worldly profit; but the corrupt world is of a larger extent. Pride is a worldly lust, and so is sensuality, or a love of pleasure. For look, as the ocean is but one, yet several parts of it have divers names, so worldliness is but one sin, yet, having divers kinds, it hath several names. Those that mind honours are guilty of worldly lusts, 'Pride of life.' Those that mind riches, are guilty of worldly lusts, 'The lusts of the eye.' Those that are voluptuous, and mind pleasure, are still guilty of worldly lusts, 'The lusts of the flesh.' This is, as one saith, the world's trinity, the roots of all other sins, against which we should bend the main endeavours of our souls. You do nothing in mortification till the axe be laid to the root of these sins, sensuality, covetousness, pride.

[1.] 'The lusts of the flesh,' viz., sensuality, or an inordinate desire of pleasures. It is the happiness of beasts to enjoy pleasure with more liberty than man can, and without remorse of conscience; and therefore a heathen could say, 'He is not worthy the name of a man (*qui unum diem velit esse in voluptate*) that would spend one day in pleasure: Other sins deprive us of the image of God, but the lusts of the flesh deprive us of our own image; they unman us of all desires. These bring most shame, because it is the lowest, basest act of self-love, and the matter of them is gross and burthensome, and they do emasculate and quench the bravery of the spirit, and embase it, and keep the soul at the greatest distance from God and spiritual employments. How can they look after God and heaven whose hearts are sunk in their bellies? The lusts of the flesh quench the vigour of nature, how much more do they hinder the powerful operations of the Spirit? Jude 19, 'Sensual, not having the Spirit.' The Spirit is

divine and active, and raises the soul to higher things; but sensual persons have no radiancy of graces nor vigour of gifts. Nay, in some sense this is at the bottom, and is the root of every sin; it is the devil's bait, and the sauce of every temptation. Men take a pleasure in their proud thoughts, in their worldly and carnal practices. Other sins are rooted in sensuality and love of pleasure. Again, it is a sin most opposite to the gravity and severity of religion. A garish frothy spirit, that is addicted to carnal delights, is not fit for such a grave thing as religion, which requires a solid grave frame of spirit; and yet, as contrary as it is, it is very natural to us. We had but two common parents, Adam and Noah, and both fell by pleasure, they miscarried by appetite; Adam by eating, and Noah by drinking. And when the apostle gives us a catalogue of the lusts of the flesh, Gal. 5:19–21, it is filled up in a great part with the fruits of sensuality, as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness, revellings. We are mighty prone to this, because pleasures are tasted by the senses, and virtue is found out by searches of reason; therefore we are very apt to be carried away by our senses. You must subdue this, or else you are utterly unfit for religion or any high work. The heart of man is melted and dissolved, and all vigour is quenched, and the soul doth grow gross and dreggy, not fit for the chaste consolations of the gospel, for the flagons of spiritual wine, for the fulness of the Spirit, and for the sweetness of the hidden manna.

[2.] 'The lust of the eyes,' or an inordinate desire of riches, when we can see nothing but we must wish for it; as Ahab falleth sick for Naboth's vineyard. The heart of man naturally is all for a present good, and therefore nothing is more delightful and pleasing to our corruption than the glory and bravery of the world. Heaven, as it is set forth, is a fine place to a carnal heart, but it is to come; so men look upon it but as a dream and notion, they shall have time enough to consider it hereafter; but the world is at hand. This was Demas'

bait, the present world: 2 Tim. 4:10, 'Demas hath forsaken me, having loved the present world,' Things at a distance, though never so glorious, lose somewhat of their worth and esteem because they are so: 2 Peter 1:9, 'They are blind, and cannot see afar off.' All natural men are troubled with a short sight; they can see nothing but what is before them; they can see no excellency in things to come. Without the perspective of faith we cannot look within the veil, and therefore hunt after present interests with all earnestness and greediness. Covetousness is a radical evil: 1 Tim. 6:10, 'The love of money is the root of all evil.' A soul is fit for anything that is subdued and captivated with the love of the world. Look, what the root is to the tree, that is covetousness to all sin. All the branches are nourished with the sap which the root sucketh from the ground; so this is that which maintains the carnal state. Covetousness is a sin more dangerous, because all other evils bewray themselves by some foul action, which bringeth shame and remorse of conscience, and therefore they are sooner wrought upon; but this is close and reserved; men are more serious than profane. Oh! but this must be renounced. Lessen your esteem of worldly things; they are not your portion. Christ gave the bag to the worst of the apostles, and it brought him to the halter.

[3.] The next radical evil, or worldly lust, is 'pride of life.' This grows upon anything, gifts, graces, parts, estate. Paul's revelations were like to puff him up: 2 Cor. 12:7, 'Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.' It is a sin that sticks very close to us. It was the main ingredient in Adam's disobedience, and still it runs in the blood. Pride is natural; we suck it in with our milk. There is pride in every sin, a lifting up of the creature against the creator: 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of



God, neither indeed can be,' Rom. 8:7; and therefore the great work of grace is to subdue the pride of the spirit, not only to sanctify, but to humble us. Look, as sensuality is the great corruption of the brutish part or appetite, so pride is of our understanding or the angelical part. Man is in part an angel and in part a beast; his appetite he hath in common with the beasts, but his understanding in common with angels. Now look, as inordinate love of pleasure is the corruption of the brutish part, so is pride the corruption of the angelical part. By being sensual we sink as low as the beasts; and by being proud we lift up our hearts as the heart of God. Sensual men are called beasts: 2 Peter 2:12, 'These, as unnatural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.' And the worldly and covetous are called mere men: 1 Cor. 3:3, 'Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' But by pride we are made devils: 1 Tim. 3:6, 'Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil;' when we are puffed up with self-conceit, and do all we do for self-esteem. This is one of the last sins we shake off; we leave it not till we come to heaven; and therefore it is mentioned in the last place. One of the heathens doth compare it to our shirt, which we put off last. In heaven only, when we are most holy, we are most humble. It is a sin that encroacheth upon God's prerogative, therefore mightily hated by God: Prov. 6:16, 17, 'These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination to him: A proud look,' &c.; Prov. 8:13, 'Pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate.' Pride is as much hated by God as sensuality by us, and infinitely more.

Secondly, What is it to deny these worldly lusts? or how far they must be denied? There are three degrees in this denial—they must be prevented and kept from rising, suppressed and kept from growth, and, which is an inferior degree, they must not be accomplished, but

kept from execution, if they do prevail upon the heart and gain the consent. Suitable to these three degrees there are three duties required of a christian—mortification, that we may prevent them; watchfulness, that we may suppress them; and christian resolution, that we may not accomplish them, and suffer them to break out into act.

1. The top and highest degree of this denial, to deny worldly lusts, is to keep them from rising, and prevent the very workings of lust or pride. The scripture doth press us not only to abstain from the sin, but the lust: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.' Many keep themselves free from the acts of sin when their hearts boil with lusts, and carnal desires, and thoughts of envy, and proud imaginations; therefore we must deaden the very root, prevent the breaking out of the lust: Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.' We are to mortify the inward affections, that, if it be possible, we may not so much as have a temptation or lust stirring; as Luther said he had not a temptation to covetousness. Prevention is the life of policy, and better than deliverance. He deserves great praise that freeth a city from the enemies when they have beleaguered it; but he deserveth greater that so fortifieth a place that the enemies dare not assault it. It is somewhat to keep off lusts, but it is more to keep them down, so to deaden the affections, and exercise ourselves unto godliness, that it cannot have room to work. She is chaste that doth check an unclean solicitation; but she is more worthy of praise whose grave carriage hindereth all assaults. So should we be constantly mortified, and exercise ourselves to godliness, and deaden the root of sin, that the devil may despair of entrance, and be discouraged from making his approaches. It is a step to victory to hope to prevail. *Possunt, quia posse videntur.* Resistance is good, but yet utter abstinence is a duty,

and falls under a gospel precept; as much as we can we should prevent the rising of any carnal thought or disobedient desire.

2. The next degree is timely to suppress them, to conquer lusts when we cannot curb and wholly keep them under. We must keep a watchful eye and a hard hand over our lusts, dash Babylon's brats against the wall, take the little foxes, smother sin in the conception, and disturb the birth; as the apostle speaks of the conceiving of sin, James 1:15, 'When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.' Look, as it is a great sin to quench the Spirit's motions, so it is also to be negligent in watching over your hearts, not to take notice of the first thoughts and risings of sin. The little sticks kindle first, and set the great ones a-fire; so lusts kindle first, and then they break out into a flame, and make way for greater sins to come in upon the soul. When a country was infested with hurtful birds, and they consulted the oracle how to destroy them, it was answered, *Nidos eorum ubique destruendos*; their nests were to be destroyed. We must crush the cockatrice's eggs, and not dwell upon sin in our thoughts. If there arise a wanton thought, a lustful glance, a distrustful or revengeful injection, it should be cast out with loathing and detestation. Every lust should have a check from the contrary principle: Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.' We have often experience that the flesh lusteth against the spirit; we should have experience also of the spirit's lusting against the flesh; deny it harbour. We cannot hinder the bird from flying over our heads, but we must not suffer it to rest and nestle. So many times corruption will get the start, though we mortify it never so much; but we must not suffer it to root in the heart, to increase and grow there. If carnal thoughts and desires arise in the heart, they must not rest there; let it be only a motion, let it not gain consent. David chides away his distrustful thoughts: Ps. 11:1, 'In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?' It is a rebuke

to his own thoughts and fears; no other speaker is introduced. With such indignation should we rise up against every carnal suggestion, Avaunt evil thoughts, distrustful fears, fleshly counsels. Remember these very intervening thoughts are sins before God, though no effect should follow; therefore do not give them harbour and entertainment. For a man to have thoughts to betray his country, or to have communication with the enemy, is a crime punishable with death, though it come not to execution. It is done in God's sight, if it be resolved on; as God accounted Abraham to have offered up Isaac because he intended it: Heb. 11:17, 'By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac'

3. Let not worldly lusts be put in execution. If thou hast neglected mortification and deadening thy affections, if sin hath got the start of thee, and gained the consent of thy soul, yet at least restrain the practice. If the conception be not disturbed the birth will follow: James 1:15, 'Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.' There are the works of the flesh that follow the lusts of the flesh: Gal. 5:19, 'Now the works of the flesh are manifest,' &c. Therefore it is good to put a stop, at least not to suffer lusts to break out: Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' We should mortify the lusts of the soul, but if that cannot be, then prevent the deeds of the body. Though lust grieves the Spirit of God, yet the work besides the grief brings dishonour to God, gives an ill example, brings scandal to religion, makes way for an habit and proneness to sin; therefore to act it is the worst of all. See what the prophet saith: Micah 2:1, 'Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds; when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.' Mark, it is naught to harbour the motion, to plot, to devise evil, to muse upon sin; but it is worse to practise, because every act strengtheneth the inclination, as a brand that hath been once in the fire is more ready to burn again;

and we know not how far lust may carry us when we give it scope and leave to work. Therefore it is good to interpose by a strong resolution, and to cry out for strength, and to continue fighting, that we may not be utterly foiled.

Thirdly, To show the difficulty of this denial of deadening, suppressing, and hindering the execution of worldly lusts. There are many things which will solicit for lusts, and plead hard, so that we have need of a great deal of grace to give them the denial; there is nature, custom, example, and Satan.

1. Nature, that is strongly inclined to close with worldly lusts. A carnal and worldly disposition is very natural to us, as for a stone to move downward, or fire to move upward. Now the course of nature is not easily broken and diverted; if it be hindered a while, it will return again. That these worldly lusts are rooted in our nature is clear from many scriptures. Ever since Adam turned from the creator to the creature, he hath left this disposition in all his children that come of his loins, that their hearts hang off from God towards the creature. The nature we have from Adam is a carnal nature, which favours and affects things that are here below; and therefore it is the great work of grace to cure this disposition, to take us from the world; first our hearts, then our bodies. It is made an effect of the new birth: 1 John 5:4, 'Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world;' and 2 Peter 1:4, 'By which we are made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' Heavenliness follows grace; there is something divine, a higher birth than that we receive from Adam, else we should live as other men do. There is the spirit of the world, and the Spirit of God. Now natural men are endowed with the spirit of the world; they use their souls only as a purveyor for the body, to turn and wind in the world, to feed high, to shine in worldly pomp, to affect honours and great

places; these things we learn without a master; we bring these dispositions into the world with us. Therefore to deny worldly lusts is to row against the stream, to roll the stone upward, to go quite contrary to the course and current of nature. When the apostle speaks of the new nature, he calls it 'a putting off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,' Eph. 4:22.

2. Custom, which is another nature. Carnal affections are not only born with us, but bred up with us; we are acquainted with them from our infancy, and so they plead prescription. Religion comes afterward, and therefore very hard it must needs be to renounce our lusts, because they have the start of grace. The first years of human life are merely governed by the senses, which judge of what is sweet, and not of what is good; whence it cometh to pass that when a man is come to that age wherein he beginneth to have the use of reason, he can hardly change his custom and alter his course of life, and therefore continueth to live as he hath begun; still the senses act in the first place. Earthly contentments are present to our sense, the other only to our faith; these are before our eyes, and we still see the need and use of them. We know how hard it is to break a custom, especially if it yield any pleasure or profit: Jer. 13:23, 'How can ye do good that are accustomed to do evil?'

3. Example increaseth sin, though it doth not cause it. At first sin is natural; it is not caused by imitation, but yet imitation doth much increase sin: Isa. 6:5, 'I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;' that is a snare certainly. So we are born worldly, and the greatest part of those men with whom we do converse they are all for present satisfaction: 'There are many that say, Who will show to us any good?' Ps. 4:6. The multitude are for worldly wealth and profit. A mortified man is rare; one that renounces interests and

contentments is a wonder in the world: 1 Peter 4:4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot.' Therefore this is a great snare to the soul; we are in danger to miscarry by example as well as by lust; for men will say, Why should not we do as others do? There are but a few that are otherwise given, and the world thinks them to be mopish, precise, and singular. The greatest part seek worldly good. We easily contract contagion and taint one from another, and learn to be carnal and worldly. There are few heavenly and mortified christians, and men think these do thus and thus, and hope to be saved. We that have the same nature learn the same manners. Surely there is somewhat in the world, or else these wise men would not follow it so earnestly.

4. Satan, he joins issue with our lusts, and makes them more violent; he finds the fire in us, and then blows up the flames. Therefore carnal men are said to walk after the prince of the power of the air, in fulfilling the will of the flesh and the mind: Eph. 2:3, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' Satan hath a hand in it; he presents objects, poisons the fancy, and stirs up those corrupt and carnal motions; therefore the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 7:5, 'Lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency.' He marks our temper, and to what we are flexible and pliable, what is our sin, and then he joins issue with it; when Satan seeth our carnal affections run that way, he makes an advantage of it. As when the matter of a tempest is prepared, the devil joins and makes it more terrible and violent, so he doth deal here with our corruptions; when he seeth our hearts strongly carried out either to the delights, pleasures, or honours of the world, he blows up the fire he finds in us into a flame. Well, then,

to deal with nature, custom, example, Satan, this is hard; all these plead for worldly lusts.

Fourthly, Upon what grounds and encouragements are we to deny worldly lusts? How doth grace teach us to deny them? Partly by way of diversion, partly by way of opposition; and partly by way of argument, discourse, and persuasion.

1. By diversion, acquainting us with a better portion in Christ. The mind of man must have some oblectation and delight. Love is a strong affection, and cannot remain idle in the soul; it must run out one way or another. Look, as water in a pipe must have a vent, therefore, it runs out at the next leak, so we take up with the world because it is next at hand, and we know no better things. Well, then, grace for cure goes to work by diversion. Why should we look after these things when better are showed to us in Christ? Grace acquainteth us with pardon of sin, with the sweetness of God's love in Christ, with the comfort of forgiveness, with the spiritual delight that is in communion with God, with the hopes of glory. And look, as the woman of Samaria, John 4:28, when she was acquainted with Christ, left her pitcher, so when grace acquainteth us with Christ, and draws out the stream of our affections that way, the course of them is diverted and turned from the world. Why should you look after these things, when you have a better portion? Rom. 13:14, there the apostle describes this diversion, or turning the stream another way: 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof,' If Christ be put on and take up the heart, if he be delighted in as the treasure of the soul, lusts will not engross so much of our care and esteem. Get Christ as near the heart as you can; for those that are acquainted with him and his sweetness, with pardon, peace, and grace, they will lose their savour and relish of these things. It is an ill sign when we have not lost our savour and



taste of carnal things; it is a sign we are not much acquainted with Christ. It is no wonder for a man that knows no better fare to love coarse diet; and so it is no wonder that one that never tasted of the sweetness of hidden manna should long for the garlic and flesh-pots of Egypt.

2. Grace goes to work by way of opposition; it planteth opposite principles in the heart and maketh use of an opposite power. It planteth opposite principles: we have a new divine nature, and so escape the corruptions of the world through lust: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust.' Lusts follow the nature; as the nature is, so are the desires. The old man is full of deceitful and carnal lusts, and the new man is full of spiritual and heavenly desires. Then it makes use of an opposite power, of the help and supply of the Spirit of God: Gal. 5:16, 'Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' There are two principles, flesh and spirit, that are always warring one upon another, and that weaken one another. The Spirit, as a never-failing spring of holy thoughts, desires, and endeavours, doth dry up the contrary issue and spring of corruption. So Rom. 8:13, 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' The mortifying of the body of sin must be done through the Spirit. A natural man may see better, but without the Spirit's help he can do nothing. All the reason in the world will not tame lust. We may declaim against it, but nothing in heaven or earth will change our dispositions, or work out our corruptions, but only the Spirit of God. We have by the Spirit not only direction, but a continued influence and supply of power.

3. Grace goes to work by way of argument and persuasion. Grace out-reasons and out-pleads lust, and so it cannot obtain a grant from the

soul, but is denied. The chief argument which grace urgeth is the unsuitableness of lust to our condition, that so it may shame the soul. Those things that become us while we are children, as toys and rattles, will not become us when we are men; so certainly those things that suited well enough with us while we were mere men, become us not when we are christians: 1 Peter 4:1–3, 'He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God: for the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries;' Rom. 13:11, 'And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep.' It is high time to leave worldly lusts. For a man after grace to be addicted to lusts, it is a relapse into a spiritual disease; and in all diseases, relapses you know are dangerous; as a man that falls into a distempered heat, after he is recovered out of a fever: 1 Peter 1:14, 'As obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.' These were your former lusts, when you were under spiritual distempers, and were only fit for you then.

But how are they unseemly and unsuitable to our condition?

[1.] They are unsuitable to our privileges, and to our interest in the death of Christ: Rom. 6:2, 'How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' He argues not *ab impossibili*, but *ab incongruo*; it is an unfit thing for such to live in sin. We disparage the death of Christ when we are not the better but the worse for it. Hath he redeemed us from sin that we might yet serve it? Did he humble himself for our sakes that we should be proud? Did he put such contempt on the world that we should loosen the reins to worldly lusts? Was he at all

this pains to make us worse? You hereby put a contumely and reproach upon Christ's death, and disparage his purchase.

[2.] It is contrary to the example of his life. We do not worship the god of this world, nor mammon, but Christ. Christ by his own choice hath put a disgrace on the world. He chose a mean estate, not out of necessity, but design. He came not in worldly pomp: Mat. 8:20, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;' John 18:36, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Who is more able to judge what is best, we or Christ? John 17:14, 'They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.' Who is fitter to choose, or wiser to choose, Christ or we? Who is in an error, Christ or we? If there was so much in the world as we fancy, Christ was in an error to despise it.

[3.] It is contrary to our hopes; we look for better things. It is a most lamentable thing to see a christian, that professeth the assurance of a better life, to lie digging like a mole in the earth: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, that war against the soul.' Worldly men are fastened to things present, but the children of God do bend and tend to things to come. Worldly men do not look for better things, and therefore they are more to be excused. We have cause to blush every time we think of our condition. What are you? whence came you? whither are you going? You are passengers to heaven; why do you stick and linger by the way? Something we may take for our refreshment as men that pass through a field of corn rub the ears as they go; as the angel roused Elijah: 1 Kings 19:7, 'Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for thee.' You that affect to tarry in a foreign country, have you a Father in heaven? Would a traveller hang his room in an inn? Will he buy such things as he cannot carry with him? Such things as we can

carry with us to heaven should take up our time and thoughts. Piety outlives the grave, but honour and wealth must be left behind us.

[4.] It is contrary to our vows. We renounced them in baptism. In baptism there is ἐπερώτημα, an answer to God's questions. Believest thou with all thy heart? renoucest thou with all thy heart? 1 Peter 3:21, 'Baptism saves, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.' You break your baptismal vows if you do not deny worldly lusts. Christ doth not only call us off from sin, but from the world; for he is to be accepted not only as our Lord and lawgiver, but as our chiefest good, as an all-sufficient saviour. You are under a vow, and alienate things once consecrated when you withdraw your affections after you have once given them up to Christ. What have lusts to do in an heart that is once dedicated to God?

Use 1. Information. It informeth us—

1. How little interest in Christ they have who are still under the power of worldly lusts. The apostle giveth us this note, Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.' He doth not say that they are Christ's that believe that he was crucified, or that he died for sinners; but they are Christ's that feel that he was crucified; that by the virtue of his cross do crucify their own lusts and sinful affections. What! a christian, and yet worldly; a christian, and yet sensual; a christian, and yet proud! You that are given to pleasures, do you believe in Christ, that was a man of sorrows? You that are carried out after the pomp and vanity of the world, do you believe in Christ, whose kingdom was not of this world? You that are proud and lofty, do you profess an interest in the humble Christ? It is in vain for those to talk of his dying for sinners, and boast of the excellency of his cross, that never felt the virtue of it:

Gal. 6:14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' Your affections to the world are still strong; how can you glory in his cross? What experience have you of the goodness of it? Have you gotten anything by the cross? Are you planted into the efficacy of it? Rom. 6:5, 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' Do you feel any weakening of lusts and decay of sin? at least, doth it put you upon endeavours in this kind? The roots of sin are in all, but do you seek to mortify them? Do you deny them in the way prescribed? do you seek to prevent them with diligence, to suppress them with watchfulness, to resist them with strength and resolution? When there is not a constant course of mortification set up, but lust is let alone to reign without control, you have no interest in Christ. Mark, it is said, 'They crucify the flesh:' there is a work on your part; man is not wholly passive.

2. It informeth us that true mortification is proper to grace. Grace teacheth us to deny worldly lusts; mere reason cannot. Reason may sometimes convince us of lusts, but it cannot reform them; in many things it is blind, but in all weak. The sublimest philosophy that ever was could never teach a man to go out of himself, to deny his lusts, to despise the world. Many of the heathens were to appearance temperate, just, sober, and liberal, but still the lusts remained; and therefore some in despair have pulled out their eyes, because they could not prevail over a naughty heart. *Sapientia eorum abscondit vitia, non abscindit*; they hid their sins, but did not cut them off. As an oven stopped up is the hotter within, so the excess and execution of lusts being prevented, they grew more outrageous. The heart of man will not be kept in order by anything but by the power of grace. We may argue, fast, vow, pray, promise, and watch against sin; these are good means, but not to be rested in, for they are too weak to

master sin. God hath reserved this honour for his grace in Jesus Christ: Rom. 7:24, 25, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' We can have deliverance nowhere else. Are not counsels of reason able to help me? No, they cannot. Is not a moral course of mortification able to help me, as fasting, watching, prayer? No; these may restrain it somewhat, and lessen the violence of it. Satan may be ousted for a time, but yet he returneth with more violence; as the jailer hangeth more irons on him that is caught again after an escape. It is only the grace of God that mortifies sin.

Use 2. Of reproof of those that do not deny worldly lusts, but feed and serve them; they act for their sins rather than against them. Nature is bad of itself, and we need not make it worse; these tempt temptations, and cater and purvey for sin. Therefore the apostle useth that phrase: Rom. 13:14, 'Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' Men make it their business to satisfy their boundless desires, forecast to fulfil their sinful desires and affections. We must provide for the body, but not to fulfil every wanton lust and loose desire. This may be done by outward provocations, when men feed their distempers, and make nature more lustful and more wrathful: James 5:5, 'Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.' The heart is the seat of desires; they reared up their concupiscence by excess and dainty morsels, and all those courses by which lust seemeth to be satisfied but is indeed inflamed. As salt water wets the palate but inflames the stomach, so they nourished lust by voluntary casting themselves on occasions of sin. He who truly desireth to shun sin will shun the occasions of it. Who would bring fire to a barrel of gunpowder? Gen. 39:10, 'And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.' As he would not yield to the sin, so not to the occasion. Or

else it may be done by meditation and thoughts. By thoughts the heart and the temptation are brought together, as a match is first propounded before it is closed with. Thoughts are sin's spokesmen, and fasten the temptation on the heart, as worldly thoughts, admiring outward excellences: Ps. 144:15, 'Happy is the people that is in such a case!' Wrathful thoughts debase men; every circumstance aggravates the injury and offence, and so inflames their spirits. Or else by a free and uncontrolled use of the senses: Mat. 5:28, 'Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' Death getteth in by the windows. Eve saw the fruit: Gen. 3:6, 'And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.' David saw Bathsheba: 2 Sam. 11:3, 'From the roof he saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very beautiful to look upon;' and this inflamed his heart. Solomon bids us, Prov. 23:31, 'Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.' The senses must be bridled. Job made a covenant with his eyes, chap. 31:1, 'I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?' No man is above these rules. The eyes transmit the object to the fancy, the fancy to the mind, the mind to the heart.

## SERMON VI

And worldly lusts, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

USE 3. Exhortation. Let us deny these worldly lusts. I shall urge arguments both on grace's part, and then on the part of worldly lusts.

1. On grace's part. Grace hath denied us nothing; it hath given us Christ, and all things with him; and shall we stick at our lusts, that

are not worth the keeping? Certainly God loved Christ with an inexpressible affection; it was infinitely more than we can love the world. Though nature be much addicted to these lusts, and though we be carried out with great strength of affection to the world, yet we cannot love the world as much as God loved Christ, for his love to Christ is infinite and unlimited, like his essence; and God found a full complacency and satisfaction in Christ, yet God gave up the Son of his love. Grace counteth nothing too dear for us, not the blood of Christ, not the joys of heaven; and shall we count anything too dear for grace? A right eye or a right hand cannot be so dear to us as Christ was dear to God. At what cost is grace to redeem and save us? And shall grace be at all this cost for nothing? If God had commanded us a greater thing, ought we not to have done it? If God had commanded thee to give thy body to be burnt, or to offer thy first-born for the sin of thy soul; considering his absolute right over the creature, he might have required thy life, and thy children's lives; but he only requires thy lusts, things not worth the keeping, things that will prove the bane of thy soul, and things that we are bound to part with to preserve the integrity and perfection of our natures. If God had never dealt with us in a way of grace, we should have parted with our lusts; and shall grace plead in vain when it presseth to deny lusts? It will be the shame and horror of the damned to all eternity that they have stood with God for a trifle, and that they would not part with dung for gold, with a stable for a palace, especially being so deeply pre-engaged by God's mercy in Christ.

2. On the part of worldly lusts. There let me speak of them in general, then in particular.

First, In general they are lusts, and they are worldly lusts; both will yield us arguments why we should deny them.



1. They are lusts, and therefore lusts should be checked, because it is lust. That we may see what victory we have over ourselves, it is a fit occasion to express our self-denial, and to show what we can do for God. There can be no considerable self-denial there but where the lust is great, and there we show how we can renounce our bosom desires for God's sake. Mat. 7:13, it is said, 'Strait is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life.' If we desire to go to heaven, we must look to cross ourselves in those things we most affect and desire, and pass through a strait gate; and therefore if you let lust have its scope, you mistake the way. Without self-denial there can be no good done in religion. Again, lust is the disease of the soul. Natural desire is like the calor vitalis, the vital heat which preserves nature; but lust is like the feverish heat that oppreseth nature. We should get rid of our immoderate desire as we would of a disease. Nature's desires are temperate and soon satisfied, but lust's are immoderate and ravenous. Contentation is the soul's health, as lust is her sickness. If after much eating and drinking a man is unsatisfied, it is a sign he is sick, and hath more need of physic than of meat and drink, and to be purged rather than filled; so when we are not contented with God's allowance in a moderate supply of nature, we need to be cured rather than satisfied. Drink is sweet to a man in a feverish distemper, but it is better to be without the appetite than to enjoy the pleasure of satisfaction. Who would desire a burning fever to relish his drink? Better mortify the lust than satisfy it; in the issue it will be sweeter; for it is the disease of the soul though it seem sweet. I am sure the pains of mortification will not be half so bitter as the horrors of everlasting darkness. And lust let alone begins our hell; it is the burning heat that at length breaks out into an everlasting flame. Again, lust is the disorder of nature; and reason, that should be monarch and king in the soul, is enslaved, and under a base bondage by strength of desires; and it is the greatest slavery for a man to be a slave to his own desires, and the truest

freedom to command them. Consider what an odd sight it were if the feet should be there where the head is, and earth there where heaven should be: there is as great a monstrosity and disorder within when the soul is under the power of a ruling lust. All should be in subjection to the law of the mind, God made reason to have the sovereignty and dominion, and we give it to appetite and lust. A man is drawn away by his lusts: James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed.' The affections are like wild horses in a coach that have cast their driver; they draw away the soul by violence, and reason hath no command. Again, lusts make us not only brutish like beasts, for beasts are led by appetite and man by reason, but worse than beasts; for beasts can do no more, and ought to do no more; they have not a higher rule; appetite is made judge. Yea, and which is more, we exceed them in lusts. Beasts, which are wholly led by appetite, desire things only nigh at hand, and which are easy to be gotten; but man's lusts rummage throughout the whole course of nature; sometimes they desire things impossible. The lust of beasts is less inordinate than the lust of men; for the beasts only desire to satisfy nature, which is contented with a little. You cannot force a beast to take more when nature hath its fill; but our desires know no bounds; and we desire not only necessary things, but superfluous, such as are burdensome and cumbersome to the soul; lust only maketh them necessary. A horse, when he hath taken his measure, will take no more. Every other creature naturally is carried only to that which is helpful to its nature, and shuns that which is hurtful and offensive; only man is in love with his own bane, and fights for those lusts that fight against the soul. Again, it is lust that makes our abode in the world dangerous; and it would be a safe place were it not for lust: 2 Peter 1:4, 'The corruption that is in the world through lust.' The fault is not in the object, in gold, in wine, but in the heart of man; not in the creature, whom we abuse to this excess, but in our own lusts. God made them to be creatures for our

help, and lust turns them into snares for our ruin. As when a vessel is filled with filthy liquor, and it runs dreggy, the fault is not in the piercer that broacheth it and giveth it vent, but in the liquor itself. Lust is the cause of all the hurt that is done us in the world: the creature doth only broach the barrel, gives vent to our desires, and we run dreggy and filthy. Were it not for lust, nothing in the world could harm us. All other things are conquered with ease if a man could subdue his own affections; and all temptations are so far under us as we are above ourselves. Again, it is lust that doth hinder our peace. How quietly and happily would men live if they were more mortified! Men desire more than they have, and so are made poor, not by want, but by desire. He that expects little is soon satisfied; and certainly he will never storm at injuries that have overcome his own passion; whereas a froward man is at the command of others, because he hath not the command of himself; he doth not storm at disgrace that hath not set too high a price upon himself. If a man be vile and little in his own eyes, when others contemn and slight him they do but ratify his private opinion of himself; and who is angry with another because he is of the same judgment with himself? But usually this is the cause of discontent and trouble; we set too high a price upon ourselves; and when others will not come up to it, we are troubled. Take away the lust, and trouble ceaseth. No man is hurt but by himself. It is a man's own affection and feeling that makes the misery; always the fuller of lust, the fuller of discontent. What need Haman be troubled that Mordecai would not bow the knee, but that he looked for it, and set a value and esteem upon it. The inordinateness of affection causeth the greatness of the affliction; and because lust is not mortified, the life is full of trouble. We would have more than God allows us, and so our trouble doth increase. Again, as lusts deny them, for lusts will end in gross sins, and gross sins in public shame; and therefore, as Elisha cast salt into the spring to cure the brackishness of the water, so look to lusts; they are the

spring and rise of evil actions. Let any lust alone, either pride, or envy, or worldliness, if you do not destroy it, it will prove a bitter root to some gross sin, and it may be of final apostasy and desperation. A man that is given to worldly lust, one time or other is put upon the trial; if we find the sin, providence will find the occasion, and then he comes off with visible shame and dishonour. There is the root within; and to what an excess doth sin grow in those that deny themselves nothing, and will not be denied in anything! Lusts grow licentious and unruly; and because they usurp God's place in the heart, therefore God suffers it; always it ends ill, in shame and judgment. Judas at first was but a little worldly; he allowed his covetousness, and it brought him to betray his master, and that brought him to the halter. Gehazi was first blasted with covetousness and then with leprosy. Ananias and Sapphira were taken off with sudden judgment. Nay, God sometimes arms their own hands and thoughts against themselves. Covetousness begins with inordinate desire, and ends in injustice; and then that injustice must be professed and veiled with hypocrisy, as in Judas; and that hypocrisy breeds hardness of heart, and then God bringeth them to shame, and that shame leads on to despair and ruin. And so I may instance in other lusts. Sensuality begins with daintiness, and ends in adultery or some shameful act, or else with beggary or some shameful punishment, and both end with despair; as Sodom began with fulness of bread, then went on to foulness of lust, and that brought hell out of heaven. The lust of the flesh can also boast of its trophies and spoils; it drowned the old world, burned Sodom, slew three thousand of God's own people in one day, Num. 23 compared with 1 Cor. 10. Pride is not behindhand; proud men have their falls, and usually they are the more shameful, because God's honour is most sensibly usurped by pride. The great work of providence for these six thousand years hath been to pour shame and contempt upon pride. The first act of God's judicial providences was the casting the angels out of heaven, then Adam out

of paradise. What! shall I tell you of Nebuchadnezzar turned a-grazing, and Herod eaten up with lice? Thus you see we had need to beware. Sin is an ill guest, that always sets its lodging on fire. Once more, why we are to deny these lusts. It is lust that blasts all your duties and services; it either hinders or poisons them; it either draws away the heart from duty or in duty; Gal. 5:17, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these two are contrary one to the other; so that you cannot do the things that you would;' and Rom. 7:19, 'For the good that I would, I do not; and the evil that I would not, that I do.' Lust will not suffer God to have his due. The love of pleasures cannot brook constant exercise in religion, and the world is a great encroacher; and pride is all for the public where it may be seen; in private duties it is slight or nothing. As a mill stands still when the wind blows not, so, when the wind of popular applause ceaseth, a proud man cannot spread his sails, or do anything for God and conscience. Thus it draweth away the heart from duty. Then it draws away the heart in duty. Observe it, and you will find it by constant experience. The main lust will surely be discovered by the working of the thoughts. When you come to pray, or in your solemn duties, that which your thought is most taken up with discovers the main lust: Ezek. 33:31, 'They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.' The devil loveth to affront Christ to his face, and therefore takes advantage of the chief lust which occupies and possesses the heart to cast up mire and dirt even in God's presence; therefore lust hinders, poisons or perverts duty. All that men do in religion, if lusts remain in force, is either to promote lusts or to conceal a lust; to hide other sins, or to feed a lust; and therefore we had need to deny it as it is lust.

2. You should deny them as worldly lusts; so you must abstain from them, not serve them. As they are stirred up by worldly objects, they keep us from better employment; and therefore grace teacheth us to deny them, as they tend only to such a vile purpose.

Many arguments there are—

[1.] Whatever is for this world must be left on this side the grave. Pomp, pleasure, and estate must be left behind us: Job 1:21, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked must I return thither.' There is no carnal pomp and pleasure in the next world. Here we bustle for greatness, but death ends the quarrel. Like foolish birds, we seek to build strong nests, when to-morrow we must begone. Open the grave, and look upon the relics of man's mortality; thou canst not discern between the rich and the poor, the king and the peasant; all are alike obnoxious to stench and rottenness. Those desires that carry you out to the world must be mortified. A mill-wheel runs round all the day, and at night it is in the same place. So whatever we gain and purchase in the world it must be left at night when we go to bed, when death finds us, and in the same place; at death we are as naked as we came into the world: 1 Tim. 6:7, 'For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.' A man's wealth doth not follow him, but his sins do; his iniquity will find him out. Consider, at birth a man is contented with a cradle, and at death with a grave; yet here we join house to house, and field to field, Isa. 5:8, as if the whole world could not contain us.

[2.] As they are only for this world, so our abode here is but short and uncertain; and therefore, if it be worldly lust, it should be less prized, for it lasts but for a time. Within a very little while those that are most potent, powerful, and shining in the splendour of the world shall be turned to dust and ashes. God hath made life short, for many

wise and merciful reasons, that the time of our labour might not last too long. He hath made us to enjoy himself; and because he loveth the saints, he would have them the sooner with himself, and would not be long without their company; and that we might love eternal life, therefore this life is short; and that he might gratify the saints (for he that hath a journey to go would pass it over as soon as he can) God makes their journey as short as is convenient for his glory; and to shame wicked men, because they delight in that which is but of a short continuance, but their torment is eternal. The pleasure of sin is but for a season, but the torments of sin are for ever and ever; therefore this should put a check to your desires; it is only for a world that passeth away. Nay, the lusts of this world pass away: 1 John 2:17, 'The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof.' The time will come when we shall have no lusts to these things. It begins at sickness, but at the day of judgment we shall have no relish of these things; and when the whole world is burnt up, it will be our torment that we have prostituted our affections to such low and unbeseeming things; we shall see the vanity when it is too late; men will have little love to the world then.

[3.] If they be but worldly lusts, they should not be cherished were they never so durable. Why? Because this is not our happiness and our rest. Carnal men have more of the world. Christ committed his purse to the worst of his disciples. Of the others he saith, 'They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world,' John 17:16. In this world God is most liberal to the worst, therefore here we should not set up our rest. Look, as it is said of Abraham, Gen. 25:6, that he gave gifts to Ishmael and to the sons of Keturah, but he gave the inheritance to Isaac; wicked men have their portion, but not the inheritance. God will not be in their debt, therefore they have gifts. Therefore saith a christian, Why should I cherish these worldly lusts? this is not my portion, but the portion of others: 'From men of the

world, which have their portion in this life,' Ps. 17:14. The world is Satan's circuit, he compasseth the earth. It is the saints' slaughterhouse; they shed the blood of saints and prophets, Rev. 16:6. It is the place where God is dishonoured. They are favoured and loved most by the world whom Christ hath rejected and passed by.

[4.] Worldly lusts do hinder us from our work. We were made for another world, and this life is lent us for a while to look after heaven. We cannot drive on those two cares at once, for the world and heaven too; as a man cannot look with one eye to heaven and with another to the earth; therefore why should we indulge worldly lusts? Who would lose a crown to be owner of a dunghill? And will you forfeit heaven and the joys of God's presence for worldly conveniences? Lust hinders your care of heaven. It is true a temperate and religious use of the world furthereth it, but worldly lust doth take off your heart from God and heaven, and unfits it for it, so that your heavenly desires are hindered.

[5.] In a sense, worldly lusts do hinder us of the comfort of this world. Want increaseth with enjoyment as the fire increaseth by laying on more fuel. The more we enjoy the more we desire, so we do not enjoy what we do possess. The more we have the more we want, so that a covetous man neither enjoys this world nor the world to come.

[6.] If it be worldly lust, then take heed of it, for thou art as thy love is. If thou lovest this world, thou art a worldly man; if thou lovest God, thou art a godly man; if thou lovest heaven, thou art a heavenly man. A man is not as his opinion is, but as his affections are. A bad man may be of a good opinion, but a bad man can never have good affections. The soul, as wax, receives the impression from the object. Thou art a person of the world if thou lovest the world. Take a



looking-glass and put it towards heaven, there you shall see the figure of heaven, the clouds and things above; put it downward towards the earth, you shall see the figure of the earth, trees, meadows, fruits. So doth the soul receive a figure from the things to which it is set; if the heart be set towards heaven, that puts thee into a heavenly frame; if thou appliest it to earthly objects, thou art a man of the earth.

[7.] The more we mortify these worldly lusts the more we prevent affliction. We might prevent the bitterness of the cross if we would subdue our own lusts; but because we are negligent of that work. God is forced to lay on heavy crosses.

Secondly, Let me now deal with these lusts in particular—pride, sensuality, and covetousness; these are immediate issues of corrupt nature; the apostle calls them lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eye, and pride of life.

1. Sensuality, or the lusts of the flesh. Let me begin there, because we live first by sense before we live by reason. These lusts are deeply rooted in the heart of man. Other sins defile a part; covetousness and pride defile the soul, but sensual lusts defile soul and body too; they leave guilt upon the soul, and dishonour upon the body. By gluttony and drunkenness, the body, which is God's temple, is only made a strainer for meats and drinks to pass through, and by adultery it is made the sink and channel of lust. In short, that you may know what these lusts of the flesh are, sensuality is an inordinate desire of soft and delicate living, an intemperate use of pleasures, of what kind or sort soever, an undue liberty of diet, sports, and other appurtenances of life. There is allowed a due care of the body, to keep it serviceable, and there is allowed a delight in the creature; for he that created water for our necessity created wine for our comfort. The body must

not be used too hardly, that it may be serviceable to the purposes of grace.

But then, what is this inordinate desire, this intemperate use, this undue liberty? How shall we trace and find out the sin? Different natures and tempers make rules uncertain; but the two general bounds which God hath set to our liberty in this kind are the health of our body and the welfare of the soul, but when bodily health is overturned, and the soul clogged and perverted, then your lusts have carried you too far.

[1.] When bodily health is overturned. Too much care for the body destroys it; as the Romans were wont to have their funerals at the gates of Venus's temple, to show that lusts shorten life. When health is destroyed, or the vigour of nature is abated (as too much oil puts out the lamp), then you sin. Hosea 4:11, it is said, 'Whoredom, and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.' The heart, that is the generousness and sprightliness of man. When gallant and active spirits are effeminated, and brave hopes are drowned and quenched in excess of pleasures, and we lose our masculine agility and vivacity, all is melted away; then we sin against the bounds and limits God hath set us. Thus there is a restraint that ariseth from the body.

[2.] When the soul is clogged or unfitted for duty or disposed for sin. (1.) Then we are unfitted for duty when there is less aptitude for God's service. The matter of carnal pleasure is burdensome and gross; it oppresseth the soul, that it cannot lift up itself to God and divine things, because it is bowed down and humbled to pleasures, and the heart is overcharged: Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.' Men drive on heavily, and duty grows burthensome and irksome. By turning out our affections to

present contentments and delights we cannot pray with that readiness. The strength of our delight should be reserved for communion with God, and for those chaste pleasures that flow in his house and are to be had in his presence. (2.) When there is more aptitude for sin: Titus 3:3, 'We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures.' Lusts and pleasures are fitly coupled and put together. The soul waxeth wanton when natural desires are too far indulged. If we do not watch over our senses, but the heart grows wanton and libidinous, and restraints of grace grow weaker, and carnal motions are more urgent, then pleasure becomes a snare, grace is disturbed, and nature is distempered, and the heart is more free for sin.

Deny these lusts of the flesh, do not indulge them, suffer them not to grow wanton.

By way of argument consider—

(1.) Sensual men have little of God's Spirit: Jude 19, 'Sensual, having not the Spirit.' The Spirit is a free Spirit, and they are slaves to their lusts; the Spirit is a pure Spirit, and their desires are unclean and gross; the Spirit is active, and they are heavy and muddy, and of a nature dull and slow. Sensual men quench the vigour of nature, much more the efficacy and radiancy of the graces of the Spirit. The Spirit works intellectual delights, and they are all for sensual. They love pleasures more than God: 2 Tim. 3:4, 'Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' those dreggy delights. Whereas the comforts and consolations of the Spirit are masculine, and they are got by exercise. Look, as the manly heat gotten by exercise is better than that which is gotten by hovering over the fire, so the comforts of the Spirit, gained by much communion with God, by being instant and earnest in prayer, is better than that delight which is gotten by hovering over

the creature. Well, then, which will you choose? Will you live at large and ease, and wallow in earthly delights and contentments? or would you be stirred up by the active motion of the Spirit of God? Would you dissolve your precious hours and spirits in ease and pleasure, or else be employed in the solemn and grave exercises of religion? Frogs delight in fens, and the worst natures are most sensual; they are not fit for any worthy action or any great exploit.

(2.) It is the first thing you must do, if you mean to do anything in religion, to renounce pleasure; and therefore it is put in the first place, 'The lusts of the flesh.' It is below reason to live in pleasure, therefore much more below grace. Alas! you will do nothing if this be not done, but will lie open to every temptation. If a carnal motion arise that bids you neglect duty or practise sin, you lie open to it; therefore it is said, Prov. 25:28, 'He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.' He that bridles not his appetite is like a city whose wall is broken down. When a town is dismantled, it lies open for every comer; so where the appetite is unruly there is no room for the Spirit, but for every temptation: Ezek. 47:11, 'But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.' The waters of the sanctuary could not heal the miry places, which is an emblem of a sensual heart. Pleasure brings a brawn and deadness upon the conscience, a cloud upon the understanding, and a damp upon the affections. Daniel, that had the high visions of God, lived by pulse; he was a man temperate. Those that mortify pleasure are of the clearest understanding; and John the Baptist, which had most eminent revelations of the mysteries of the gospel (of all the prophets, there was not a greater than John the Baptist), he was fed with locusts and wild honey. Therefore mortify pleasure.

(3.) By custom this sin is rooted, and so hardly left; because it doth not only pervert the constitution of the soul, but the constitution of the body. Now, when the body is unruly as well as the affections, grace hath more to struggle with. A man that hath habituated himself to carnal pleasure, because his body is distempered and perverted, is not so soon healed. That is the reason that when the apostle speaks of meats and drinks, 1 Cor. 6:12, he saith, 'He will not be brought under the power of any.' So again, when men are given to wine, it is their custom and rooted disposition; therefore avoid not only the gross act, but the very beginning, that it may not be a settled distemper. Whenever you take pleasures, they should be used with fear. It is the charge of the Spirit of God commenceth against those, Jude 12, 'Feeding themselves without fear.' Mark, it is not enough for your acquitment that you do not drink to drunkenness, or feed to actual excess and distemper, but suffer it not to be a rooted disposition in your hearts, for then it will be hardly left. Austin speaks of his own experience in this kind, *Ebrietas longe a me est, crapula autem nonnunquam subrepat servo tuo*—Lord, I was never a drunkard, it is far from me; but gluttony creeps upon me unawares, and so hinders me from the duties of the spiritual life. The throat is a slippery place, and needs to be guarded with much watchfulness and care, lest this distemper be rooted in the heart. Job sacrificed while his sons were feasting: Job 1:5, 'For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.' In all these things should we use much caution.

2. The next particular the apostle mentions is the lusts of the eye, or covetousness. This is an evil very natural to us, and we cannot be watchful enough against the encroachments of the world. We need it in part, and we love it more than we need it. Worldliness is a branch of original sin; it is a disease we are born with. The tenth commandment, that forbids original sin, saith, 'Thou shalt not covet.'

The best find temptations this way. We are daily conversant about the things of the world, and we receive a taint from those things with which usually we converse; we find by experience that long converse is a bewitching thing. Again, the world is a thing of present enjoyment; we have the world in hand, and heaven in hope. The judgment of carnal men is quite different from the judgment of the word. The word of God counts the world to be but a fancy, and an apparition, and heaven to be the only substance: Prov. 23:5, 'Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?' It is not in comparison of better things: 'And the fashion of this world passeth away,' 1 Cor. 7:31; but, Prov. 8:21, 'That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance.' Heaven is the durable substance; this is the judgment of the word, but wicked men think quite otherwise. We have sensible experience of the profits of the world, and therefore we judge thus perversely, and call it durable riches, and heaven but a mere fancy to make fools fond withal. Besides, worldliness is a serious thing; it doth not break out into any foul act, therefore it is applauded by men: Ps. 10:3, 'The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.' We think well of it, at least we stroke it with a gentle censure. A drunkard is more liable to reproach and shame than a worldling, Worldliness is consistent with the gravity and strictness of profession; and therefore above all corruptions it is usually found amongst them that profess religion; but dissoluteness of luxury will not stand with that external gravity and strictness which the profession of religion requires. Licentious persons procure shame to themselves, and are publicly odious; but now, this being a serious sin, and possibly it may win the soul from other vices, therefore we indulge it the more. Again, it is a cloaked sin; the apostle speaks of 'the cloak of covetousness,' 1 Thes. 2:5. It is a hard matter to discover and find it out, there are so many evasions; necessary providence, and provision for our families is a duty, and it is a duty enforced by nature and grace. Here men evade the charge of

covetousness; they think their carking is justified, as being no more than the prudent management of their affairs. But consider, it is an evil which the Lord hates. Covetousness bewrays itself by an immoderate care after the things of this life, immoderate desire, and immoderate delight.

[1.] By an immoderate care after worldly comforts. When we are so solicitous about outward supports, what we shall do, and what will become of us, that is a sure sign of a worldly heart. We dare not trust God's providence, but cark ourselves: Luke 12:29, 'And seek ye not what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.' The word  $\mu\eta\ \mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\omega\rho\iota\zeta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$  signifies Do not hang like a meteor in the air, hovering between heaven and earth, between doubts and fears. This is to take God's work out of his hands, as the care of the son is a reproach of the father. It is a sign we dare not trust God's providence, but will be our own carvers; we reprove and tax his providence as if he were not solicitous enough for us.

Object. But must we not be careful and provident? I answer—

(1.) Do your present work, and for the future leave it to God. God would have us look no further than the present day, provided we do not embezzle our estate by idle projects, or in carnal pleasures, or wasteful profusion, and provided we be not negligent in our calling; let us do our work, and let God alone for future times. It is a mercy God would have our care look no further than the present day: Mat. 6:34, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' God is very careful of man's welfare; he hath made carking a sin, he might have left it as a punishment. Every day hath trouble enough for our exercise, and that is as much as God hath required.

(2.) It is bewrayed by an immoderate desire. The temper of the heart is very much discovered by the current and stream of the desires. As

the temper of the body is known by the beating of the pulses, so is the temper of the soul by the course of the desires; or, as physicians judge of the patient by his appetite, so may you judge of your spirits by your desires, how they are carried out, whether to heavenly things and the enjoyment of God, or to the world. A carnal frame of spirit will be known by an unsatisfied thirst, and the ravenousness of the desires, when they still increase with the enjoyment, and men crave more and more. Such a dropsy as this is argues a distempered soul, especially when the desires are transported beyond all bounds of modesty and contentment: Isa. 5:8, 'Woe unto them that join house to house, and field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.' The inordinate inclinations still increaseth, and men never have enough, as if they would grasp all, that they might be blessed alone. Alas! those that have a heavenly frame will stand wondering that God hath given them so much in their pilgrimage; nay, that God hath given them anything. But more especially doth this bewray lust when these desires bring the soul to that determinate resolution that this shall be the project of their lives. He that is rich hath many temptations, however wealth be gotten, or given by God; but he that will be rich is sure to miscarry: 1 Tim. 6:9, 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.' The bent and resolution of the soul argues the heart is naught; he hath drowned himself already; he falls into a snare, and into many temptations.

(3.) By an immoderate delight in worldly comforts. A man may be worldly, that is, not carking and ravenous. Esau saith, 'I have enough, my brother,' Gen. 33:9. Your complacency in outward enjoyments is a great sin. When men are satiated with their present portion of the world, it is as great, if not a greater sin, than to desire more. When Christ would represent a covetous man, he doth it not



by one that grasps at more, but by one that found a greater complacency in what he had; he blesseth himself as if he had happiness enough: Luke 12:19, 'I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.' It is a question which is worse, a ravenous desire after more, or a carnal complacency in what we do enjoy. This last is worst; there is discontent and distrust in the former, but God is robbed and wholly laid aside by the latter. Our delight, which is the choicest affection, is intercepted. Many will say, I desire no more; but thy heart is set upon what thou hast, and so God is robbed, who is to be the soul's treasure; and the poor are robbed; they are loath to part with what they delight in; and the soul is robbed of eternal happiness, which it should look after, and of present comfort, in case God should blast all by his providence; for a contented worldly man will be soonest discontented. It is a breach of the matrimonial contract: James 4:4, 'Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?' There is a matrimonial contract between God and the soul, wherein God propoundeth himself as God all-sufficient. Now, as if God were not good enough, men seek delight elsewhere. Well, then, deny these lusts of the eyes. To this purpose consider—

(1st.) Your happiness doth not lie in these things: Luke 12:15, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' You may be happy without them. The saints have a candle that shall never be blown out. Neither your safety nor comfort lies in the world. Your safety doth not lie in it; you do not live by ordinary supplies, but by God's providence. Your comfort doth not lie in it, it should be in God. We cannot see how we can be well without friends, wealth, present supports; but consider, a man lives not by visible means, but by the providence of God.

(2d.) A little serves the turn to bring us to heaven. He is not poor that hath little; but he that desires more, he is the poor man. Enlarged affections make us want more than the necessities of nature. We are not contented with God's allowance, but pitch upon such a state of life, and cannot live without such splendour and pomp, or without such an estate. It is not want of estate that makes a man poor, but an unsatisfied mind. He that doth not submit to God's allowance is poor.

(3d.) God will provide for us if we do our duty. He that hath given us life will give us food that is less than life; it is Christ's argument: Mat. 6:25, 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?' Nay, he that hath given us Christ, 'will he not with him also freely give us all things?' Rom. 8:32. So a man may argue, God hath given me life, and that is better than food and raiment, as the body is better than the garment. Is any man so illogical, and of so little reason, as to argue thus, God hath given me Christ, and will he not give me support? I have trusted him with my soul, shall I not trust him with my estate? God never sets any one to work but he gives them maintenance. He feeds the ravens, and will he not feed his children? Certainly a father will not be more kind to a raven than to a child, to a flower than to a son, Mat. 6:26–29.

(4th.) Wealth doth not make us more acceptable with God. Grace puts the rich and the poor upon the same level: James 1:9, 10, 'Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.' The rich man is not too high for God if his heart be kept humble with his estate, and the poor man is not too low for God if he be preferred by grace; so that grace still is the ground of acceptance: 'Riches profit not in the day of wrath,' Prov. 11:4; 'What is the hope of

the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God takes away his soul?' Job 27:8. These things will stand you in no stead.

(5th.) The more estate you have, the more danger and the more trouble. A pirate doth not set upon empty vessels. None are so liable to such snares as those that have wealth and greatness. You can hardly discharge what you have already. If you had more, you would have the greater trust; for 'to whom much is given, of them much shall be required,' Luke 12:48. You must give account for more time, for more opportunities to do good, for more acts of mercy. A greater estate is incident to more cares and more duties.

3. The third lust is pride of life. The most natural affection is self-love, and pride is nothing else but the excess of self-love. We suck it in with our milk. Our first parents fell by pride; they soon caught at that bait, 'You shall be as gods,' Gen. 3:5; and we see it takes with us, and surpriseth us upon every small occasion; a fine garment, a lock of hair, a good horse, or a serviceable creature. There is nothing so high and nothing so low but pride can make use of it; if we go back any degrees, it is to rise the higher. Yea, rather than not be proud, we can be proud of sin. The apostle speaks of some 'that glory in their shame,' Phil. 3:19, as their revenge and glutting themselves with their unchaste pleasures. It is a sin that will put us upon much self-denial. How can men rack their spirits to promote their own praise and exaltation? How can they pinch themselves of the conveniences of life to feed pride and to supply pomp and state? Nay, a man may be proud after his death in funeral-pomp and in the glory of the sepulchre. Now pride is twofold—in mind, and in desire. Pride in the mind is self-conceit, and pride in the desire is an inordinate affection of glory or high place. Pride in mind is when we ascribe to ourselves what we have not, or transfer upon ourselves the praise of what we have. To boast of what we have not is folly; to boast of what we have

is sacrilege, and we rob God; this is like a man deeply in debt, who boasts of an estate he has borrowed. Pride in the desire is an inordinate affectation of our own glory: all that men do is to set up themselves.

[1.] Against pride in the mind. Consider what little reason we have to be proud. Poor men! in whose birth there is sin, in whose life there is misery, and in whose death there is sorrow and perplexity. What should we be proud of? Not of strength, which is inferior to many beasts. Not of beauty; many flowers are decked with a more glorious paint. Beauty it is but skin-deep; it is blasted with every sickness, it is the laughing-stock of every disease. And then he that is proud of his clothes is but proud of his rags wherewith his wounds are bound up. Clothes you know were occasioned by sin; in innocency holiness was a garment for man, and men might have conversed naked without shame. And so for birth; we have no reason to be proud of that. *Omnis sanguis concolor*—all blood is of a colour: 'He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,' Acts 17:26. Not of estates; they are but as trappings to a horse, things without us. We do not value a horse for his trappings, but by his courage, mettle, and strength. Not of learning; there is none so learned but he hath ignorance enough to humble him. To be proud of learning shows our ignorance. A little river seems deep when it runs between narrow banks, but when there is a broad channel it is very shallow; so men seem to be profound till their thoughts run out into the breadth of learning. Nor should we glory in preferment and in being advanced. When men are put into great places, they grow proud, but it is their folly: thy preferment may be in judgment; God many times chooseth wicked men to rule. He gives kingdoms to the basest of men, Dan. 4:17. God's providence is not only seen in preferring wise and godly governors, but in setting up the base for a judgment to the nation. Nebuchadnezzar is called God's servant, Jer.

25:9. The sins of Egypt and Judah did require such a servant. A devout man complained of a bloody prince, Lord! why hast thou made him emperor? He did seem to hear this answer, Because I could not find a worse for such a wicked people. So when such an one was chosen bishop, he grew proud upon it, and there was a voice heard, Thou art lifted up, not because thou art worthy of the priesthood, but because the city is worthy of no better a bishop. Some may be preferred, not because they are worthy, but because the sins of the nation deserved no better governors. So in any good actions, when they are done commendable before men, remember, God makes another judgment: 'All the ways of man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits,' Prov. 16:2. Man hath but a partial hatred of sin, but God hath an exact balance, and he weighs the spirits: Luke 16:15, 'Ye are they that justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.' When men praise you, say, These men cannot see my heart. Usually after some eminency there afterward comes a blasting. Jacob wrestled with God, and then his thigh was broken. Paul was rapt up into the third heaven, then presently there was sent him a thorn in the flesh. Sometimes God blasts the creature before the work, as Moses's hand was made leprous before he wrought the miracle, Exod. 4:6. Sometimes after the work, to show we are but vile instruments; there is something left to remember the creature of his own vileness. Then be not proud of thy holiness, for what is this to God's? Ps. 130:3, 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand?' And God hates this sin so much that he lets men fall into many scandalous sins when they grow proud of their holiness. The ornament of a high and honourable estate in the world is not outward splendour, but the humble mind; James 1:10, 'Let the rich rejoice in that he is made low.' This is true nobleness and eminency,

and an argument of a great mind, to be like a spire, least and low in our own account when most exalted by God.

[2.] Against the other, pride in desires and inordinate affectation of greatness. Consider what God hath done for you already, and prize the opportunity of a private life, and improve it to frequency of duty and converse with God. It is better to be like a violet, known by our own smell rather than our greatness. The mountains are exposed to blasts and winds, and they are generally barren; but the low valleys are watered and fruitful; therefore men know not what they do when they seek great things. The true ambition is to seek the great things of heaven and the great things of Christ, and for other things, to refer ourselves to the fair invitation and allowance of God's providence. A vainglorious man is nothing in Christianity. Paul can count a man's judgment but a small thing: 1 Cor. 4:3, 'With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.' God is our judge, and the business of our lives is to approve ourselves to God; man's judgment must not be valued. And besides, it is a vain thing to affect that in which we may be soon crossed. One man's opinion may disturb our quiet; one Mordecai can cross Haman in all his pomp. To doat upon that which is in the power of those whose humours are as inconstant as the waves, or their breath, or the wind, is a very great folly; where one word may deject us and cast us into sorrow. And lastly; consider, this is nothing to eternal glory.

## SERMON VII

We might live soberly, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

THE lesson which grace teacheth was propounded privatively and positively, Privatively, wherein I have showed what we must eschew and avoid, viz., 'Ungodliness and worldly lusts.'

I now come to the positive part, where the duty of man is distributed into three kinds. Look, as in a moral consideration, there are but three beings, God, neighbours, and self, so here the apostle makes three parts and branches of our duty—that we should live soberly as to ourselves; righteously as to our neighbour; godly, that the Lord may not be defrauded of his portion. Sobriety respects the duties of our personal capacity; righteousness the duties of our relation to others; and piety the duties of immediate intercourse with God.

I begin with the first of the apostle's adverbs, that we should live soberly. Sobriety is a grace very necessary; we can neither be righteous nor pious without it; for he that is not sober, he takes to himself more than is due, and so can neither give God nor man their portion. If he be unsober, he will be unjust; he robs the church of his parts which are quenched in pleasure, the commonwealth of his service, the family of their maintenance and necessary provision; and then the poor are robbed, because that which should be spent in their relief is wasted in luxury. And then he that is unsober cannot be godly, for he doth not give God his portion; he robs God of his time, and, which is worse, of his heart; for that, being carried out to pleasure, it is deprived of the fruition of God, and transported from better delights. So that if we would discharge our duty to God or man, if we would live righteously and piously, we must live soberly. Once more, that you may a little conceive of the weight and consequence of this discourse, sobriety is a part of virtue's armour: so much is intimated by the apostle, 2 Peter 1:5, 6, 'Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience.' Virtue or strictness of life is rooted in faith, directed by knowledge, defended and maintained by temperance and patience; by temperance on the right hand, and patience on the left. As fortitude or patience is necessary to arm grace against dangers, so is temperance or sobriety to arm it against pleasures and worldly

comforts. It is hard to say which we need most, temperance or patience. We must expect hardships, and still we live among snares, but only snares are more frequent than troubles; as more birds are ensnared by the net than killed by the birding-piece. Persecution hath slain its thousands; but pleasures their ten thousands. Therefore you see sobriety is of great use in the spiritual life. As we need to press faith as the root of virtue, and knowledge as the guide of virtue, so we need to press temperance and patience as the guard and defence of virtue; patience against the troubles and hardships that we meet with, and sobriety against the comforts and allurements of the present world.

Before I enter upon the discussion of the present argument, let me first remove some prejudices.

1. Some men think that to discourse of sobriety will be to give you a moral lecture, not an evangelical discourse; they would have us to preach Christ, as if pressing the duties of religion were not a preaching Christ. Certainly we may preach that which grace teacheth; now grace teacheth to live soberly. The truth is, men would be honeyed and oiled with grace, and cannot endure the strictness of moral duties. Here conviction is easy, and conscience maketh guilt fly in the face, and therefore men cannot endure this kind of preaching. I tell you, to preach sobriety and temperance is to preach Christ. It is said, Acts 24:24, 'After certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.' Paul, let us hear somewhat of Christ. Now what doth Paul preach of? ver. 25, 'And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.' There is his preaching Christ. To preach Christ is to press whatever the christian religion requireth, and in that manner and upon those terms. And when Paul saith, 1 Cor. 2:2, 'I have



determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified,' it was because that was the controverted truth, the truth then in question, and most opposed; for the doctrine of the cross was 'to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness,' 1 Cor. 1:23. Now saith the apostle, as foolish a doctrine as it is, 'I have determined to know nothing else among you.' Not to prescribe in other cases, and to confine our meditations to the doctrine of the cross, there are other arguments necessary, and must take their turn and place.

2. Some men think that they are above these directions, to be taught how to eat and drink, and that every man hath prudence enough to govern his appetite. But consider, Christ thought meet to warn his own disciples: Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life.' A man would think it a needless direction to such holy men; yet saith Christ, 'Take heed,' and certainly sin is not grown less dangerous, nor we more holy than the apostles. Besides, now if ever is there need of such kind of preaching. Some men profess to live to the height of the creature, and so make lust a wanton, as it is dangerous always to go near the pit's brink; and he that doth all that he may will soon do more than he should. It is a character of profane men, Jude 12, 'Feeding themselves without fear.' The throat is a slippery place, and had need be watched and kept with fear. We find that an over-spiritual preaching hath made men loose and careless, and that moral duties need to be pressed.

3. Another prejudice there is against this doctrine; men shift it off to others. We conceive of gluttony, drunkenness and covetousness otherwise than Christ did, and therefore do not judge such discourses necessary. We conceive drunkenness and gluttony to be an outrageous excess; when we hear of gluttons and drunkards, we

think of them vomiting, staggering, reeling, not being able to speak, or able to go, faltering in speech and language; but the scripture sets out other manner of drunkards; these are the effects, the punishment, rather than the fault. And so, when we hear of covetousness, then we think of some sordid wretch, or else of some oppressor that gets wealth by rapine and extortion, or the apparent use of unlawful means; and so we wipe our lips, and think we are clean. But now that which is counted surfeiting and drunkenness and covetousness before God is the overcharging the heart: Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be overcharged,' &c. A man's heart may be overcharged, though his stomach is not, when he cannot freely meditate upon heavenly things, though he doth not vomit and give up his luxurious morsels in loathsome ejections. And that is covetousness before God when the care of earthly things hinders us from heavenly-mindedness and heavenly desires; the heart is then overcharged, and loseth the sense of spiritual things.

These things premised, I come now to the doctrine.

Doct. One of the lessons which grace teacheth us is sobriety.

(1.) I shall show you what sobriety is in the general; (2.) I shall open the particular branches of it.

First, I shall show what sobriety is in the general. Sobriety is the moderation of our affections in the pursuit and use of all earthly things.

To explain the description, it is the moderation. Grace doth not take away the affection, but governs it; it bridles the excess, and then reduceth the affection itself to a just stint and temper. Now the rule according to which this moderation must be made must be either the word, or, where the word interposeth not, then spiritual prudence

and conveniency is to be a judge. How the word judgeth I shall show in the branches; but in matter of conveniency, what is most convenient for ourselves, that we be not brought under the power of any creature, spiritual prudence must be the rule: 1 Cor. 6:12, 'All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.' A christian is to see, while he makes use of one part of his liberty, that he doth not forfeit and lose another, yea, the better part. As men go to law for trifles, and spend a real and solid estate, so by an intemperate use of christian liberty we forfeit that which is the best part, freedom from lusts, and from the bondage of sin. As, for instance, a promiscuous use of meats and drinks is a part of christian liberty, but freedom from lusts is another part; and therefore, while a man useth this liberty in the creature, and hereby brings himself in bondage to his lusts, or is enslaved to such a creature, how inconvenient soever the use of it be, he cannot leave it; he disappoints the main end of Christ's blood, and forfeits the fairest part of that liberty Christ hath purchased for him. God hath given us a large liberty in Christ; let us not go too far, lest we forfeit the spiritual part of it. Therefore it is a part of sobriety, if it be likely to prove a snare, to moderate and bridle the affections. Yea, in another case, which concerneth others, that may be lawful to one which is not lawful to another. If the thing affected be lawful, yet if it be likely to give offence, or to procure a blot upon ourselves, it is a part of sobriety to moderate ourselves, and abstain from it. In such a case we owe so much to one another's weakness, and to our own credit, which should be preferred before the satisfaction of any appetite whatsoever: Phil. 4:8, 'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think of these things;' and again, 1 Cor. 8:13, 'Wherefore, if meat make my

brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.' Rather wholly abstain from this liberty than give offence. So that this moderation is a reducing the affections to the limits of the word, and the rules of conveniency and charity.

Of the affections. I mean such as are accompanied with pleasure in the exercise; these are under the command of sobriety. There is a moderation of our passions that belongeth to fortitude and patience, as sorrow and anger, the moderation of these belongeth to other graces. But now such affections as are accompanied with pleasure in the exercise, as delight and desire; desire in the pursuit, and delight in the use of worldly things; these belong to sobriety. It is indeed a question which is worst, not to bridle anger or not to restrain pleasures? Anger is unruly and violent, but lusts work both ways; ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος, James 1:14, 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.' The most generous natures are subject to anger, and the basest to pleasures. Anger is stirred up by reason, though it runneth away without deliberation; but lust prescribeth to reason; there is more of plot and counsel in lust than in anger. Reason sooner cleareth up when the storm of passion is over, and then men repent; but in lust and pleasure there is a long bondage. So that not to restrain lust, or those affections that carry us out to corporal delights, seemeth worst. But then, again, it may be inquired which is harder, to endure griefs or renounce pleasures? I shall answer—To renounce pleasures, and sobriety is more put to it than fortitude. Many that have borne griefs with a stubborn mind yet have yielded to their own carnal affections; as Sampson, that broke so many cords and bands, yet could not break the bonds of his own lusts. It is true nature flieth from grief, and therefore it is hard to take up our cross; but nature flieth from grief because it is addicted to pleasures, and it is our lusts that make

the cross so burdensome. Renounce the desire and the delight, and the lust will be more easily overcome.

In the pursuit and use. I name both, because as we must use worldly things moderately, so we must desire them moderately. The sin is first in the affection, and there may be an immoderation in the desire when the practice is restrained by fear, or by difficulty, or by danger of compassing our lusts; and therefore the great work of sobriety is to moderate the lust. As a bird when its wing is broken is eager to fly, so a man that may abstain from excessive practice, yet he may have much inordinate affection: Col. 3:5, 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection.'

Of all earthly things. Profits, pleasures, pomps, meats, drinks, apparel, recreations; sobriety reacheth all those affections that are carried out to any of the good things of this natural life. There is a dry drunkenness, as the prophet saith in another case: Isa. 29:9, 'They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.' The cares of this world have an inebriating power, as well as voluptuous living; and therefore Christ couples them together: 'Surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life,' Luke 21:34. Look, as wine disturbeth reason and oppreseth the senses, so do these worldly cares besot the mind and deprive us of the sense of spiritual things; and therefore sobriety is necessary to moderate our cares, as well as to govern the use of meats and drinks.

Secondly, I shall handle sobriety in these four branches—

1. As to pleasures and recreation, sleep and pastime.
2. In meats and drinks, and the necessary supports of human life.

3. In pomp and apparel.

4. In the cares of this world.

First branch, sobriety in recreation.

The first branch of sobriety, in recreation, in sleep and pastime, and other delights of human life.

For sleep I need say but little; it is a soft enemy, that steals away half our time, and should be reckoned among our burdens, and not our pleasures, as a thing to be borne with patience rather than to be taken with delight. It is our unhappiness that so much of our lives should be spent, and not one act of love and kindness should be shown to God. The angels, that are wholly spiritual, are exempted from this necessity. Night and day they are always praising God, doing his will, and hearkening to the voice of his word. Yea, we may see many other creatures are restless in their motions, and obey the law of their creation without weariness. The sun in a constant unwearied course moves from east to west and from west to east, and never ceaseth. When thou liest upon thy bed in the morning, thou mayest think of it, how many thousand miles the sun hath travelled since thou went to rest the last night, that he might come again this morning to give thee light to go about thy labour and exercise, and yet thou liest snorting upon thy bed, and turning hither and thither, as Solomon saith, like a door upon the hinges. David contended with the sun who should be up first; as the sun to represent God to the world, so he to acknowledge God in his prayers and supplications: Ps. 119:147, 'I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried.' But of this I will speak no more. Common prudence and the light of nature will give us sufficient direction.

But now for sports, and the other delights of human life. Accept of God's indulgence with thankfulness, and use it with moderation. Adam in innocency was placed in a garden of delight; and since the fall God hath provided not only for necessity but pleasure. Certainly in Christ we have a great liberty, but we should not use it as an occasion to the flesh: 'To the pure all things are pure,' Titus 1:15. Only let us take heed that we are pure in the use of these outward comforts and refreshments. Now we need not fear the uncleanness of meats and sports, but let us fear the uncleanness of lusts. There is a double exercise of sobriety in our sports and recreations and the delights of the human life—to direct us in the choice of them, and in the use of them.

1. In the choice of them, that they be lawful, not 'the pleasures of sin,' Heb. 11:25. There is a strange perverseness in man's nature; those pleasures relish best that are seasoned with sin, as if we could not do nature right without wrong to God, and putting an affront upon his laws: 'He that breaks the hedge, a serpent shall bite him,' Eccles. 10:8. Now, to prevent danger of this kind, and that we may not break through the hedge and the restraints which God hath set us, and so find remorse upon our deathbeds, conscience must be informed. Generally we may observe, that we offend God more in our recreations than in any other affairs of life, and are more guilty of unlawful recreations than of unlawful ways of gain and traffic; and therefore it is good to be wary, and keep at a distance from sin. And because recreations are not among things absolutely necessary, but only convenient, if they be questionable, or of ill fame, it is better to forbear: Phil. 4:8, 'Whatsoever things are of good report, &c., think of these things;' that we may be sure not to be guilty of any contempt of God, and that we may not give offence to others. As, for instance, a lusory lot in cards or dice is very questionable, therefore better to be forborne than used, especially where they give offence. And again,

because 'everything is sanctified by the word of God and prayer,' 1 Tim. 4:4, therefore we should seek to understand our liberty by the word, and venture upon nothing in this kind but what we can commend to God in prayer, and upon which we can ask a blessing. Thus sobriety directs you in the choice of recreations.

2. In the use. Usually we offend in such things as are for the matter lawful; there the soul is more secure: as in the Gospel, the excuse is put in the handsomest terms: Luke 14:20, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' For the understanding of it, note, Christ's parables do put the dispositions of men's hearts into words. Now the sensualist, or the man that is addicted to pleasures, is there represented; and mark, he doth not urge dalliance with harlots, but 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come;' implying that excess in lawful pleasures keepeth many from Christ and from the things of grace; and therefore here is the work of sobriety, to set bounds and limits to the use and exercise of our liberty, that it may not degenerate into licentiousness.

Well, but what rules shall we observe? In short, then, we offend in sports when they waste our estate, rob us of our time, cheat us of opportunity of privacy and retirement with God, and when they unfit the heart for the duties of religion.

[1.] When they waste their estates. You may not do with your estates as you please; you are stewards, and are to be accountable to God at the last day for every penny. Why should a prodigal have a greater liberty and dominion over his estate than a covetous man? I will tell you for what reason I speak it; prodigals that 'waste their substance with riotous living,' as he described in Luke 15:13, when they are taxed for this, they say, It is my own, and I may do with my own as I please. We are not content to take such an answer from a rich and



covetous man when you press him to charity; if he should say, It is my own, and I shall give what I please, as Nabal said, 1 Sam. 25:11, 'Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not?' The truth is, it is a mistake on both sides; it is not theirs, but God's; he is the great owner. Therefore when recreations are costly, and waste your estates, you cannot give an account of it to God at the great day; you rob your families, at least the poor. Lust starves charity, and makes it a beggar. It is sad when a lust can command thee to do more than the love of God can. When you can lavish away thus much upon your pleasures, and account nothing too dear for them, and every penny be begrudged that is for a use truly good, you are guilty of sacrilege to God, you rob him of his tribute, and you rob the poor of their support, who are God's receivers.

[2.] When they engross your time, which is the most precious commodity that can be, for it cannot be bought with gold and silver, and, when once lost, can never be repaired. God hath appointed pleasures after labour, and when we are grown dull with exercise; but then they should be moderate, that as little time be wasted as may be. But now, when men make a calling of their recreation, and their life is nothing else but a diversion from one pleasure to another, and they spend more time than will serve to quicken them to their work, certainly this is a sin; for then they alter the nature of them, and make it a work, and not a sport. They that spend their whole time in eating, drinking, and sporting, live like beasts rather than men; for it is the beasts' happiness to take pleasure without remorse. Nay, they live rather like plants, which are a less noble sort of beings than beasts. Beasts have their labour, but plants have only life, and time given them that they may grow bulky; for it is the perfection of plants to grow bulky and increase in stature. And yet this is the life of many gallants and idle gentlemen, who live as if they were not born for

business but recreation. Nay, though you do not make a trade of it, yet too much time is not to be spent for the measure; only so much time as will serve to quicken you again to the labours of your general and particular calling. An eminent divine gives this rule concerning recreations, It is not lawful for a man in an ordinary course to spend more time in the day upon any pastime than in religious exercises. He means private religious exercises; he limits him only thus, not constantly. Now, if we be tried by this rule, how many of us would be taken tardy and guilty of sin? As one said, when he read Mat. 5, *Aut hoc non est evangelium, aut nos non sumus evangelici*—Either this is not scripture, or we not christians. So let us look upon this rule; either it is not true, or we do not act aright. Therefore let us debate it a little, and see whether is defective. Either we come short of strictness and circumspection, or the rule comes short of truth and weight. Think of it. Certainly it is most equal that the most needful duties should have most time bestowed upon them. To get assurance and enjoy communion with God, this should be first in your care: Mat. 6:33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you.' It is true we cannot spend so much time in private communion with God as in business, because of the urgency of bodily necessities; yet this is but equal, that we should spend as much time in duties of religion as we do in recreation. Consider, the soul hath its delights, and repasts, and recreations, as well as the body, and needs it as much; and therefore, if our first care should be for the soul, it is but equal that at least as much recreation as we bestow upon the body, so much also should we allow to the soul. Especially when we consider this, that it is some refreshment to the body to go aside from manual labour and converse with God. Once more, that you may think charitably upon this rule, there is a sad character in scripture given of that sort of men, 2 Tim. 3:4, that 'are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' Now consider, will not this too much describe the temper of our

hearts? Will not this text stare in the face of conscience, when we are loath to give an equal time to God and to religion as to our carnal sports and delights? If your expenses of time were written in your debt-books, you would blush to look over the accounts; so much for pleasure, so much for sports, so much for business, and so little for duty and private converse with God. The rule is too true; let conscience be judge. Certainly if we did prize heavenly comforts as much as carnal, we should not complain of the rule as too strict. What shall we think of them who grudge no time spent in pleasure, and yet grudge all time spent in God's service?

[3.] When they unfit the heart for any serious work, by putting the affections out of joint, then they become a snare, and it is high time to think of setting a restraint. All things are to be measured by their end. Now the end of pleasure is only this, to quicken the mind and revive the body, and fit it for work and service. The end of pleasure is not for pleasure, but work and service. Well, then, a thing is no longer good than it conduceth to its end. Now, when the heart is set back, and unfitted more for duty, and less able to pray and meditate, and labour in our callings, by reason of our sports and recreations, it is a sign we have too much let loose the reins to pleasure; for pleasure was appointed to make us better, not worse, more cheerful in the duties of our callings; but now it proveth a clog and a snare.

[4.] Then is sobriety to interpose when our pleasure doth cheat us of opportunity of retirement and religious privacy with God and ourselves. Certainly it is a duty to maintain a constant converse with God: Job 22:21, 'Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace.' He delights to speak with his creatures, and be familiar with them. This is that which is called communion with God, a constant correspondency that is kept up between God and the soul. Now, will a man rob God? This is strange and monstrous. Well, then, when

ease and pleasure will not give way for communion with God, and stops the voice of conscience when it pleads for God, then it is naught. And so for privacy with ourselves; it is a duty to commune with our own hearts: Ps. 4:4, 'Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.' We and our hearts should be often together. Now carnal men give themselves up to pleasure because they cannot endure solitariness and self-conversing; they are loath to look into themselves; like a mill, when it wants corn, it will grind upon itself; they shall be forced to speak to themselves, which they cannot endure. Now pleasures are unlawful when they use them against holy soliloquies, and as a remedy against conscience; as Saul would drive away his evil spirit by David's music. This is a great sin: Amos 6:3, 'They put far from them the evil day;' and ver. 6, 'They drink wine in bowls, but remember not the afflictions of Joseph.' Men beguile their consciences by turning from pleasure to pleasure, and so put off suing out a pardon, the sense of their sins, and humbling themselves before God, and making their peace with God. This is the work of your lives. Therefore when business, entertainments, sports, and pleasures take up your time, and will not allow you to be solitary, and you and your hearts be together, you sin against God: Job 21:13, 'They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.' It is dangerous to employ your whole time in mirth, and in visits, and in company, that should be spent in examining your hearts, humbling your souls and seeking the face of God; so that your hearts grow dead and barren.

Helps to sobriety are two—to consider the preciousness of time, and the vileness and danger of pleasure.

First, The preciousness of time; that will appear in sundry considerations.

1. Time is short. We have a great deal of work to do, and but little time; therefore we should redeem it from pleasure, and rather encroach upon our recreation, and spend it in matters that most concern us. All complain of the shortness of time, and yet every one hath more time than he useth well. We should rather complain of the loss of time than of the shortness of time; as Seneca said, *Non ocepimus brevem vitam, sed fecimus; nec inopes temporis, sed prodigi sumus*—We make our lives far more short than otherwise they would be; and we do not want time, but waste it. We spend it freely upon mirth and vain pleasures, as if we had more than we could well tell what to do withal. Life is short, and yet we throw it away, as if we had not such great work to do as to mortify corruptions and to make our peace with God; as if that eternity which cannot be exhausted in our thoughts did not depend upon this moment. When men are writing of a sermon, and have but little paper left, they write close. Oh! consider, our work lies upon our hands, and therefore the acts of duty should be more close and thick. The sun is even going down; we know not how soon day may be over.

2. Too much time hath been spent already; so will all the godly-wise judge: 1 Peter 4:3, 'For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles;' Rom. 13:12, 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand;' and there is but little left to express your love and thankfulness in glorifying God. Our infancy was spent in ease, and youth in sin, and age in business. Certainly that part of your lives was merely lost which was spent in an unregenerate condition. Saith Austin, *Perdit quod vivit, qui te non diligit*—He loseth that time which he lives that doth not love the Lord. Properly we are not said to live till we live in Christ. A man may be long at sea, tossed to and fro upon the waves, and yet be but little from his port, and cannot be said to have made a long voyage; so a man may abide long in the world, but cannot be said to live long, if he doth not live in Christ.

Reflect this truth upon thy heart. Alas! my life hitherto hath been a death rather than a life, useless, and lost to all spiritual purposes; and shall I still waste my time, and spend my days in ease and idleness? Travellers that have tarried long in their inn mend their pace, and ride as much in an hour as before they did in many; so we have staid too long; oh! let us now mend our pace. Say, I have lived thus long vainly, sinfully, carnally, in an earthly manner; I have little thought of God, and treasuring up for heaven, or providing for my latter end. Oh! how rich might I have been if I had been a good merchant for my soul! How am I now outstripped by many my equals, my youngers in age, but seniors in grace! They are in Christ before me. Oh! why doth God spare me, but to recover that which is lost?

3. Consider, it is uncertain how long thou shalt enjoy the season. The present time is always best, and shall we waste it vainly? We have not a lease of our lives. Ludovicus Capellus tells of a rabbin that, being asked when was the fittest time for a man to repent, he answered him, One day before he dies, meaning presently, for this may be your last day. We know not how soon God may call us to himself. In an orchard some fruits are plucked green, few are left to rot upon the tree. Mariners, that have not the wind in a bottle, are ready to tackle the first gale. We shall never have a better opportunity to consider our ways. In youth we want wisdom and zeal, and in age strength; in the midst of business we want leisure, and in the midst of leisure we want a heart. There is not more efficacy in the latter season than in the former. Do not think that sickness and old age will help you more in the work of repentance than youth. Moral arguments work not without evangelical grace. The bad thief had one foot in hell, and yet he blasphemed. There will be more difficulty in old age, but no help. Sickness and age needs a cordial, and not work; and therefore no season like the present.

4. They that have lost time know the worth of it. Oh! if they might have the happiness to live again that are now in hell, would they waste their precious hours so wantonly and lavishly as you do? Dying men that are affrighted in conscience, discover to us the passions of the damned; they would give all the world for one year or one month to repent. He that so passionately begged for a drop to cool his tongue, how would he have indented with God for a year's respite from torment? In the day of death, all the wealth of the world will not purchase one day longer. We never know what we lose in losing time, till it be too late. It is better to be sensible of the worth of time in earth than in hell. Knowledge of things that are evil and bitter is more easily gained by teaching than by experience and feeling; but we do not lay these things to heart. Christ mourned over Jerusalem because she lost her day: Luke 19:42, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.'

5. We must give an account for time, and therefore let not pleasure engross and take up too much of it. Whenever God comes to reckon with his people, the great thing for which he calls them to an account is their time. He keeps an exact reckoning of the years of his patience: Ps. 95:10, 'Forty years long was I grieved with this generation.' I have given them thirty, forty, fifty years respite to think of their sins, and apply their hearts to be wise for eternity. So of the times and seasons of grace, and methods and dispensations of mercy: Luke 13:7, 'Behold, these three years came I seeking fruit of this fig-tree, and find none;' by which is meant the three years of Christ's ministry with the Jews, for he was then entering on his last half-year. When the scripture speaks in a round number, there is no mystery in it; but when the numbers are uneven and odd, there is something to be noted; these three years Christ had been labouring with them. And Jer. 25:3, 'From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son

of Amon king of Judah (that is the three-and-twentieth year), the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early, and speaking,' &c. Such passages are but pledges of the great process of the day of judgment. God will call to account then for the time of his patience, and the means and mercies you have had. Oh! then, reflect this truth upon your hearts, and say, I must die and give an account for time, and alas! I cannot give an account of one day among a thousand. My time hath been spent in foolish mirth, in troublesome cares, in idle company, in vain sports and revellings; and how shall I be able to look God in the face, and answer him? Do but pass the account with yourselves, and if you cannot answer conscience, you will never be able to answer God. So much time spent in meals and banquets, so much in visits, so much in sports, so much in sleep, so much in worldly employments, and then think how little a remainder there is for God! Oh! if we did but now and then cast up our accounts, it would extremely shame us. If you hire a labourer for the day, and he should come at night and demand pay, and the master should say, What hast thou done for me? would he not be ashamed to say, Thus much time have I spent in meals, thus much in loitering and sporting with my companions, thus much in mending my own apparel, and an hour or half an hour in your work and service. Can this man expect a day's wages? Christians, do you believe that there is a God of recompenses, and that there will be a day of account, that you dare loiter thus, and waste away your time that should be spent in God's service?

Secondly, Consider the baseness and the danger of pleasures, in four considerations—

1. The baser a man is the more he affects carnal delights and is addicted this way: Eccles. 7:4, 'The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.' That which



wise men prefer certainly is better than that which fools make choice of. Now this is the choice of fools. Wise men know there is more to be gained by grave exercises and by spectacles of sorrow than in the places of carnal rejoicing; they know there is nothing to be seen or heard there but snares or baits; little wisdom to be gained, and little improvement of grace and reason to be made.

2. All carnal pleasures are mixed with grief, and leave a sting and bitterness in the issue. You never came away from your sports with such a merry heart as you do from the throne of grace. If men would but consider their experiences after duty and after recreation; there is a calm and serenity in the conscience after the saddest duties when they are ended. Who ever repented of his repentance? They yield some cheering and reviving to the soul. As it is said of Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:18, that she 'went away, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.' Prayer gives ease, as the opening of a vein in a fever. If all come not away alike cheerful from the throne of grace, and this be not a general rule, yet it is no addition to their grief that they have been with God; rather it is some lessening of their trouble. As the pouring out of a complaint into a friend's bosom, though it do not help, it is some ease to the mind; so though God do not come in with a high tide of comfort to the soul, yet it is some ease we have been with God, and presented the case to his pity; there is some spiritual mirth and delight kindled, at least some lessening of grief. But now, not to speak of wicked men, when they come from their pleasures, even the children of God, to whom all things are pure, yet because of the tenderness of their hearts there is always some remorse after their pleasures; and therefore Solomon propounds it as a general rule, Prov. 14:13, 'Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.' It is an allusion to outward laughter, which causeth pain by the too much dilation of the spirits and straining the body, which is a figure of that remorse which

accompanies all worldly joy. All worldly joy begets a sudden damp upon the spirit in the departure. God will still remember us, that we are in our pilgrimage, and complete joy is not to be had here; that every rose in the world grows with a thorn, would teach us to look after more solid comforts.

3. Pleasures, if they be not watched, will soon make us unfit for communion with God and for any solemn duty: Eccles. 2:2, 'I have said of laughter, It is mad, and of mirth, What doth it?' Solomon in the former verse was resolved to make an experiment, and to let loose his heart to carnal pleasures, that he might see what would come of it; to loosen the reins, and turn his heart loose to carnal pleasures; and what was the issue? 'Oh! it is mad!' It soon transports the mind, and puts reason out of frame; it makes a wise man to be like a madman; as madmen in their freaks of mirth have little use of reason. And of laughter it is said, 'What doth it?' that is, whither hast thou carried me? whither art thou now going and carrying my soul? Satan hath a greater advantage upon you in your sports than in your business; therefore to affect them is but playing with the baits, and as the bird sings in the fowler's snare, so do we in the midst of temptation. If christians would but consult with their experience, how often have we smarted when we fall into it. A poor beast fallen into a hole will not fall into the same hole again. Though we see the inconveniency of it, yet our hearts are addicted.

4. It is a sign men have not received the power of grace when they are immoderately addicted to pleasures. It is a description of the carnal state: Titus 3:3, 'We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures.' So much grace as you have, so much victory and command over yourselves; and therefore, when men are wholly led by sense, they are at a great distance from the life of grace. Therefore, as we would not be

accounted carnal, we should be more sober in this kind. We may use pleasures, but should not serve pleasures; but rejoice as if we rejoiced not. If we use a thing, it is for some other end; we enjoy the end, and use the means. You may use pleasure to quicken the mind and revive the body, that it may be quick in the service of God, and not unfit the heart for duties of religion.

## SERMON VIII

We might live soberly, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

SECOND branch, sobriety in meats and drinks. If you ask which is worst, excess in meat or drink, gluttony or drunkenness? I answer—Drunkenness is more odious, and doth more sensibly deprive a man of the use of reason, and put him upon actions unseemly, and is the cause of more diseases and disorders in the body. But then gluttony is very dangerous, partly because it is not of such a great disreputation among men as drunkenness, and shame is one of the restraints of sin; partly because it insensibly creeps upon us, as Austin complained, *Ebrietas longe a me est, crapula autem nonnunquam surrepit servo tuo*—Lord, I abhor drunkenness, but gluttony creeps unawares upon me. If it be inquired again, which sin is worst, he that is immoderate in the use of pleasure, or he that is immoderate in worldly cares? I answer—Gross intemperance brings more dishonour to God, and worldly cares more spiritual disadvantage to our souls. A worldling doth not dishonour God openly so much as a drunkard, but then he is more incapable of conviction and of heavenly things; and by distracting his heart with cares he shrewdly endangereth his salvation. As for drunkards and sensualists, their face declareth their shame, and their crime is written in their foreheads; and so they have less of defence against

the strokes of the word; therefore our Saviour saith. Mat. 21:31, that 'the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.'

These things premised, I come to speak of sobriety in the use of meats and drinks. I join them both together, because grace is exercised in the restraint of both. Christians, as we are your remembrancers to God, so we must be God's remembrancers to you, and every part of conversation falls under some rule of religion. The apostle saith, 1 Peter 1:15, 'As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;' in every point, and every affair of life; and therefore eating and drinking being one part of human conversation, it is necessary to give you some directions. It is very familiar with men to miscarry by appetite, more familiar with man than with beasts. There is no beast but swine will overeat themselves; they know their stint and measure. But, Lord, how far is man fallen! Nature is not only blind in point of worship, but weak in point of appetite. The relics of inordinancy are in the regenerate. The holiest men had need of caution, as Christ saith to his disciples, 'Take heed and beware that your hearts be not over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness,' Luke 21:34. And the apostle bids Timothy to flee youthful lusts, to be chaste and pure as he was: 2 Tim. 2:22, 'Flee also youthful lusts, but follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord with a pure heart.' Yea, those that are wisest and most accomplished many times are swallowed up in this gulf. Who would have thought that Adam and Eve, endowed with the image of God, should have miscarried by appetite, by eating? or that Solomon, who had such large gifts and knowledge, from the cedar to the hyssop, should miscarry by women? and that persons of excellent abilities are many times of a riotous conversation? Certainly we are weakest where we think ourselves strong. When the upper part of the soul is sufficiently fortified with counsel and knowledge, the devil dare not assault us in point of

error, but then he draws us away by appetite, and the baits of the flesh; and therefore we had need speak of sobriety in meats and drinks.

Now sobriety becomes all persons, especially magistrates, ministers, women, and youth. Magistrates and ministers, because of the dignity of their office; women, because of the imbecility of their sex; and youth, because of the slipperiness of their age.

1. For magistrates: Prov. 31:4, 5, 'It is not for kings, O Lemue, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink. Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish.' It is an allusion to the custom among the Jews; if a man were condemned to die, it was their courtesy to give him spiced wine to attenuate and thin the blood, that it might sooner pass out of the body, and to inebriate the senses that he might be less sensible of his pain. Now 'it is not for kings to drink wine,' not for the judge, but for the condemned person. So Eccles. 10:16, 17, 'Woe unto thee, O land, when thy princes eat in the morning. Blessed art thou, O land, when thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.' Magistrates cannot be good or bad alone; when they are given to sensual delights, it is more odious in them, for it unfits and diverts them from public business; when they spend their time in excess, they are totally indisposed for counsel and wise debates, and weighty affairs; therefore the Carthaginians forbade wine to magistrates during the time of their magistracy; and by Solon's law a drunken prince was to be slain.

2. For ministers, their work lies with God, therefore they had need live in constant sobriety. Under pain of death, neither Aaron nor his sons the priests were to drink wine or strong drink, when they went into the tabernacle of the congregation. Lev. 10:9, 'Do not drink wine or strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the

tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die. It shall be a statute for ever, throughout your generations.' It is probable Nadab and Abihu's miscarriage in offering strange fire was occasioned by fumes of strong drink; for presently God makes that law for Aaron and his sons. So the apostle: 1 Tim. 3:3, 'A bishop must be sober, not given to wine,' because of the excellency of his ministration, which requires meditation, and freedom of contemplation, which is hindered by the fumes of wine and strong drink.

3. For women, because of the weakness and modesty of their sex. In some nations it was death for women to be intemperate, because by this means they make shipwreck of that modesty which is the ornament of that feeble sex; and therefore excess in them is more filthy and shameful.

4. For youth, they need chiefly to be pressed to this sobriety, because of the slipperiness of their age. Their judgments are weak and green, and their affections are violent. Nature is strong in them, and Satan is diligent to seduce them; he prizeth young affections; and they are but newly come to the use of their reason, from living the life of sense; and the natural heat of the stomach that is found in youth is a great provocation. Though all need to be fortified, yet especially these.

But what is this sobriety that is required? I answer—You may know it by the sin that is contrary to it; and we sin against sobriety when we offend by quantity, quality, and in the manner of usage.

1. There must not be offence in quantity. Fulness of bread was one of Sodom's sins, Ezek. 16:49; that is, excess in the use of the creature. Now, how shall we state this excess? Not merely by the custom of nations, for sins may be authorised by general practice, as Sodom's sin was fulness of bread. Not merely by the greatness of the estate;

plenty doth not warrant excess. If a man have never so much cloth, yet he would not make his garment too big for him. If the meat be too salt, it is no excuse to the cook to say he had good store of salt by him; so will it be no plea that God hath given you plenty and a great estate to warrant you in your excess. The heart may be overcharged when the purse is not. Neither must it be measured by the capacity of the stomach. Christ doth not say, Take heed you do not overcharge your stomach with surfeiting and drunkenness, but your heart, Luke 21:34. Some men are strong to drink wine; they are tubs and hogsheads, as Ambrose calls them, rather than men. But it is not when the stomach is overcharged, but the conscience, when it grows secure and carnal; or the heart, when it is not fit for duties, less apt to be lifted up to God in prayers and thanksgivings, and the mind cannot be lifted up to heavenly things. So that the measure in this kind must be our fitness to perform the duties of our general and particular calling; and when that is exceeded, then we sin.

2. For the quality. We must not hanker after quails, and desire dainty food; that is a sign lust is made wanton; and nature, being perverted, is grown delicate, which otherwise aimeth but at necessaries. Indeed it is God's great indulgence to us to give such things as are refreshments to nature, not only for support but delight. The substance of our food might suffice to nourish, but God hath created them with smell, taste and colours, for our greater delight. But we must not be too curious; this is 'nourishing your hearts as in a day of slaughter,' James 5:5. And still the disposition increaseth; therefore it is good to check curiosity at first. Curiosity in diet God takes notice of: Deut. 14:21, 'Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk;' affecting excessively the pleasing of the palate with too much curiosity. It is said of the rich glutton, 'He fared sumptuously every day,' Luke 16:19. I know feasts are allowed, and sometimes a more liberal use of the creature; Christ honoured a feast with a miracle of

changing water into wine. But a constant delicacy brings a brawn upon the heart, and a wantonness upon the appetite. When men do nothing else but knit pleasure to pleasure, they nourish their hearts, that is, rear up their lusts, and are fond of the flesh. We are still to maintain and carry on the spiritual conflict, and therefore this curiosity and hunting after novelties is contrary to the intent of the christian life, which is a war with the flesh, not to make it wanton.

3. The manner of enjoying the creature; it must be with caution and with piety.

[1.] With caution. Job sacrificed while his sons feasted, Job 1:5. We are apt to forget God most when he is best to us; and when our hearts are warmed and inflamed with high and good cheer, we are apt to sin; therefore your heart should not be let loose to the fruition of outward comforts. It is ill to trust appetite without a guard, as it is to trust a child among a company of poisons: Prov. 23:1, 2, 'When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee; and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite;' that is Solomon's advice; 'And rejoice as if you rejoiced not,' 1 Cor. 7:31. Consider you are in the midst of dangers and temptations. When these baits are before you, self-denial is put to the exercise; and here you are tried to see what command you have over yourselves. Men lay aside all care when they go to festival meetings. It were well to lay aside worldly cares, that you might not eat the bread of sorrow; but take heed of a secret snare; you should not lay aside spiritual care.

[2.] You must use them with piety. God must not be banished from our delights and refreshments; we must receive them from God, enjoy them in God, and refer them to God. We must receive them from God, who is the author, the giver, the allower, and the sanctifier of them. You must take all your comforts out of God's hands with



thanksgiving, then your table will not so easily be made a snare. How sweet is this when you can say in good conscience, Lord, thou hast provided this for me, this is the comfort thou hast allowed me. The apostle saith, 1 Tim. 4:4, 5, 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.' In the word God hath declared the use to be lawful; there we understand our liberty and right by Christ; and in prayer we ask God's leave and blessing, that so we may act faith upon his providence; for man doth not live by bread alone, he must receive his strength and nourishment from God. All the creatures since the fall are armed with a curse, and therefore we had need take them as blessings out of God's hand in and through Jesus Christ; and we must enjoy them in God; God must not be forgotten when he remembers us. As you refresh the body with food, let the soul be refreshed too by meditation; that is the soul's refreshment. Consider his liberality; how many things doth God give at a feast? It is God that gives wealth to furnish our table, health to use them, peace to meet together; and Christ hath purchased liberty that we may make use of all these blessings. The soul must have its refreshment; and so may we meditate upon Christ's sweetness, the fatness of God's house. In Luke 14, when Christ was eating bread in the pharisee's house, then he discoursed of the spiritual wedding supper, and of eating bread in his Father's kingdom. Then you must use them to God, as the end and scope: 1 Cor. 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' No pleasure should be its own end. The immediate end is the sustentation of the body, but the remote end should be service and God's glory. We do not eat to eat, but eat to live. Pleasure is the handmaid of nature, but not the guide. The end of eating is to repair the strength which hath been weakened in duty, and fit us to attend upon duty again: Eccles. 10:17, 'Thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness;' not for mere delight, but for

service. Thus you see what it is to be sober in the use of meats and drinks.

Third branch, sobriety in apparel.

The third branch of sobriety is in apparel. That this is a part of sobriety appears by that scripture, 1 Tim. 2:9, 'That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.' We must be moderate as to apparel, as well as to other delights and comforts of life.

In managing this part of the discourse, I shall first give you some rules, and then some helps.

First, For the rules. The work of sobriety is to moderate the affection, and then the use.

1. To moderate the affection to vain and immodest apparel; there the disease begins: Col. 3:5, 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection.' There may be even in those that are poor a desire and an envy at the bravery of others (which is grievous to the Spirit of God) when we want it ourselves. Pride in apparel is not only seen in the wearing, but in the desire of it, when we can no sooner see a vain fashion but we are taken with it, as Ahaz was taken with the altar at Damascus, and we must have another of the like fashion. It is the duty of christians 'to consider one another, to provoke to love and to good works,' Heb. 10:24, who should be most sober, most modest in their apparel; but we often provoke one another to excess and pomp, and strive who shall excel; therefore this desire, when we are taken with vain fashions, is sinful. And if our hand will not reach to it, then we envy and speak against others, not out of zeal, but emulation, because we cannot attain to the like ourselves as Diogenes trode on

Plato's rich garment with a greater pride, Calco Platonis fastum. Envy shows we value these things. Now, to moderate this secret envy, take a consideration or two—

[1.] If we have food, and raiment to cover our nakedness, why should we trouble ourselves about more? 1 Tim. 6:8, 'And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.' When God first made Adam and Eve apparel, he made them coats of skins, plain and homely ware; and they were greater persons than we are. And it is said of the children of God, those of whom the world was not worthy, Heb. 11:37, 'They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins.' Our condition is much better; therefore let us not envy others when they shine and excel in pomp of the world; it is enough God hath given us anything for warmth and use.

[2.] Consider how holy men have behaved themselves upon a like occasion. It is recorded in the life of Bernard, if he saw a poor man in coarse habit, he would say, It may be this poor man may be glorious within, and have a better soul than thou hast; but if he saw a man with a fine garment, he would say, It may be he excels thee as much within as without. So Pambus, when he saw one very curious in dressing herself, he wept, saying, Have I been as careful to please Christ, to deck my soul with grace in the sight of God, as she is to please a wanton lover? Thus should we make a spiritual use of such a spectacle, and strive to be as fine in God's sight as they are in bravery without.

2. The work of sobriety is not only to moderate the affection, but to moderate the use of apparel and outward ornament, that we may not be pompous and excessive. That there is such a sin as excess in apparel appears by the frequent dissuasives of the word. The scripture takes notice of it chiefly in women, but men have their

share. The Holy Ghost by the prophet Isaiah is pleased to give us an account of the fashions of those days, and to make an inventory of their wardrobe: chap. 3:18–24, 'In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils;' and therefore threateneth a heavy judgment, ver. 24, 25, 'And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well-set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding with sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.' Mark the judgment; a scab, which meeteth with their aim, which was to set off their beauty; and the violence, incivilities and rudeness of the soldiers to meet with the matter of their sin, who shall strip them of their garments, that they should not have rags to cover their nakedness. So 1 Peter 3:3, the Spirit of God takes notice of 'the outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel.' By which he reproveth, not a decent dressing, but a laying of it forth in curls and locks and wanton plaits. So Luke 16:19, there it is taken notice of as a luxury in the rich man that 'he was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.' Curious clothing is made to be one of his crimes, as well as gluttony and neglect of the poor; usually they go together. And the experience of all ages showeth that there is such a sin, and in these times more abundantly, when all distinctions of ranks and place and superiors and inferiors are taken away.

But how shall we do to find out the sin, cases being so different, and the custom of ages and nations so various? I answer in the general—Such a modesty as is without exception doth best become the saints and christians indeed, who are chiefly to regard the inward ornament, to adorn themselves in the sight of God rather than in the sight of men: 1 Peter 3:4, 'Whose adorning let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.' And again, they are to stand at a distance from a snare, and to avoid all appearance of evil: 1 Thes. 5:22, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.' And again, they are to 'give no offence, neither to Jew nor gentile, nor to the church of God,' 1 Cor. 10:32; neither to their fellow-members within, nor to observers without. Therefore, if we had to do with a gracious heart, the case would be soon decided; they do not love to walk upon the brink, nor to come near a sin. An inoffensive modest habit is free from all exceptions; and if men and women were wise, they would soon see that it would neither lessen their esteem with God or men, but increase it rather. But more particularly, persons guilty are clamorous, and say, Why do we abridge them of their liberty, and take upon us to condemn their garb? I confess it is a sin to condemn what God hath not condemned. There are two sorts of superstition—positive, when we count that holy that God never made holy, and negative, when we condemn that for sinful which God never made sinful. Therefore what rules can be given to trace and find out the sin? The abuse will be best discovered by considering the use. What are the ends of apparel? They are diverse, either for necessity to defend the body against the injuries of the weather; therefore they that discover their nakedness sin against that; or else for honesty or modesty, to cover that deformity of the body which was the fruit of sin; or else for profit, such apparel as suits with our callings and course of life; or for frugality, according to the proportion of our estate, that we may not waste the good gifts of

God, that should be kept either for family uses or for other good uses; or for distinction of persons, of age, sex, and rank: Deut. 22:5, 'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination to the Lord thy God.' By these ends the abuse may be conceived.

[1.] It is a foul abuse of apparel and ornament when men and women disguise nature, and seek to mend that which God hath made, by patching, painting, and other varnishes of art. Jezebel is infamous in scripture for painting; and dare any sober woman that pretends to be a christian put herself into her garb and fashion? They reprove God that seek to mend nature. Cyprian saith, It is a dislike of God's work. So Tertullian before him, They dislike God's workmanship in their own faces, and consult with the devil how to mend it. That which is natural is from God, and that which is artificial is from the devil. How shall God own them at the last day when they are ashamed of his workmanship? Will thy maker own thy disguised face? He will say, This is not the face that I made. We should appear before men with no other face than we would appear before God with at the day of judgment. Would I have God see me thus disguised, patched, and painted? Doth not conscience startle at the thought of it? When God shall come to take knowledge of all the works he hath made, wouldst thou appear then with these spots and artificial varnish?

[2.] Addictedness to fashions, certainly that argues such a levity that doth not suit with the gravity of religion. That there is a sin in fashions is plain by Isa. 3, where the Holy Ghost is pleased to give us an inventory of the wardrobe of the women among the Jews; for what reason, but to show they were vainly addicted to fashions. So Zeph. 1:8, 'I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.' God takes notice of pride in

apparel, though it be in courtiers, nobles, princes, and kings' children, their new and strange exotic garbs; therefore much more is it evil in private persons and those that are of an inferior rank. But you will say, If we must not follow the fashion, of what date should our habits be? Should we go back as far as Adam, to clothe ourselves with skins and leaves, and run back to the rudeness of former ages? I answer—There may be as much vanity and affectation in being too much out of the fashions of the times and places in which we live, as in being too much in it; therefore our liberty in this kind is to be determined by the general and received custom of the gravest and godly wise. It stands not with christian gravity to be first in a fashion and affect that which is new, nor to take it up when it is only the fashion among those that are light and vain; they are not to be imitated, for that is conforming ourselves to the fashions of the world, which the apostle disproves: Rom. 12:2, 'Be not conformed to this world.' The apostle speaks in the business of long hair; and when he had spoken what an unseemly thing it was for a man, ruffian-like, to go with long hair; 1 Cor. 11:14, 'Doth not nature itself teach you that if a man have long hair it is a shame to him?' he adds, ver. 16, 'But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God;' which seems to carry this sense, that if women will come with their nakedness into the congregation, and if men will wear long hair, and if any man or woman will contend and say the thing is indifferent, and they have a liberty in this kind, this is the short answer, 'We have no such custom, neither the churches of God.' Therefore the general and received custom of the churches of God ought to be a law in all such cases. Mark, the vain world is not to give you a precedent, but the use of the churches, and the practice of godly christians, and their sobriety.

[3.] When our apparel exceeds the proportion of our callings and abilities. There is more due to persons of a higher rank than to those

of inferior place: Mat. 11:8, 'They that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.' It is more commendable in them that stand before princes than in others; and therefore our rank and place and estate must be considered. It is a wrong to the family and the poor when our garments exceed our abilities. Nay, but take them both together; though they do not exceed our abilities, yet if they exceed our state, place, and calling, it is a sin. As for instance, for ministers, who should be mortified to the glory and pomp of the world, it is not fit for them to shine in bravery as others do. So for ministers' wives; the scripture is pleased to take notice of women in that relation above all other women: 1 Tim. 3:11, 'Their wives must be grave, sober.' And for servants, it is odious to see them strive to be in a garb exceeding their station, and to do as others of better rank and higher place. As habits were given for necessity, so for distinction of ranks and orders of men; and as odd a sight it is to see an inferior exalting in pomp as to put the attire of the head upon the feet and shoes on the head.

[4.] When it suits not with modesty and chastity. Garments were given to cover nakedness and the deformity that was introduced by sin; therefore the apostle saith, 'Let the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array,' 1 Tim. 2:9. And therefore the leaving the breasts naked, in whole or in part, is a transgression of this rule; they uncover their nakedness, which they should veil and hide, especially in God's presence; as the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 11:10, 'The woman ought to have power on her head, because of the angels.' In the assembly there you meet with angels and devils; angels to observe your garb and carriage, and devils to tempt you; therefore be covered because of the angels. Yet usually women come hither with a shameless impudence into the presence of God, men, and angels. This is a practice that neither suits with modesty nor conveniency; nothing can be alleged for it but reasons



of pride and wantonness; it feeds your own pride, and provokes lust in others. You would think they were wicked women that should offer others poison to drink; they do that which is worse, lay a snare for the soul; uncover that which should be covered; lest you provoke others of your rank to imitate your vanity, if they should not by the fear of God be guarded from unclean thoughts and filthy desires. Now christians should be far from allowing sin in themselves, or provoking it in others.

[5.] When dressing of the body takes up too much of our hearts and time, so as to cause us to neglect the inward adorning, and by it we are tempted to pride. Certainly there is a sin in fashions themselves, but the greatest sin is the pride of the heart. The garment falls under a rule; but apparel is not the offence, but pride: Isa. 3:16, 'The daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-out necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet.' Better never wear jewels or costly raiment more, than to be tempted by it to pride. Therefore the spiritual ornament you should still preserve is being humble in spirit: 1 Peter 3:4, 'Let your adorning be the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.' When you forget that, it is a sad exchange. Outward adornment belongs to the pomp of the world, but the inward adornment is our spiritual glory and excellency. The outward adorning is to please men, but the inward adorning pleaseth God. Now we should rather please God than men; better never please men than offend God.

Secondly, To offer some helps.

1. Consider, curiosity in clothes argues deformity of mind; a godly, serious, humble christian is above these things. Therefore, how can we choose but think that a man or woman hath vanity in his heart,

that is so clothed with it upon his back? Look, as plasters argue a wound or sore, so do these exotic and vain attires argue a wound and blot in the soul; that there is pride, vanity, and levity there. Clemens Alexandrinus observes that the Lacedemonians permitted only harlots and infamous women and common prostitutes to go in gorgeous attire. Clothes, then, are the flag and ensign which pride hangs out, and the nest of wantonness.

2. To be proud of clothes is to be proud of our own shame. Before sin came in man did not need a garment. Look, as the sun is adorned with light, it needs no trimming and ornament, so man in innocency was adorned with grace, and needed no other robe; but when he sinned, he needed garments. So then he that is proud of his clothes is but proud of the rags with which his wounds are bound up. Clothes are a memorial that we were once disobedient to God. Shall a thief be proud of his shackles, or a malefactor of his brand or mark in his forehead? This is a time of mourning, not of triumph; therefore God at first clothed Adam with skins, an habit that becomes mourning. We shall not need these things in heaven; clothes are only there in use where sin is.

3. Consider that habit makes not the man. A horse is not chosen by his trappings, but by his strength and swiftness; the trappings are things external, that conduce nothing to his goodness; so man is not to be valued by his habit, it is but the excrement of silk-worms; not by the ornaments of the body, but the endowments of the mind. *Imperatoria majestas, saith Seneca, virtute constat, non corporis cultu.* And therefore, if you would excel others indeed, you should excel them in grace and virtue. Alas! many are but dung finely dressed; the hidden man of the heart, that is the man. Grace is the best dressing, and that which is never out of fashion; by this men are valued. The more wise and excellent men are indeed, the less curious

in their apparel. Cato, that had been consul at Rome, never wore apparel that exceeded an hundred pence. Let great ones be known by their modesty of apparel.

4. Consider, when you are most gorgeous, the beasts excel you. Cræsus, king of Lydia, being gorgeously arrayed, asked Solon if ever he had seen a more beautiful spectacle? He answered, Yes, sir; I have seen peacocks and pheasants and other birds. And Mat. 6:29, Christ takes notice of this, that 'Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies.' The draughts and colours of nature are more beautiful than art. Therefore neither delight in bravery nor envy it; when thou seest the bravery of others, thou hast a fairer flower in thy garden.

5. Think often of Jesus Christ hanging naked upon the cross, who was stripped of his garments to satisfy for thy excess. Oh! shall we again put him to open shame, as if he died in vain? say, Shall pride live when Christ died to subdue it, and mortify it, and to expiate for it?

Fourth branch, sobriety in worldly cares.

The next branch is sobriety of moderation in worldly cares. These also besot the mind, and deprive it of the sense of spiritual things. By a strange fascination and enchantment, our care becometh our pleasure, and men grow quite drunk with the world, so that they are always scraping and raking here as if their whole time were given for nothing but getting wealth.

First, What this carking and worldly care is that must be moderated. The scripture doth not only allow but require an honest diligence. It is a command as well as a threatening: 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread,' Gen. 3:19. The grievousness and

burdensomeness of labour falls under the threatening; but the labour itself is a command, as moral as any of the ten. The apostle saith, Phil. 4:6, 'Be careful for nothing;' but he doth not say, Do nothing. The scriptures would not have us to be idle and careless; they commend the diligent hand. To let children and family shift for themselves were not only unchristian, but unmanly; we see the very brute beasts provide for their young ones. Diligence is one of the means by which God provideth for us. But yet, though the scriptures do allow a diligent care, yet they forbid a carking distrust. There is *σπόνδη*, a care of diligence, and *μεριμνᾶ*, a care of diffidence; the first is a duty laid upon us, the second is a sin. Faith is painful, but not distrustful. It is represented by the emblem of a pair of compasses; while one foot is fast in the centre, the other wanders about in the circumference. So the heart is fixed in God by faith; it depends upon him, and looks for the success and issue of all from his blessing, though the hand in the meantime be employed in the use of means. Certainly God allows us careful provision against all visible evils, though they be to come; as Joseph stored the granaries of Egypt against the dear years. But not to distract ourselves with a supposal of future contingencies; therefore our Saviour saith, Mat. 6:34, 'Take no thought for the morrow;' and ver. 31, 'Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?' This is that the scripture forbids. You ought not to trouble yourselves with uncertain future events, but to refer yourselves to the disposal of God. Briefly, sinful cares may be thus discerned—

1. Distrustful care is troubled about the event, what shall be the issue, but lawful care is employed in the use of means. The event is God's act, duty is ours; and to trouble ourselves about it is to take God's work out of his hands. We set ourselves in God's stead when we think to accomplish our ends by our own industry. The Lord might lay this

burden upon us as a punishment of sin, but he would have us cast it upon himself: 1 Peter 5:7, 'Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.' To neglect the means were to neglect providence; but then to trouble ourselves about the event, what will be the issue, and how these means will succeed, that is to renounce providence, to reproach God as if he were not solicitous for us. A christian is not to trouble himself what will become of him and his posterity, that is God's care; and it is altogether needless in us, for God is all-sufficient; but he is to be diligent in a lawful calling, and then let God do what seemeth him good.

2. Sinful care flieth to unlawful means, but religious care keepeth within the bounds of duty: Prov. 16:8, 'Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.' It useth no means that are indirect and sinful. Men that will not trust God with success, will soon go out of God's way. The unbeliever looketh not to what is just, but to what is gainful; as those that gathered manna on the sabbath day, and 'trode wine-presses, and brought in sheaves, and laded asses,' Neh. 13:15.

3. Sinful care is immoderate in the use of lawful means: Eccles. 2:23, 'For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night.' Those that have none else to trust to, no wonder if they make use of their own endeavours to the uttermost; but he that hath an heavenly Father should not so cumber and distract his spirit: Eccles. 4:8, 'There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother; yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good?' The world will not let them be quiet; they toil and moil, and there is no end. When men multiply means, they have no trust in God. God is tender of all his creatures, much more of the reasonable creature.

4. Sinful care increaseth upon good duties, but diligent care fairly complieth with them. Christ warns his disciples, Luke 21:34, 'Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life.' Our care for eternal things doth not carry any proportion to the excellency of them, but they are laid aside: Mat. 13:22, 'He heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.' They take up the room, travail, and affection which heavenly things should have, so that they have no time to converse with God, or to look into their souls, so that the heart groweth poor, lean, distempered, and unfit for holy uses; they are greedy of wealth, and prodigal of salvation.

Secondly, Whence it ariseth. From a distrust of God, and discontent with our portion.

1. From a distrust of God. Carking takes his work out of his hands, as the care of the son is a reproof to the father. You tax his being and providence. A child at school taketh no care for maintenance, because he hath a father: Mat. 6:32, 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.'

2. From discontent with our portion. We have never enough, and expect more than God will allow: Heb. 13:5, 'Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' It is not our necessities, but the enlargement of our desires, that causeth carking. We would have more and more worldly goods, which hindereth us from trusting God's promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' The sea hath banks and bottom, but not man's heart. We begin and end with nothing, and yet nothing will suffice us. There is a story of a discourse between Pyrrhus and Cynicus, when

he told him of his designs. When thou hast vanquished the Romans, what wilt thou then do? Conquer Sicily. What then? Subdue Africa. When that is effected, what then? Then we will sit down, and be quiet, and spend our time contentedly. And what hinders but thou mayest do so before, without all this labour and peril?

Thirdly, The cure of it. Cure it by Christ's arguments: Mat. 6:25, 'Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life more than meat? and the body than raiment?' &c.

1. Life is more than meat, and the body than raiment, ver. 25. Deus donando debet; God by giving is become a debtor. Life, without any aid of ours, is a pledge of more mercy. God provided us two bottles of milk when we were new-born: Ps. 22:9, 10, 'Thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope, when I was upon my mother's breast. I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly.' Who formed us, and suckled us, and continued us hitherto? We are unthankful to God if we ascribe it to ourselves.

2. Consider God's providence to other creatures. God feeds the fowls: Mat 6:26, 'Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are not ye better than they?' God paints the lilies: ver. 28, 29, 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Luke instances in the raven, which is animal cibi rapacissimum, a creature ravenous of food: chap. 12:24, 'Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them.' The raven is a bird of providence: Ps. 147:9, 'He giveth to the beast his food, and to the

young ravens which cry.' The raven as soon as it is hatched it is left to prayer, for the crying of the ravens is their prayer. Now ask the beasts if there be not a providence: Job 12:7, 'But ask now the beasts, and they will teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.' These creatures have no ordinary means, they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns; the lilies spin not; and yet God feedeth and clotheth them; 'And shall he not much more clothe you? O ye of little faith!' Mat. 6:30.

3. Consider the fruitlessness of our care unless God add a blessing: ver. 27, 'Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?' A man never gets anything of God by not trusting him. He that will not take God's word must look elsewhere. The way to obtain earthly things is to be less careful and distracted about them.

4. Consider it is for them to distrust who know no providence, or no particular providence: ver. 32, 'For after all these things do the gentiles seek.' Distrust and carking becometh none but those that will not grant a providence. Shall our profession be christian, and our practice heathen?

5. Set your minds on a higher interest: ver. 33, 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' You then promote both cares at once. Christianity is a compendious way; the body followeth the state of the soul. Man was made to contemplate and enjoy better things; and when he doth so, these things shall be given in over and above.

## **SERMON IX**

Righteously, &c.—TITUS 2:12.



I NOW come to the second branch, wherein the duty of man is expressed, and that is justice or righteousness, which implies the duties of our public capacity and relation to others. Though the discourse be moral, yet it may conduce to spiritual ends. Therefore let us see what may be spoken concerning justice and righteousness. Justice is a grace by which we are inclined to perform our duty to our neighbour. There are many distinctions usual in this matter, which I shall omit, and only deliver you the nature of this grace in some general rules; and then show you how much it concerns us to look after this grace, to be just and righteous in the course of our conversation.

First, To give you the nature of this grace in some general rules, and they are such as these. To give every man his own; to do injury to no man; to make restitution; to bear the injuries of others with patience; in many cases not to demand our own extreme right; to do as we would be done unto; public good to be preferred before private; and that according to our power we must be useful to others.

First rule, To give every man his own. This is laid down, Rom. 13:7, 'Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.' This due ariseth either by virtue of the law of God, or by virtue of a bargain and contract, or by virtue of a voluntary promise.

1. There is a due that ariseth by virtue of the law of God; such things cannot be dispensed with, therefore the obligation cannot be made void. As for instance, a child is to honour his parents by the law of God, and a father cannot discharge his child from obedience, as we may remit a duty or thing that is due by bargain and contract, because we have greater power over it. There is a due to every one, as reverence to parents, obedience and tribute to magistrates, double

honour to ministers and the guides of the church. It is injustice to deny parents a respect; it is theft and robbery to defraud magistrates of their tribute or ministers of their maintenance: it is not a gift, but a debt, the scripture saith, they are 'worthy of double honour,' 1 Tim. 5:17; 'Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.' And it is not in a begging way, as a contribution, but as an honorary stipend. Things that are due by natural duty cannot be dispensed with, as things due by bargain and contract, because the obligation cannot be made void.

2. There is a due that ariseth by way of bargain and contract: Rom. 13:8, 'Owe no man anything, but to love one another.' If money be borrowed but not restored, it is theft and injustice. If you bargain with another, the full bargain is due to him: 1 Thes. 4:6, 'Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.' He is to enjoy his full bargain. The apostle saw a need of enforcing this doctrine in the church to prevent the iniquity of traffic. The seller is not to work upon the simplicity of the buyer, nor the buyer upon the necessity of the seller, but all things must be done equally, else God will be offended. But chiefly is this iniquity committed, and that it is in an high degree, when the reward you are to give is not bought with money, but earned with labour. Defrauding the hireling and servants of their wages is a very crying sin, the greatest height of iniquity; it cries in the ears of the Lord of hosts: James 5:4, 'Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.' God is their patron. This is a grievous sin, because it is their life and their support and solace: Deut. 24:14, 15, 'Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, that is poor and needy, whether he be

of thy brethren, or of the strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down upon it: for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.' It is often spoken of in scripture. There is a greater and more pressing inconvenience to defraud the labourer than to defraud others.

3. Again, there is a due ariseth by voluntary promise. We make ourselves debtors, and it is part of justice to make good our promise, though it be to our own hurt and loss: Ps. 15:4, 'He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.' All promises must be kept but those that are evil, and those are void in making. Why? Because they are bonds of iniquity; so they must be broken, and not kept; and again, because they are contrary to the former promise we have made to God to obey his laws. It is evil to make a sinful promise, and it is a greater sin to keep it.

Second rule, Do injury to no man: Jer. 22:3, 'Do no wrong, do no violence.' Do no wrong to their persons, their names, or their goods.

1. Not to their persons; that will not suit with the mildness of religion. The apostle saith, Phil. 2:15, 'Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke.' Man by nature is fierce, 'hateful, and hating one another,' Titus 3:3; that is his disposition; but now the children of God their nature is changed; the Spirit of God is in all his members. Now Christ went about doing good; he did no harm, neither was guile found in his mouth; and if you would be the children of God, you must be like him, be harmless. That we may be mindful of this, the Lord hath given us an emblem of it almost in all things, among the birds, the beasts, the plants, the worms. Among the birds, natural men are compared to the eagle and the kite, birds that are ravenous; and a christian to the dove: Mat. 10:16, 'Be

harmless as doves.' Among the beasts, natural men are compared to the wolf and the lion, and a christian to the lamb. Among the plants, natural men are compared to briars and pricking thorns that cannot be touched. Saith the Spirit of God, 'The sons of Belial shall be as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands,' 2 Sam. 23:6. And the children of God are compared to the lily. And then among the worms; wicked men are compared to vipers, Mat. 3:7, 'O generation of vipers!' And the children of God to an innocent worm apt to be trod upon, to receive injury, and do none: Ps. 22:6, 'I am a worm, and no man.' Usually in a well-ordered kingdom the fierceness of men is restrained by the severity of laws; but yet it is bewrayed, and breaks out in fury against those that fall under the displeasure of the magistrate, especially for matters of religion, out of blind zeal; there civil men are fierce and cruel. And therefore it is notable that Paul, when he makes an acknowledgment of his natural condition, saith, 1 Tim. 1:13, 'I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious.' That Paul was a blasphemer of God and a persecutor of the saints is clear; but how doth he say he was injurious, since elsewhere he said he 'walked in all good conscience to this day?' I suppose it relates to the violence of his persecution, to his haling and dragging the saints out of their houses, having a commission from the rulers, Acts 8:3, and that he calls injury. Thus it falls out, men are transported by irregularity, heats, and violence, and forget humanity. Now in such cases, though the cause be right, yet this violent dragging and insulting over those that are in their power is but natural rage let loose; and this Paul confesseth to be his injuriousness, and a crime that kept the same pace with his blasphemy and persecution. True zeal is manifested by pity and compassion. The heights and fervours of zeal are only necessary when evil men are countenanced, and when it is dangerous to appear against them, not when they fall under our power; then there is some pity due to their humanity.

2. Do no wrong to their names; next to their persons this is to be valued. A slanderer is worse than a thief; the one is publicly odious, but the other robs us of our better treasure: Prov. 22:1, 'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,' and more conducive to our usefulness for God than wealth. A wrong done to the estate is sooner repaired than a wrong done to the name of others, for a reproach divulged is hardly recalled; when the wound is cured, yet the scar remains; and therefore this is a very great evil to do wrong to their names; especially when you reproach the godly, and do wrong to them, because their discredit lights upon religion. God is much concerned in the credit and honour of his servants. You hinder their service, and lay them open to the rage of the world. A blemished instrument is of little use. Num. 12:8, saith God, 'Were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?' To speak against persons eminent and useful for God in their age is to render them suspected to the world; and who would drink of a suspected fountain? You hinder their use and serviceableness. And the wrong is greater when one christian blemisheth another, for one scholar to speak against another, and one lawyer against another; so for one christian to speak against another, it aggravates the injury. Therefore, when there is cause to speak against a man, it should be with grief.

3. There must be no wrong to their goods, no invading of right and property: Eph. 4:28, 'Let him that stole steal no more.' Every one is against a gross thief; but the more plausible and secret ways of wrong, and getting estates into your hands, or abusing trusts, is theft. The apostle there writes to the Ephesians that lived in the city, and by iniquity of traffic were likely to heap up an estate to themselves.

I shall here take occasion to handle a question or two about property.

[1.] Is there any property, yea or nay? or must all goods lie in common? This was Plato's fancy. Some men think that if all were levelled and reduced to a parity, and we did live as fishes in the sea, there would be less confusion in the world. But this is contrary to God's appointment, who by his wisdom hath cast the world into hills and valleys. God is the maker of rich and poor: Prov. 22:2, 'The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.' And Christ saith, Mat. 22:11, 'Ye have the poor always with you.' A world of mischief would follow otherwise; if there were no property, there would be no justice, whose chief property is to give every man his own. There could be no charity. How can we give, if we have nothing that we can call our own? It would hinder diligence and prudent administration; the idle would have as great a share as the industrious and diligent; rewards of special eminency and virtue would be taken away. Who would undertake the hardest labours and the condition of servants? Superiority and inferiority is the bond of human society. It is God's wisdom to dispose of the conditions and estates of men that one should need another, and supply each other's wants and defects. The poor need the bounty of the rich, and the rich the labour and service of the poor. Object. But what shall we say to the example of the primitive times? Acts 4:32, 'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.' Ans. This was extraordinary, and it was done freely, and not by virtue of any precept, as appears by what Peter said to Ananias, chap. 5:4, 'Whilst it remained, was it not thy own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?' still they kept a property to dispose of it as they saw cause. And pray mark, it is not said that they did equally divide among them all the things that were sold; but, Acts 2:44, 45, 'All that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.' Here was no

levelling, but an orderly charity; there was great necessity, and they believed the destruction and desolation of Judea, and therefore in wise foresight took this course. And therefore it is notable that it is not said that they sold all they had, but only their possessions and inheritances: Acts 4:34, 35, 'As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet,' &c. And still it was free; yet it was not taken from them, but freely given by them; it was not catch who catch can, but 'distribution was made unto every man according as he had need,' ver. 35. Some good people kept their houses still, as Mary had her house: Acts 12:12, 'He came to the house of Mary.'

[2.] Have wicked men any right in what they do possess? or may they be spoiled as the Canaanites were, and ousted of all their possessions? I answer—Wicked men have a civil right, and that is bank enough against violence and invasion of property; or suppose there were no other title but grace, and a man that had not grace were an usurper, what a world of inconveniences and confusions would follow! If one man were made judge of another man's grace, how should we know who had a right? Give unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's. If it were so, we could not trade with them; but Abraham bought the field of Mamre. Wicked men have a civil right; but that is not all, they have a right before God, a common right of providence, so that they are not usurpers of what they do possess; it is their portion: Ps. 17:14, 'From men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure.' It is true they have made a forfeiture as to God, and deserve to lose all, but the sentence of the law is not executed upon them; and therefore by the gift and indulgence of God they have a just and free use of such things as fall to their share and portion. There cannot be a better title than God's own gift. Now God in the general course of

his providence giveth wicked men many things, as he gave Tyrus to Nebuchadnezzar. He that giveth them their lives giveth them meat and drink; they do him common service, and God rewardeth them with common mercies. But they have not such a right as God's children, a right from the covenant of grace, from God's love, and for their good, but their blessings are salted with a curse.

Third rule, If wrong be done, restitution must be made. It is not enough to reconcile yourselves to God if you have thriven by unjust gain, but you must make restitution to men, else the sin remains. There is in all such acts the sin and the injury. Now many seek to take away the sin while the injury remains, but that cannot be; and some may seek possibly to do away the injury while the sin remains; they do not reconcile themselves to God. In the law of Moses, he that wronged his neighbour was to make restitution: Lev. 6:5, 'He shall restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass-offering.' That law speaks of wrong done against our will. The thief that wronged with set purpose was to restore fourfold; but if a man did by chance, and against his will, wrong another, when he was convinced of it, he was to restore the principal and the fifth part in the day of his trespass-offering. Our Lord renews and repeats this sentence of the law: Mat. 5:24, 'First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' It is an allusion to this law, where, on the day of their offering, they were to make restitution. This is the only way to retract the wrong. As long as you retain the use and fruit of your fraudulent practices, the sin and the injury is continued, and there can be no true repentance. In the very counterfeit repentance of Judas there is a kind of restitution; it is a necessary fruit of grace. When salvation was come to Zaccheus' house, and he was converted, he offers the restitution of the law: 'If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold,' Luke 19:8. Therefore



the continuance of gain gotten by fraud upbraideth the tender conscience with the sin. Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum; and if you should be disabled from restitution, your acknowledgment must be very serious and humble, and take shame to yourself, and do what you can. And if servants have purloined from their masters, or if any have thriven by iniquity of traffic, restore as far as possibly you can. He that can rectify the injury and doth not, doth not repent, and God will not accept him. If the party wronged be not living, it must be given to the next heir, if none of the line be found, it must be given to God; for as long as it remains with you, it is an accursed thing, and will bring a curse on all the rest. If you have wronged others in their names, make them all the satisfaction you can. Christ drew from Peter a treble profession of his love, to answer his threefold denial. By all public vindications you should seek to heal the wound you have made. Take an instance of one that accused a bishop at Jerusalem falsely; God touched his heart that he wept his eyes blind.

Fourth rule, You must bear the injuries of others with patience rather than revenge them. If patience be not a part of justice, I am sure private revenge is a part of injustice, because you take God's work out of his hands, and you make yourselves magistrates without a commission: Rom. 12:9, 'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.' You must leave it to God and his deputies. It is an usurpation and against all right to avenge yourselves, that a man should be an accuser, judge, and executioner, and all in his own cause, where self-love is apt to make us partial. If we are fit to be an accuser, certainly not to be judge and executioner. It crosseth the ends of just revenge, which are to right the party wronged, or mend the party offending, or to provide for public safety. He that avengeth his own quarrel doth but more and more enrage his adversary,

scandalise others and not right himself. In taking wrong we suffer evil, in returning wrong we do evil; the one is our affliction, the other is our sin. It will be no excuse for you to say you were wronged first. See how the Spirit of God takes off these pleas: Prov. 24:29, 'Say not thou, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.' This is but a continuance and reciprocation of injustice. So Prov. 20:29, 'Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord and he will save thee.' I remember Lactantius hath a pretty saying in this case, *Qui par pari referre nititur, ipsum a quo læsus est imitatur*—Revenge and injury differ only in order; he that begins the injury goeth before in mischief; and he that requites it comes as fast after as he can; he doth but delight to follow that which he saw go before him. If you judge it evil in others, why do you fall into the like yourselves? What care hath he of justice and goodness that imitateth that which he acknowledgeth to be evil? It is no excuse to say he began; his doing wrong to thee doth not dissolve the obligation of God's law, or the binding power it hath upon thy conscience. Nay, the return of injuries argues you to be the more malicious, because it is a more willing, a more knowing act.

Fifth rule, We must be so far from wronging any man, that in many cases we must not demand our own extreme right: Phil. 4:5, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand.' Your moderation, *επιεικεια*; it signifies the mitigating of the extremity of justice: James 3:17, 'The wisdom that is from above is peaceable and gentle.' Extreme right is but an injury when you do not all you may do by the letter of the law out of lenity and christian forbearance. Power stretched to the utmost is but tyranny; and when the words of the law are urged contrary to the end, the law is made a pattern of sin and unjust dealing. In short, this equity and moderation lieth in not interpreting things doubtful to the worst sense: Eccles. 7:16, 'Be not

righteous overmuch;' when we do not interpret things rigorously that are receptive, and capable of more plausible interpretations, when we depart from our own right for just and convenient reasons: Ps. 69:4, 'I restored that which I took not away.' For peace's sake much may be done, that we may not dishonour God, nor vex others for every trifle; the good of others is to be considered, that we may not undo them, though it be our right. Thus Paul departed from his own right, 'to cut off occasion from them that desire occasion,' 2 Cor. 11:12. He would labour with his hands rather than lose an opportunity of spreading the gospel: 2 Thes. 3:8, 'Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.' Paul took no maintenance. The spiritual things we sow are above your best carnal things. Considering our labour and pains, the bread we eat is bought at the dearest rate. We have a right, but for God's glory, and not to lay a stumbling-block in the way of young converts, we recede from it. You are not to exact all your labours, Isa. 58:3. When you hold poor men to a bargain that is burdensome, it is injustice; and thus our Lord Christ himself paid tribute to avoid scandal.

Sixth rule, Do as you would be done unto: Mat. 7:12, 'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets;' this is the scope of scriptures. This saying the Roman Emperor Severus much admired, and wrote it upon many places of his palace; for it is a rule serves in all cases. If we would do as we would be done unto, what lives might we lead? We are very tender of our own interest, give a favourable sentence in our own case, and are very sensible of the wrong done to us; we would not be circumvented by a fraudulent bargain, we would not be detracted in our own names, we would have our infirmities hidden and not divulged, we would be succoured in such distresses; now do so to them. If in all cases we would do aright and judge

aright, let us change the persons, and suppose ourselves in another's case, Would I have others thus do with me? But how is this law to be understood? Some lay violent hands upon themselves, others desire things sinful, as to be drunk and to commit adultery. I answer—It is meant of what we wish to ourselves, by a regular self-love, and a free and unperverted will.

Again, it holdeth not in duties of relations; it is not just that the father should do that to the children which he would have the children do to him, as to give honour and reverence and the like. So in all relations between inferiors and superiors, it is to be understood if we were in their place and in the like condition; as if I were a son, or if I were a servant. Still take the person of him with whom thou dealest upon thyself; that right which you would have others do to you, as you would be kindly dealt with in buying and selling, in pardoning injuries, forgiving unadvised wrongs, do you the same to others. This will help us to keep a good conscience in all our dealings.

Seventh rule, Public good is to be sought as well as private, and in many cases to be preferred before it. No man is born for himself, and therefore it is injustice when men mind only their own things, and are wholly taken up with fulfilling their own wills and desires. God hath commanded us to love one another; he hath devolved upon one man the respects of all the world in effect; for all men are bound to love thee and seek thy good. What is the reason of this but to engage and oblige us the more to seek the good one of another: Rom. 12:5, 'We are all members one of another;' the members seek the good of the body. The stomach receives meat not for itself, but to disperse it for the use of the whole body. When men are of a narrow private spirit, and do not seek the welfare of others, they sin against nature and grace. Man is ζῶον πολιτικόν, a sociable creature; if he could live by himself, then he might live to himself. Human society is founded

upon communion and commerce, and therefore we are bound to seek the good one of another. There is a great body to which all the members must have respect. As in a clock all the wheels move one another, and each part receiveth help one from another, so every one should mind the common good, and be sensible of the common evil: 1 Cor. 10:24, 'Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth;' not his own exclusively; it is not to be understood in sensu conjuncto, not his own so as to neglect and exclude the care of the public. We are not to live as beasts, every one to shift for himself; but human society is maintained by communion and converse. Yea, in many cases others' good is to be sought more than our own: Rom. 15:3, 'For even Christ pleased not himself;' for the common good of the elect he regards not his own life. And this example we are to follow: 1 John 3:16, 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;' that is, my single life to save the community; I must promote their spiritual good with the loss of my temporals; my interest must be exposed to hazard for a more public good.

Eighth rule, We must help others according to our power. This is a part of righteousness. In the law it is said, 'It shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God,' Deut. 24:13, when it speaks of the poor's due. Carnal, wicked, covetous men stand upon property; 1 Sam. 25:11, 'Shall I take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers?' &c. Thy estate is not thy own, but God's; it is ours in law, but God's in use, and you are but stewards for him. This will be no plea in the day of judgment to say, It was my own, and I did not rob others: thou art a thief before God, if thou givest not. He that useth not his estate as God would have him use it, is a spiritual thief: Prov. 3:27, 'Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.' When the poor are cast upon thee by God's providence, they are a kind of owners;

that which thou detainest from them is theirs; it is not ours when Christ calleth for it, and his members need it. Ambrose saith, *Non qui capit aliena, sed qui non dedit sua, &c.*—we have done no wrong, yet if we have not disposed our goods and estate for God's glory, it is injustice and sin; as stewards must dispose of goods according to the mind of the master.

Secondly, What reason have we to look after this grace of righteousness, and to be just?

1. It is a piece of God's image: Eph. 4:24, 'That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' Nothing makes us so like God as righteousness; we must be like God not only in holiness, but in righteousness. See the distinction between these two; the one signifies purity of nature, and the other justice and equity in our dealing and conversation. For God is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works; his essence is holy, and his administrations just. So the new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness; be like God in both.

2. It is an evidence of the truth of grace to walk in all your relations righteously, amiably, and justly. We are bidden 'to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance,' Luke 3:8; that is, such as are meet evidences that there is a change wrought. What are these? Defraud no man; 'Exact no more than is appointed you,' ver. 13. And when the soldiers came to ask, What shall we do? he said, 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages,' ver. 14. And that is the reason the children of God so much stand upon their righteousness, because it is an evidence of their interest in grace: Job 27:6, 'My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go;' Acts 10:35, 'In every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is

accepted with him.' Still it is made to be the evidence that God hath taken us into his own grace, and that we are heirs of salvation.

3. It is a delight and rejoicing to God to see his children just and righteous in all their dealings. God exceedingly hates iniquity in traffic and commerce: Deut. 25:15, 16, 'Thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee: for all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination to the Lord thy God.' And it is repeated again: Prov. 20:10, 'Divers weights and divers measures both of them are alike abomination to the Lord.' But now it is said, Prov. 15:9, 'He loveth him that follows after righteousness.' So Ps. 106:3, 'Blessed are they that keep judgment and he that doth righteousness at all times.'

4. It is necessary for the honour of religion. Grace teacheth us to live soberly and righteously. Truants at school are a reproach and disgrace to the skill of the teacher; and so carnal professors are a reproach to God. If men are unrighteous, they never learned it of grace. Hypocrites usually abound in acts of worship and duties of the first table, but they seldom make conscience of duties of the second table, here they bewray themselves. What is the cry of the world? None so unjust and unrighteous in their dealings as those that profess religion; this brings a reproach upon the ways of God: Neh. 5:9, 'It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?' It is high time to vindicate religion, and do it all the right we can, and make it comely: Rom. 12:17, 'Provide things honest in the sight of all men.' The wicked world are apt to speak ill of the gospel of God. Now the Lord would have the world know that there is no such friend to human society as his grace. The ancient fathers were wont to make challenges, Dent imperatores tales, tales consules, tales exactores

fisci, talem exercitum, &c.—Let all the world show such emperors, princes, magistrates, such treasurers, such soldiers as the christian religion can. But religion is mightily made a contempt when men make it to be the pretence of vile practices.

5. It will be for your own comfort, whatever falls out in the world, good or evil. Samuel could say, 1 Sam. 12:3, 'Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?' If good come, Prov. 16:8, 'Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right;' and in death you will die comfortably when you can wash your hands in innocency.

6. Consider how just some of the heathens have been, and shall grace come short? What a disparagement is this, as if grace did teach thee to be unjust! Regulus when he had passed his word, though it were to endure an exquisite torment, yet he would not break it. Curius Dentatus, when he had been employed in the highest services of state, as general of an army, yet after he returns to the plough again, not enriched at all with public spoils. Of Aristides it was said, you may sooner pull the sun out of heaven than turn Aristides out of his course. Scævola buying a piece of ground, and the seller setting too low a price, saith he, This is too little, and he gave a great deal more. Abimelech would not have taken Sarah if he had understood she was Abraham's wife. Now shall nature do more than grace?



## SERMON X

And godly, &c.—TITUS 2:12.

I COME to the third branch used by the apostle, wherein the duty of man is expressed, and that is godliness. Here we have a perfect distribution of the duty of the creature. The duties of our personal capacity are expressed by sobriety; the duties of our public relation and commerce with others are expressed in the word righteously; and then all those intercourses that are to pass between God and us, and the whole tendency of the soul towards God, is expressed by the word godly. The scripture speaks of godliness, and of the exercise of godliness: 1 Tim. 4:7, 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.' Therefore I shall inquire—(1.) What godliness is; (2.) How it must be exercised, or what it is to live godly, the phrase used here.

1. What godliness is. It is a thing not only distinct from righteousness and honesty, but also from holiness. It is the opposite part of the distinction to honesty: 1 Tim. 6:11, 'Follow after righteousness godliness, faith,' &c. By righteousness he meaneth the duties of the second table; and by godliness the duties of the first. More expressly: 1 Tim. 2:2, 'That we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.' The apostle presseth christians there to pray for the conversion of the magistrate, who is *custos utriusque tabulæ*, that so he may promote the duties of both the tables. If any difference should arise about godliness, or about the institutions of Christ, there the magistrate may interpose for the defence and safety of the first table; and that we might live peaceably for the exercise of it; and so for honesty in the second table. But it is also to be distinguished from holiness: 2 Peter 3:11, 'What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' Holiness notes

purity of heart and life, and an abhorrence from evil; but godliness denoteth more distinctly a tendency of the heart and carriage towards God; and therefore God is said to be holy, but not to be godly; because it is a grace proper to the creature, and implies inferiority and subordination, a tendency towards God as the highest Lord and chiefest good, as holiness denoteth excellency and perfection. Briefly, godliness may be thus described: It is a religious temper and frame of heart, by which we are inclined to look after the right worship, and to aim at the glory of the true God. To the constitution of godliness there are graces necessary and ordinances; that which swayeth and inclineth the heart is grace; that about which it is conversant are the ordinances of worship.

Therefore I shall inquire—

First, What graces are necessary to make up this religious temper and frame of heart.

Secondly, What are the ordinances about which it is conversant.

First, The principal graces that are necessary to this frame of heart are faith, fear, and love.

1. Faith is necessary, partly that we may have a right apprehension of God, which by nature we cannot have. It is not godliness, but idolatry, superstition, and formality, until we have a right knowledge of God. The Samaritans worshipped the true God, and yet it is said, John 4:22, 'Ye worship ye know not what.' To worship God out of form and blind custom, it is to make him an idol. But chiefly is faith required, because trust is the ground of all the other respect that passeth between God and us. Look, as unbelief is the ground of all disrespect and departure from God: Heb. 3:12, 'Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living

God;' so is faith and trust the ground of all true respect. You know our first parents fell by unbelief. First, Satan seeks to weaken their faith in the promise; first he told them, 'Ye shall not surely die,' Gen. 3:4; then 'Ye shall be as gods,' ver. 5. First he persuaded them to unbelief, before he persuaded them to ambition, and aspiring after the dignity of the divine nature. This is the root of all. Men care not for God, because they do not believe him upon his word. But now faith is the mother of all respect, of all devotion and obedience to God. When we believe that he is, and is a rewarder of those that come to him, this is that which makes us seek him diligently. To evidence this by the influence which faith hath upon the soul, there are two powerful affections by which the spiritual life is acted and carried on, and they are fear and love, and they both need the influence of faith. There can be no fear till we are persuaded of his being and power whom we cannot see with bodily eyes; but put on the spectacles of faith, and so we 'see him that is invisible,' Heb. 11:27. God is within the curtain of the heavens; and carnal men say, Tush! he cannot see: Job 22:12–14, 'Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high are they? And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.' They cannot see him, and think he cannot see them; as the panther hideth his head in a bush, and then thinks the hunter doth not see him; and that is the ground of all disobedience and carnal conversation. But now faith opens the eye, and carrieth us within the curtain and veil, and discovers the invisible God upon his throne of glory, without which sight we cannot fear him. So for love (the other powerful affection), that flows from faith, for our love is but a reflex of God's love, but a reverberation and beating back of God's beam upon himself: 1 John 4:19, 'We love him because he loved us first.' There must be first a sense and persuasion of his love to us in Christ, and then we love him

again. The more we feel the comfortable effects of God's love in the conscience, the more is the heart inflamed with desire of performing love and service and subjection to God again; and therefore faith is said to 'work by love,' Gal. 5:6, and make use of the sweetness of God's love to carry on duty and obedience. Look, as the more directly the beams of the sun do fall upon any solid and smooth body, the more strong is the reflection of heat again. The less of jealousy and doubts of God's love, and the more God's love is darted and reflected upon the soul, there is the more service and care to glorify God, and to do him respect and honour. Thus faith, the radical grace, is necessary for this temper and frame of heart, which is called godliness, and inclineth us to worship and glorify God.

2. Fear and love are likewise necessary. I join them together, because they do best mixed; love with fear, that it may not be servile; and fear with love, that it may not be careless and secure; both are gospel graces. In the Old Testament, when God's dispensations were more legal, and God is represented as a judge, fear is more spoken of; but in the New Testament, where more of grace is discovered, love is more spoken of; but both are necessary. Fear and love are indeed essential respects of the creature to God; therefore both continue in heaven; and they are of great use in the spiritual life to maintain piety. Fear is necessary, that we may keep God always in our eye; and love, that we may keep him always in our hearts. Fear restrains from offence, and love urgeth to work and service. Fear thinks of God's eye, and represents him as a looker-on; and love remembers God's kindness. Fear makes us cautious and watchful, and stirs up awful thoughts that we may not offend God and grieve his Spirit; and love works a desire to enjoy him, and a care to glorify him, wherein indeed true godliness consists; for godliness in its proper notion importeth a tendency of the heart towards God, either to enjoy him, which is our happiness, or to glorify him, which is our work and duty.

And therefore love is of great use, it stirs up desires to enjoy God; and fear, which stirs up care to glorify God. Fear makes us upright, because of God's eye; and love makes us diligent and earnest, because we are about God's work, who hath been gracious to us in Christ. The one makes us serious, the other active; so that they are both of great use to constitute that frame and temper of heart wherein piety consists. Well, then, he is godly that feareth God, for he would not offend him; and he is godly that loves God, because all his care and desire is to serve him, and enjoy him.

Secondly, The ordinances about which godliness is conversant. Because particulars are most affective, let me speak a word of each. The ordinances which manifest, which nourish which increase godliness, are these—reading, hearing, meditating, prayer, the use of the seals, and keeping of the sabbath.

1. Reading the word. The words of scripture have a proper efficacy. The Holy Ghost is the best preacher, therefore it is good now and then to go to the fountain ourselves, and not only to have the word brought to us by others, but to read it ourselves. As the eunuch, Acts 8:28, when he returned from public worship, he was reading the scripture, and God owned it by sending him an interpreter. Every ordinance hath its proper blessing, and when we use it out of conscience, God will not be wanting. He that sent Philip to the eunuch will send his own Spirit to help thee, therefore read the word. Daniel the prophet, that had the highest visions from God, yet he studies other prophecies, those of Jeremiah: Dan. 9:2, 'I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet.' Mark, the study of the scripture is a duty that lies upon those that are most gifted and most eminent for parts. Nay, the prophets and holy men of God read over again, and studied their own prophecies: 1 Peter 1:10, 'Of which

salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.' And if they that were guided by an infallible Spirit, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost, if they thought fit to read, and read again and again their own prophecies, and inquire diligently into the salvation they spoke of, much more is it our duty to read the word. None is above the ordinance of reading; that is one ordinance which nourisheth godliness.

2. Hearing. One institution must not jostle out another. It is not enough to read at home, but you must also hear and attend upon public preaching: Rom. 10:14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' It is God's ordinance. Seldom is grace got by reading. We have our confirmation by reading, but usually conversion is by hearing; therefore do not reason against this duty, and say, You can provide yourselves with books. You are not wiser than God; his will should be reason enough, though the institution should be never so mean and despicable: 1 Cor. 1:21, 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' All God's institutions are full of wisdom and full of reason. There is some help certainly in hearing, there is a ministerial excitation which is of some use. Look, as warmed milk is fitter to nourish than that which is cold, so the word of God delivered by a lively voice hath a greater congruity and suitableness to the work of grace. As the ear was the door by which death got into the soul, by hearkening to the temptation, so God would have the ear to be the sense of grace, and the door of life and peace. In the church hearing is exercised, as in heaven, seeing. Our happiness in heaven is expressed by vision and sight; but in the church hearing is our duty, and our benefits and advantages come in by attending upon the word; therefore it is good to take all occasions, and to 'be swift to hear,' James 1:19. Though we know a great deal already, and have never so great parts, yet we need

a monitor to represent the things of God to us, and to awaken our consideration, and lay them before our eyes; and though we know many things, we are forgetful, and do not think of them. It is good to come to this duty, that we may be put in remembrance.

3. Meditation, a neglected thing; but it falleth under the care of godliness as well as others. It is not enough to exercise the eyes and the ears, but the thoughts. God deserves the best use, and the flower and strength of our reason; and the things of God deserve consideration, being so difficult and so excellent. Especially should we meditate upon the word we hear, for then there is matter to work upon, and somewhat whereby to fix the thought: Ps. 62:10, 'God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this.' That which God speaks we should go over again and again in our thoughts; as when a man hath been hearing of bells, the sound hovereth in the brain when the bells cease. Thus and thus hath God spoken to-day, and what shall I say to these things? This is like grinding of the corn; it prepares and makes it fit nourishment for the soul. So meditate upon what you read: Josh. 1:8, 'The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.' And this I suppose is that meditation which is required of the simpler sort of christians. Certainly it is every one's duty to meditate, but every one hath not riches of invention, and cannot command their thoughts; they are slow of conception: what then? Shall they continually live in the neglect of a necessary duty? No; here is a help; read, and ponder what thou readest; urge thy soul; do as the clean beasts, chew the cud; go over and over it again. You have often seen the beasts, when they have done feeding, chew over their food again, and so prepare it for the stomach; thus may the meanest christians do, they may urge their hearts with what they read; whereas their thoughts are not like a ball struck against a wall, that cometh to hand again, but as a ball struck into the open air, that returneth not. Certainly meditation is

one of the exercises of godliness; and they that delight in the law of God will be meditating, pressing and fixing it on their hearts: Ps. 1:2, 'His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night;' for we muse upon what we love.

4. Prayer, that is another exercise of godliness. Here we have our constant commerce with God. If there were no other use of prayer but only to appear before God to do our homage, to profess our service and dependence upon him, it were enough; but it is a means of spiritual acquaintance; by these private soliloquies God and the soul grow intimate, and we unbosom ourselves to God, as intimate friends are often together speaking one to another. Prayer is such a necessary duty and a part of godliness, that it is often put for the whole worship of God: Acts 2:21, 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved;' it is only expressed by that. On the other side, atheism is expressed by not calling on God's name: Ps. 14:4, 'Who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.' There is not a swine but is better regarded than God; they are tended morning and evening, but God is forgotten. Oh! what honour is put upon dust and ashes to speak to the great God! Prayer is to be reckoned among our privileges. If we had such freedom of access to an earthly prince, we would not reckon it a burden. It is a part of our liberty by Christ, that was purchased at a dear rate; therefore let us often call upon God with thankfulness. God hath been at a great deal of cost to erect a throne of grace that we may pray with confidence: 'Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,' Heb. 10:19. If a charitable man should see a company of beggars wandering in the street in the time of worship, and their pretence is that there is no room for them in the public place of meeting, and he should build a chapel for them, they would be without excuse. God hath been at great cost to provide a throne of grace, that we might not neglect prayer.



5. Singing of psalms, that is one of the exercises of godliness, and is of great use in the spiritual life, though usually it be performed perfunctorily and customarily. It is chiefly required as a solemn profession of worship. As far as the voice will extend, we proclaim it to all the world that we are not ashamed of God's worship. David calls upon the nations to make a joyful noise to God: Ps. 66:1, 2, 'Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands; sing forth the honour of his name, make his praise glorious.' As it is the custom of nations to proclaim what they would have noted and observed, by sound of drum and trumpet, so by singing we manifestly own God's worship and service. But this is not all; it is an excellent way of instruction: Col. 3:16, 'Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord.' It was one means of Austin's conversion, *Quantum fluminis in hymnis et canticis suavi sonantis ecclesiae?*—How did he weep and mourn when he heard the psalms sung by the church, to think of the mercies and dispensations of God to the church. And it is a fruit and effect of spiritual delight, the vent we give to it. Look, as drunkards, when filled with carnal mirth, they howl out their wanton songs, so when the soul is filled with spiritual consolation, it breaks out into singing. The apostle alludes to it: Eph. 5:18, 19, 'Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.' It gives vent to strong spiritual affections when the heart is ravished and overcome with the love of God. It is a more distinct and fixed reading, a reading with meditation. Singing and meditation are put for the same thing: Ps. 104:33, 34, 'I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being; my meditation of him shall be sweet.' Singing is but a more distinct pronunciation, that we may have more liberty for thought and meditation as we go over those portions of scripture that are sung in the church.

6. A religious use of the seals. Baptism must not be forgotten, though not to be reiterated. Look, as Christ told Peter when he washed his feet, John 13:7, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter;' so you are to look after the fruits and effects of your baptism, and of your engagement to Christ in your infancy, and what benefit you have by virtue of your being baptized into Christ. But especially the use of the supper; that is one of the exercises of godliness; it is the seal of the covenant. It is called, 'The new testament in Christ's blood,' Luke 22:20; that is, it is a sign and seal of it. Sacramental speeches must be understood sacramentally. Now this is a high condensation on God's part (with what reverence should we come to such an ordinance!) as if his word did not suffice, but we must have all ways of ratification and assurance. The Lord's supper is the map of the gospel; all the mysteries of salvation are here abridged; it is the epitome of the gospel, Christ's public monument to the church. Look, as kings will not only have their royal acts and deeds recorded in faithful chronicles, but also erect a public monument to keep up their memory, so the Lord Christ would not only have his royal acts recorded in the chronicles of the scripture, but hath erected this public monument, that we may remember what he did for us, how he triumphed over principalities and powers, and made a spoil of them openly. It is a visible pledge of his second coming. Christ would have it celebrated in the church to awaken our hopes, our thoughts, and our desires, till he come again in person to convey us into his Father's bosom. It is a mysterious instrument and means God hath found out to convey comfort and grace to the soul, to work out a union between him and the creature. We do not only draw nigh to God, but are united to him. It is the beginning and antepast of glory; so much Christ intimates, Mat. 26:29, 'I will not henceforth drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' It is a taste of

the new wine we shall drink with Christ, those spiritual consolations we shall receive from him in his kingdom.

7. Keeping the Sabbath day holy. It is a sure mark of an ungodly person to be a Sabbath-breaker, as a conscionableness to celebrate it to God's glory is both a mark and a work of godliness. It is the description of the godly eunuch, Isa. 56:4, 'Thus saith the Lord to the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant.' Mark, it is one of the chiefest things that is taken notice of there, the observation of God's own day. If you would exercise yourselves to godliness, this is a great means. Profaning the Lord's day is the cause of profaneness all the week after; and so a careless keeping the Lord's day is the cause of the carelessness and formality you are guilty of in the business of religion. God hath appointed this day for a repose for the soul, that, by a long uninterrupted continuance in worship, it might be more seasoned, and fit to converse with God all the week after. Dost thou love Christ? then observe his day. Ignatius calls it the queen of days. The primitive christians were very careful of the Sabbath; they would run all hazards rather than not keep the Sabbath day. When they were accused as guilty of Sabbath-violation, they would answer, I am a christian, how can I choose but love the Lord's day? This is the day wherein we do most solemnly and publicly profess the worship of God; therefore it is to be celebrated with all care. Thus much for the description of godliness from the disposition of the heart, and the duties about which it is conversant.

II. I am to speak of the exercise of godliness: 1 Tim. 4:7, 'Exercise thyself to godliness.' It must be exercised both in worship and conversation: 2 Peter 3:11, 'What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?'

First, In worship. What is the part and office of godliness in worship?

1. There must be a care that it be right. God will not be at the creatures' carving; his honour is best kept up by his own institutions, and therefore he will accept nothing but what he requires. The woman of Samaria, as soon as she was converted, inquired after the right. worship. Christ had convinced her of lewdness, and living in adultery: John 4:18, 'The man thou now hast is not thy husband.' The great thing that troubled her was her present standing, and the superstition she was nursed and brought up in: ver. 20, 'Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' As soon as men are awakened, that is the question; they can no longer be content with their ignorant, senseless, careless, ceremonial worshipping of God, and say, Thus our fathers did; this will not serve the conscience when it is a little stirred. It is said of the people of God, Jer. 1:5, 'They shall ask the way to Sion with their faces thitherward.' Sion was the place of God's residence and solemn worship; and it is the disposition of his people still to be inquisitive after the way to Sion, how God is worshipped. I speak not this to unsettle men, and to draw them to scepticism and irresolution, but partly that they might settle upon better grounds than tradition, public consent, and the example of men. Cyprian observes that this is the reason men are so fickle, so inconstant, so soon off and on, they do not practise those things upon good grounds. None so inconstant as they that practise things right and good, but not upon principles. And partly that men may not content themselves with a cheap worship, such as costs them nothing, as when they do not inquire about the grounds and reasons of what they do, or when they do but even as others do. We should be still searching 'and proving what is acceptable unto the Lord,' Eph. 5:10, and 'seek for knowledge as for silver, and search for her as for hid treasures,' Prov. 3:4. It is a thing of great care and exactness to be

a christian, to be right in God's worship. Usually men serve God at random and at peradventure; and if they be right, it is but a happy mistake; they do not inquire and search, and so miss of a great deal of comfort, settlement, and experience in the way of God.

2. There is required constancy and zeal in the profession of God's worship. This is religion, to be zealous for God's institutions, to contend for the faith of the saints, and hate what is contrary to right worship and sound doctrine: Ps. 119:104, 'Through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way;' and ver. 128, 'Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way.' This is the effect of the knowledge of the truth, to hate all falsehood, idolatry, and superstition, as much as they love God's institutions, that they may not be entangled, and so either deceive others, or be deceived themselves, by the craft of them that lie in wait for such an enterprise. Whenever they hear or read any such doctrines, the heart nauseateth them; there is a rising of heart not only against corruptions of manners, but falsehood of doctrine. But if men be indifferent, come what may come, Christ or antichrist, they care not greatly, their religion is worth nothing. If you do not hate heresy and corruption in worship, there is no true religion or godliness in you. Heretics and men in a false way seldom hate one another though they differ in principles. Why? Because they have not a love to truth. But those that love the truth prize the institutions of God; there is a displeasure in their hearts against any false way.

3. There must be frequency in the practice of it. God and their souls must not grow strangers. Things that are not used contract rust, as a key seldom turned in the lock turns with difficulty. So it will not stand with your spiritual welfare to omit duty long. Much spiritual exercise keeps the soul in health and sweet; as the oftener they drain

the well, the sweeter the water is. By running and breathing yourselves every day, you are the fitter to run in a race; so the oftener you come into God's presence, the greater confidence and freedom and enlargement it will bring. The way to be fervent in prayer or in any holy exercise is to be frequent. Rest breeds many distempers, which are prevented by exercise. The right arm is bigger and stronger than the left, and fuller of spirits. Why? Because it is most agitated, and in exercise; so the oftener you are with God, the more full of life, strength, and spiritual enlargement. The field of the sluggard is overgrown with thistles. you grow barren, raw, sapless, and lose the choiceness of your spirits, and the savouriness of your thoughts, when you are seldom with God. The soul runs out of repair when you pray but now and then; and therefore a christian indeed cannot be long out of God's company; there is a strong bent in his heart towards God. Can a man love God and be a stranger to him? Is it possible? Briefly, there are so many necessities, so many frequent impulses and excitations of grace, that it cannot be imaginable that a man be a christian and neglect worship. Certainly if we did not want a heart we could never want an occasion to come to God, either for ourselves, children, friends, or relations. God hath left the more wants upon the creature that he may the oftener hear from him. The throne of grace was erected for 'a time of need,' Heb. 4:16. Many needs are left upon us, that we may have continual recourse to God; many doubts to be resolved, many graces to be strengthened, many corruptions to be mortified. A christian in good earnest will be sensible of these things. It is true it is not expressly set down in scripture how often we should pray, meditate, read, or perform other duties. In these days of the gospel, God trusts love, which is a grace that is wont to keep the heart open and free. We are left to our liberty more than those under the law, not that we may come short of them, but that we may do more. However, there is no gap opened to looseness, because the terms wherein duty is enjoined are very large

and comprehensive: 1 Thes. 5:17, 'Pray without ceasing;' Eph. 6:18, 'Praying always;' that is, upon all occasions. And we have high patterns; we are referred to the angels that are never weary. David had his seven times a day: Ps. 119:164, 'Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.' And Daniel thrice: chap. 6:10, 'He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.' Certainly it must be done every day; for Christ saith, Mat. 6:11, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' Every day we stand in need of the blessings of providence, and it must be sought καθ' ἡμέραν, day by day. Every day we live as it were a new life; it is but the lesser circle of time, and it should not pass without some worship. From the morning and evening sacrifice we may plead for morning and evening prayer: Num. 28:4, 'The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even.' This is expounded, Ps. 141:2, 'Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice;' there is the exposition of the sacrifice. Certainly there is a standing occasion. Who dares venture on the temptations of the day without prayer, or the dangers of the night? In the morning we are to beg direction; in the evening, protection. Can God's children go to bed without leaving their hearts with him overnight, or awake without God in the morning? It is an ill sign when men wrangle and dispute away duties rather than practise them.

Secondly, There is godliness in conversation. In all you do, godliness must bear sway. Even in the actions of the civil life, they must be done from God, to God, and for God, with a sense of his eye, a dependence upon his strength, and an aim at his glory. All such actions as proceed from self-love, and tend only to self-welfare they cannot be godly, for godliness comes from God, and brings to God; it hath another alpha and omega than nature hath.

1. In the course of our conversation there must be a sense of God's eye. The world is a great stage, men are the actors, God and angels are the spectators and lookers-on; therefore all must be done in God's presence. All actions and duties which lie between man and man must be done in and to the Lord. You must love your neighbour for God's sake. The swaying reason of all your actions must be the love and fear of God; by this means you make your commerce to be a kind of worship, and turn duties of the second table into duties of the first table: Eph. 5:19, 'Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.' Remember he seeth thee; it is done to him. Submission is the usual effect of fear of man. When men have power, they cast off the yoke. This is the fairest bond and tie. So to servants: Eph. 6:5, 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ.' What would you do to God and Christ if they were present? Use yourself thus often to think of God, for this is to walk with God, to keep always in his eye and presence.

2. Dependence upon his strength. It is notable, when the apostle had laid down reciprocal duties of relations, between children and parents, husbands and wives, masters and servants, he concludes all, Eph. 6:10, 'Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.' It is an error to think that the supplies of grace are only necessary for duties of worship; they are necessary also for duties of your civil relation. We are like a glass without a bottom; when it comes to stand of itself, it is broken in pieces; so we shall surely miscarry, and walk unworthy of our relation, if God do not help us, but we be left to ourselves. It is a good part of godliness to look to God, and wait upon him all the day for counsel and strength. You give him the honour of a God when you acknowledge him in all your ways: Prov. 3:6, 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.' By a constant dependence you acknowledge him most;



and this preserves a constant intercourse between us and God, when we lift up the heart that we may receive grace and strength to walk in all our relations to his glory.

3. An aim at God's glory; that must be the supreme end of all our actions, be they of never so small a consequence: 1 Cor. 10:31, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Whatever we do, eating, drinking, trading, all must be done that God may be honoured by ourselves and others. This is to make every meal an act of worship, your trading a solemn praise. It is God's design that all our lifetime we may do him service; this must be our fixed scope, that his honour and glory may be at the end of every natural and civil action. Look, as in all the works of creation, providence, and redemption, God made it his aim to glorify himself in all, so we should make it our fixed aim and scope to bring honour to God in all our work; all other things are nothing to this.

Use 1. Examination. Art thou godly? Hast thou been a diligent hearer and reader of the word? a religious observer of the Lord's day? an earnest worshipper of God? zealous for his glory against those that profane his name, corrupt his doctrine, make void his institutions? an enemy to idolatry and superstition; a lover of God's ordinances? It is an evidence of interest in grace to live godly. Only there is a form of godliness—(2 Tim. 3:5, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof')—which is discovered by a pretence of worship and a neglect of honesty; as the pharisees made long prayers, but devoured widows' houses; or else by a disproportionate zeal against idolatry, but not against heresy, or such falsehoods as yield no gain. It is not zeal for God's institutions when you do not hate every false way: 2 Tim. 2:16, 'But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.' The apostle speaketh of some that suppose godliness is gain, 1 Tim. 6:5, that make a merchandise of

their zeal: Rom. 2:22, 'Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?' He speaketh to the Jews that gloried in their privileges; he had said before, 'Dost thou steal? dost thou commit adultery?' But here, 'Dost thou commit sacrilege?' That was their glory, that they did not serve idols, but they robbed the true God; they would not endure a false god, or an idol to be set up, but in the meantime they defrauded the temple of its maintenance, and things consecrated. But the closest rebuke is, ver. 23, 'Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?' They were much in worship, but were not bettered by it; they were not changed in heart. You do not feel the power of it if the heart be not new-fashioned, and put into a godly frame.

Use 2. To press you to exercise yourself to godliness.

1. It is the aim of the gospel. The gospel is called, 1 Tim. 6:3, 'The doctrine which is according to godliness,' invented on purpose to maintain and keep godliness alive. So Titus 1:1, 'The truth which is after godliness,' which preserveth the true worship of the true God, and right thoughts of God. Here in the gospel the way to eternal life is discovered.

2. It is the aim of providence. All God's dispensations seem to put us in mind of God, and to draw us the nearer to him; afflictions to increase our reverence and watchfulness, and mercies to engage our love and trust. God complains of Israel that he had inflicted many judgments on them, and 'yet ye have not turned unto me, saith the Lord,' Amos 4:8–11. So he complains of their abuse of mercies: Hosea 2:8, 'She did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold which she prepared for Baal.' The mercies of God should be cords and bands of love to draw us to God.

3. Consider how God hath deserved it. We are God's. You that have servants expect they should work for you, their strength and time is yours: Rom. 14:8, 'For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.' A christian is not master of anything; his affections, his interests, his time his care, his strength, all is the Lord's.

4. Consider God hath given us sufficient grace to live godly: 2 Peter 1:3, 'According as his divine wisdom hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.' We cannot complain, as the Israelites did of Pharaoh, that he required brick where he gave no straw; or as the servant did of his master, that he expected to reap where he never sowed: the divine power is engaged to help us. How much do we walk beneath that divine power which he is ready to afford us! Do not say, I shall never be godly if this be to be godly; I am but flesh and blood, what would you have me do?

5. Consider the worth of godliness: it is our chief duty. First we must show our respects to the first table, because there are the great commandments: Mat. 22:37, 38, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: this is the first and great commandment.' *De loco modum, de ordine statum, de confinio meritum cujusque præcepti cognosces*, says Tertullian. It is the first table, and therefore most worthy; the object is greater; God is greater than man; by the breach hereof we do more immediately sin against God. He that wrongeth his neighbour sinneth against God: 1 Cor. 8:12, 'But when ye sin against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ:' but not so immediately. Godliness directeth honesty, which is otherwise but a civil action, proceeding from interest and self-love. This is the great commandment; without it all other graces are worth

nothing: 2 Peter 1:5, 6, 'Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness.' Civility is nothing, temperance is nothing, abstinence from pleasures is nothing without godliness. Many virtues are reckoned up, as patience, knowledge, temperance; all these things the Lord requires, not without godliness, therefore add godliness. God requires nothing but that which draweth the creature to himself; this bringeth us to the well-head.

6. Consider the profit of godliness. I mention this to counterbalance the discouragements which you would meet with in the ways of godliness. It will cost you trouble: 2 Tim. 3:12, 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' Mark, if they will live godly, not civilly only; if they are zealous for Christ's institutions. A Gallio will escape well enough; but you have encouragements: 1 Tim. 4:8, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' They have an interest in both, but the promises of this life are subservient to that which is to come. If the things of this life hinder our progress to heaven, grace should be content to be without them. There is much comfort with a little: 1 Tim. 6:6, 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.'

## **SERMON XI**

In this present world.—TITUS 2:12.

HAVING shown you the substance of the lesson, let me now speak of the season of it, when this is to be performed; and that is, in this present world.

Doct. That our abode in the present world is the only time wherein we are to discharge the duty of our heavenly calling. I shall—(1.) Draw forth the force of the expression; (2.) Give you the reasons of it.

I. The force of the expression, 'In this present world.' It implies three things—timely beginning, zealous discharge, and final perseverance. Whatever we are to do upon the teaching of grace, we are to do it speedily, earnestly, constantly. Speedily, now or never, take hold of the present occasion; earnestly, it is the work of our lives, wherefore we are sent into the world; and constantly, that is, all the time of our living here.

1. Speedily; now or never must it be done. We must set upon this work speedily upon two grounds—because time to come is uncertain, and it is not fit to neglect it. (1.) Time to come is uncertain. We have nothing to command but this instant; that which is to come is not in our power. One being invited to a feast the next day made answer, *Ego a multis annis crastinum non habui*—For these many years I never had a to-morrow. The present time is put into thy hands; thou hast no security for the next day but thy own word; and how is he the better assured that is security to himself? When you promise yourselves many years, you are liberal upon another man's goods; and it is the fashion of madmen to reckon other men's estates to be theirs. The Father hath reserved times and seasons in his own power, and taken them into his own hands. We are not masters of a day; therefore now or never must we set upon this work of living soberly, righteously, godly. Oh! how sad is it to be surprised, and death to find us unprovided! 2 Peter 3:14, 'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace.' This is the great business of our lives, to be found in a condition pleasing to God. A man should live every day as he would be found of God, for usually death comes by way of surprise; it finds

us before we look for it, and steals upon us ere we are aware. (2.) Because it is not fit to neglect it till death, and to provide work for that time when we need cordials; the infirmities of age and sickness need supports, and not work. Oh! how sad is this, that many times we are going out of the world before we begin to think why we came into it! Our great business here is to save our souls; and when time is gone, then we begin to think of it. He is a foolish traveller that would set out at night, and begin his journey when the sun is setting, and the darkness of the night is coming on; so when time appointed is gone, then to think of saving our souls. It is too late to be sparing when we have spent all upon prodigality. The foolish virgins came to buy oil too late. Who would expect to conquer then when his enemy is strongest and himself weakest, or purposely delay it till such a time? If you do not presently set about the work, you do but provide grief and sorrow for your last age, when you are least able to bear it.

2. Earnestly. It is the reason why we are sent into the present world. It is the work of our lives. We were not put into the world as leviathan was put into the sea, to take our fill of pleasure; but we were sent into the world for our trial and for our exercise. For this end was life given us; not to get wealth and honour, and great estates, or only to eat, drink, and sleep, and so live as if we were never to die, and then die as if we were never to live more; such lose the end of their lives. God hath appointed a time for everything under the sun, and the time of life is appointed to work out our salvation; and therefore it is but reason that our best business should have the greatest share of our time and strength, and that this work should go forward according to our years; still should you increase and be bettering yourselves in the great business of your lives. It is some work of grace to raise the soul to desire things within the veil; it is more to hope for them; it is more to seize upon them as our right and portion, and 'lay hold of eternal life,' 1 Tim. 6:19. This is the

great work of our lives, first to raise up the soul and carry it within the veil, to be always increasing our assurance of heaven, and looking after a better life: John 9:4, 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.' Hereafter there is no prophecy, nor labour, nor faith, nor repentance. We have a little time, and a great deal of work, and a great many temptations. It is a great work to get out of a state of nature into a state of grace, to fit ourselves for a better world. Now, because we have no long continuance here, we should be doing it with all our might; therefore let us not forget the main thing, that which is the business and employment of our lives; let not your time pass unfruitfully, for 'the night cometh, wherein no man can work.'

3. Constantly. It is in the present world as long as we are here, without any limitation, and therefore it hints final perseverance, without which as good we had never begun. It is notable that under the law the Nazarite, if he had made a vow, he should touch no wine or anything that was forbidden for so many days or months; but if he had defiled himself before the days of his purification were accomplished, he was to begin again: Num. 6:12, 'The days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.' So when we have renounced the vanities and delights of the world, and given ourselves to God, all is lost when we turn apostates, and go off from a course of godliness; Ezek. 18:24, 'But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, shall he live? all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.' As good never have begun if we fall off and tire before we come to the end; nay, in some respect it would have been better if we had never begun than not to have continued; for it is said, 'The latter end is worse with them than the beginning,' 2

Peter 2:20. A male-factor who hath made an escape out of prison, if he be taken again, he is loaded with chains and irons; so when any have made some show of escape out of the devil's clutches, by keeping a constant course of duty and communion with God, and then turns and breaks off again, none in such bondage and slavery as they. Nay, and this apostasy is a mighty dishonour to Christ, as well as a disadvantage to yourselves; for a man that hath begun to be strict, and careful, and holy, and righteous, and profess himself to be taken out of the kingdom of darkness, and made experience of the ways of Christ, yet if he falls off, he doth as it were after trial pronounce to the world that Satan's service is better than Christ's. As Jacob kept wrestling till daylight appeared, and would not let go his holdfast, so till the morning of glory come, still keep on and continue your courage. Or as Elisha would not leave his master till he was taken from him into heaven, so be constant to the last; let the world know you see no cause to leave Christ or to be weary of his service, and to begrudge the strictness of religion. Mat. 20, you read some were called into the vineyard sooner, some later, but they all kept working to the end and close of the day. There is a different time of calling; some begin with God in infancy, some in riper age, but none must be weary of well-doing. But how apt are we to turn aside from God! Our righteousness must be as the morning light, that always increaseth till high-noon; but our righteousness is like the morning dew, it is gone as soon as the sun breaks out in strength and power. We have a great many resolutions when we begin a course of godliness, but soon grow weary. Look, as a tired horse is ready to turn in at every inn, so upon every occasion and temptation we are ready to turn away from God. But it is not enough to begin to live godly, strictly, righteously, but while life lasteth you must hold on in God's ways; it must be during your whole present state and abode here in the world.



II. The reasons why this duty of our heavenly calling must be in the present world.

1. Because this is the time of grace. There is no other time to get the favour of God and an interest in heaven but here upon earth. Now we have the means, hereafter the recompenses. Now Christ saith, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' Mat. 11:28 Hereafter he will say, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,' Mat. 25:34. Now he calls us to receive grace, hereafter we must receive either vengeance or glory. In the angels' song we find, Luke 2:14, 'Peace upon earth.' Here God proclaims tidings of peace and reconciliation to the creature, if it will submit to God. Now the golden sceptre is held out, and you will have no more such a season. This is God the Father's, God the Son's, and God the Spirit's time, but after this life you shall have it no more; it is the time of God the Father's patience, and these are the days of the gospel when God the Son is offered to us; and now we have the advantage of the Spirit's impulses, and his convictions upon our hearts: but after this life there is neither prophecy, nor gospel, nor conviction, nor means offered any more; then comes recompense and retribution. Zanchy speaks of some which had a fancy that the gospel should be preached hereafter in the other world to those that never heard of Christ in this world; as to children, to Turks and pagans. To justify this conceit, they allege that place: 1 Peter 3:19, 'By which he went and preached to the spirits in prison.' But that is a clear mistake. The apostle speaks there how the Spirit of God went forth by Noah's preaching in warm conviction upon the hearts of those that are now in prison, that were sometimes disobedient to the warnings of Noah, and are now held with chains of darkness in the prison of hell. But however there is nothing to this world. Now you have the means, and God's golden sceptre is held out. Now Christ saith, Come; but if you refuse, hereafter he will say,

Depart: 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,' 2 Cor. 6:1.

## 2. This is the time of our exercise and trial.

[1.] There must be this exercise before we come to heaven. We do not leap into heaven without any preparation. The vessels of glory must first be seasoned with grace: Col. 1:12, 'Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' First we are qualified and seasoned, then filled brim-full. As when the virgins were chosen for Ahasuerus, they were to accomplish their months of purification, so we must have a time of purifying and cleansing from corruption before we can get to heaven. Balaam would die the death of the righteous, but not live his life: Num. 23:10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.' As it is said of the snake, that when it is stricken with death, it stretcheth out itself straight, though crooked before; *at oportuit sic vixisse*, you should have so lived; you should be sober, righteous, and godly. 'Enoch before his translation had this testimony, that he pleased God,' Heb. 11:5. Something must be done here; there is no triumph without a warfare: 2 Tim. 2:5, 'If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned unless he strive lawfully;' that is, according to the laws of the race or exercise; so we cannot expect to die in the Lord unless we live in the Lord: Rev. 14:13, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' Your works die not when you die: Eccles. 11:3, 'If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be.' In the time of the law there was nothing to be gathered upon the sabbath day, but a double portion to be gathered before; those that provided nothing on the sixth day, had nothing on the sabbath day. The sabbath is a figure of heaven, of that eternal rest we shall have there.

If we do not make provision during the time of life, there can be nothing done afterwards.

[2.] It is only here; this is the fittest place for exercise. Here are difficulties, snares, and temptations, and these serve to discover the glory of grace; and this makes it worthy of praise, that we can act for God in the present world, where so many miscarry: 2 Tim. 4:10, 'Demas hath forsaken us, having loved this present world.' Here is the fit place for our trial, where we have so many difficulties, snares, baits, avocations, and scandals, to take us off from performing the duty of our heavenly calling. As death leaves us so judgment finds us. Upon our behaviour in the present life both our everlasting woe or weal depends. Hereafter is not a time of labour, but of reward and punishment; there is no room for exercise and trial there, no snares in the next world. Grace cannot be found worthy of praise there, for that is God's day, called the day of the Lord: 2 Peter 3:10, 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.' Here is our day, because God affords time to us as a space and season of repentance and reformation; but the day of judgment, that is the Lord's day, the day of recompense, rewards, and punishments.

Use 1. To reprove them that delay the work of repentance and their change of state. There is nothing more usual than delays and put-offs. Some are full of employment, and after their business is a little over, then they will think of saving their souls: Luke 9:59, 'Suffer me first to go and bury my father;' still there is something in the way. Others, when they have arrived to such a degree of wealth, and made such provision for their families, then they will look after their souls. Others, when their youthful heats are spent, then they dream of a devout retirement and a religious age; there is nothing more usual. The Lord knows these are our inward thoughts; still there is something in the way when we should act holily, righteously, and

godly. This is Satan's last shift to elude the importunity of a present conviction by a future promise. As a bad debtor promises payment for the future to be rid of the importunate creditor, though he means no such matter, so we make promises for the future. Felix, when his conscience boggled, dreams of a more convenient season: Acts 24:25, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season, I will send for thee.' And Mat. 22, when they were invited to the wedding, the answer is not scornful, but civil; it is not non placet, but non vacat; they do not deny, but make excuse; they had present business, and were not at leisure to comply with God's will. Always God comes unseasonably in the sinner's esteem, reckoning, and account: and Satan's usual clamour is, when we begin to be serious and mind our salvation, 'Art thou come to torment us before our time?' Mat. 8:29. The devil would fain have a little longer possession, and therefore something is pleaded by way of bar and hesitancy. You find it in particular cases; when you go to perform anything that is good, to pray, to meditate, to renew your communion with God, something is in the way. If such a business were over, then I were at leisure. Thus we dream of another time, a more convenient season, and we linger and draw back as Lot in Sodom. Oh! consider, the work must be once done, or you are for ever miserable; and you will never have a better season than now, when you are under conviction, and the warm impulses of the Spirit of God. David takes hold of the present season when his heart was engaged and he had a religious bent towards God: Ps. 119:60, 'I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.' So when there is such a strong bent in your souls, strike while the iron is hot; you may have more hindrances, but never more helps. Again, we owe more than we are worth already, and why should we run more in debt? The longer you continue in sin, the higher will your accounts rise. A tenant that cannot pay the rent of one year, if he let it run on, how will he be able to discharge the rent of two years? So if it be so troublesome now, do

you think it will be more easy hereafter, when the heart is hardened by a constant resistance? If there were a sound conviction you would not delay. A sensible sinner is always in haste: Heb. 6:18, he flies for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before him. It is an allusion to the man pursued by the avenger of blood; he that hath wrath at his heels, he runs as for life to Jesus Christ. It is but a slender and insufficient touch upon the conscience. He that knows the danger can never make haste enough to come to Christ, as the pursued man could never make too much haste to get into the city of refuge that is before him. Nay, it argues little love to God, and a great deal of disingenuity of spirit, to continue in rebellion against God, and think to come in at last, when you can stand out no longer. This is merely self-love, when you care not how much God is dishonoured and his Spirit grieved, provided at length we be saved. The Lord did not so deal with us; his whole duration and existence is for our sakes; from eternity to eternity he is God, and from eternity to eternity his loving-kindness is great to them that fear him: Ps. 103:17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him.' If God thinks of us from one eternity to another, before the world and after the world, can we be content to thrust him into a narrow corner of our lives? Can you satisfy your hearts when you have nothing to give God but the rottenness, weakness, and aches of old age and sickness? Consider once more, sin leaves thee in sickness, thou dost not leave sin; it is not a work of choice, but of necessity, as a merchant throws his goods overboard in a storm, though he loves them well enough. At least it is a very suspicious act, a natural aversation from our own misery, and a desire of our own happiness; it is a yielding upon force when a man never yields to God, but when God hath him under, and he can sin no longer. And what assurance have we, that we shall have a heart to mind salvation at all, and turn to God hereafter? When all our distractions are out of the way, is grace at our beck? There is an offer of it to-day: Heb. 3:15, 'While it is

said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Nay, there is a shrewd presumption to the contrary, that obduracy, hardness of heart, and despair will grow upon us. Long use makes the heart more obdurate, and long resistance grieves the Spirit of God, and makes him more offended with us. By putting off the change of your lives, you put your souls into Satan's hands by consent for a while. He that delays his conversion doth, as it were, pawn his soul into the devil's hands, and saith, If he do not fetch it again at such a day, it is his for ever. Again, it is a great honour to seek the Lord betimes. Mnason was an old disciple. Seniority in grace is a very great honour. The apostle saith, Rom. 16:7, 'Salute Andronicus and Junia, who were in Christ before me.' And the Lord saith, Jer. 2:2, 'I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals.' God prizeth these pure virgin affections, when, before our hearts be prostituted to the world, we apply ourselves to seek his face. You lose the advantage of much early communion with God, whenever you are called to grace; and if ever you taste of the sweetness of grace, it will be your grief that you were acquainted with it no sooner, and all the time that remains will be little enough to repent the loss of that which is past. Consider, a man can never come soon enough into the arms of mercy, nor soon enough out of the power of Satan. Present necessity admits of no deliberation, therefore charge yourselves to be more solid and serious. Sin, if you let it alone, will gather more strength: Jer. 13:23, 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil.' When a stick hath been long bent, it will hardly ever be set right again. Some that have been late converted have much bewailed their disadvantage, their standing out so long, till their inclinations were fixed, and that they have got a stubborn nature so strong and ever apt to recoil upon them. Consider, we would not have God to put us off when we come for mercy, and are in present need, and shall we put off God? We

would count a delay to be as bad as a denial; therefore take heed of delays in this kind, for if ever you be called to grace, you will smart for it soundly. Christ waited upon the spouse for entrance: Cant. 5:2, 'My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night;' and then the spouse waited for comfort: ver. 6, 'I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone; my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.' What is the reason, when the work is begun and the first stroke is given to sin, that christians walk so mournfully for a great while? Oh! they have made God wait long, and stood out many a call, therefore the Lord exerciseth them with waiting. Let all this work thee to comply with the importunity of the present conviction of the Holy Ghost.

Use 2. Is to reclaim us when we are greedily set upon other businesses and projects than the great business of our lives, as to get wealth, honour, and great estates. Remember what is thy duty and work in this present world. Consider—

1. The shortness of life. We have a great deal of work to do in a little time, therefore we should not waste it; every day we are nearer to the grave. We are sensible of the decays of others, but not of our own; thou seest others wax old and die, remember thou thyself art going that way. When two ships meet one another in the sea, the other ship seems to sail faster than yours, though both pass away alike, because you are not sensible, or do not observe your own motion. We see others are mortal, but do not number our own days. This is a point of prudence: Ps. 90:12, 'So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.' A man would think of all points that were plainest and soonest learned, yet it is very hard to learn the lesson of our own frailty; I mean, to learn it by heart, to learn it practically.

2. The uncertainty of life. We know not when death will surprise us; it is ill to be taken unprovided; when death comes, to say, Hast thou found me, O my enemy? Every day we have cause to look to it; more are mistaken in reckoning upon life than upon death. Thou art asleep in the wolf's mouth; there is no remedy but imploring the shepherd's help. A carnal man that goeth on in sin provoketh God to his face, and trieth whether he will cut him off, yea or nay. We are sure to live to enjoy what we provide for heaven, but we are not sure to live to enjoy what we provide for the world. A man may not roast what he took in hunting; but when he cometh to enjoy his estate, God cutteth him off: Luke 12:20, 'Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' And shall my master come and find me idle?

3. After death followeth eternity, the great amazement of the soul. Now, if death find you at peace with God, eternity will be comfortable and death sweet; body and soul part, but God and the soul meet. When we can see angels ready to do their office, and conscience becometh our compurgator, I bear you witness you have spent your time in this world in obeying and serving God; and then body and soul take leave of one another, it is a blessed parting. But now; when you have not regarded your work, you are then delivered up to Satan by such an excommunication as shall never be reversed, accursed till the Lord come; and then body and soul meet to be tormented for ever. It is a sad parting when conscience falls a raving, and we curse ourselves and the day of our birth. Oh! that ever such a creature were born! Oh! that I had been stifled in the womb, and never seen the light!

4. The necessity of working out our own salvation. God's stipulation with mankind is not made up all of promises; something is required: holiness is the way to salvation. Men that live as they list can claim



nothing. The world is a common inn for sons and bastards; in the time of God's patience he keeps open house for just and unjust; but no unclean thing entereth into heaven. At the great rendezvous God maketh a separation: Ps. 1:5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' The wicked shall not be able to look Christ in the face, nor veil themselves in the glorious assembly: 1 Cor. 6:9, 10, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Our desires settle into opinions; we think God will not damn his own creatures, and an universal hope is natural.

5. The folly of not doing our business. To get bodily supports is but our errand by-the-by. These souls were not given us to scrape up wealth, and only to provide and purvey for the body; Let us use them to the end that God gave them, to think of eternity: Luke 10:41, 42, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.' Martha was careful to entertain Christ in her house, but Mary to entertain him in her heart. The one thing needful is the care which every one ought to have of his own salvation. Everything is best that helpeth us on towards heaven, and that is evil that hindereth us in our pursuit of heaven. This will appear to be the greatest wisdom at length, and not to spend your lives in getting honours or pleasures, or screwing yourselves into the favour of great personages. It is commonly said of a man that hath gotten an estate, that he hath spent his time well; but the apostle commands, Eph. 5:15, 16, 'See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'

Those other are the worst fools, who make no provision for the future; they part with jewels for trifles.

## SERMON XII

Looking for that blessed hope, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

I OBSERVED—(1.) The teacher, 'The grace of God;' (2.) The lesson, the whole duty of our heavenly calling, 'To deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly,' &c.; (3.) I come to the third general branch, the encouragements to learning; here are two—eternal life, and Christ's death. There are two great principles of obedience—gratitude and hope. Gratitude, or thankfulness, because of the obligation that is left upon us from Christ's death; and then hope, because of the glorious reward that is set before us. So that whether we look backward or forward, we meet with obligations to obedience. Backward, there is an excellent merit: ver. 14, 'Who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity,' &c. Forward, there is a glorious hope: 'Looking for that blessed hope,' &c. There is nothing lost by God's service. The Lord might deal with us out of sovereignty, and rule us with a rod of iron, but he is pleased to 'draw us with the cords of a man, and with bands of love,' Hosea 11:3; to indent with us and propound rewards, as if we were altogether free before the contract. Men do not use to covenant with their slaves; we are bound to serve him whether there had been any reward or no; but the Lord will not leave us without an encouragement. We are apt to have hard thoughts of God, and to think him harsh and austere, requiring work but not giving wages.

But consider, we have the highest motives as well as the noblest work; we are not only 'to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world,' but 'to look to the blessed hope.' Life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel. There is no such encouragement to virtuous living anywhere as in the gospel. Lactantius saith of the heathens, *Virtutis vim non sentiunt, cujus præmium ignorant*—They do not feel the force and transforming power of virtue, because they are ignorant of the reward of virtue. The heathens had no such encouragement as immortality and eternal life, and the happy enjoyment of God and Christ for evermore.

But to handle the words a little more distinctly. We have here—(1.) The reward itself, called a 'blessed hope;' then (2.) The time when it shall be accomplished to the full, at the 'coming of the Lord.' Both these things you must look for. Christians, as often as you think of eternal life, you must also think of Christ's appearing. Before we enter into glory we must first give an account. Carnal men fancy a heaven without a day of judgment; they would be saved, but they would not be called to an audit and reckoning with God. Many can brook sitting upon the throne with Christ, but not coming before his tribunal; but they that would live holily must look for both the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of Christ. Many points may be observed out of this verse.

Doct. 1. That looking for the blessed hope conduceth much to the advancement of the spiritual life.

1. What this looking is.
2. What influence and power it hath to work us to the spiritual life.
  - I. What this looking is. It implies patience, but chiefly hope.

1. Patience in waiting God's leisure. Patience is a grace very needful in our pilgrimage, where we are exercised with so many difficulties: Heb. 10:36, 'For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.' You do not only need holiness, but patience. It is long before we can bring our hearts to do the will of God; but after that is done, you have need of patience, that you may wait God's leisure for your reward; for the reward is not given till there be time for labour and exercise, and troubles coming on make time seem very long. Whatever grace we may spare, we cannot spare patience if we would persist in well-doing, for we are to wait for the blessed hope. The good ground 'bringeth forth fruit with patience,' Luke 8:15. Look, as the ground endures the plough, the harrow, the cold, the frost, that in due time the seed may spring up, so we have need of patience that we may wait upon God for the blessed hope. And as patience is very needful in the present life, so it is inseparable from hope; 1 Thes. 1:3, it is called 'the patience of hope.' To every grace he gives a proper action; there is 'the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope.' Faith propounds work, love makes us to labour and sweat at it, and hope makes us wait with patience for our reward and recompense: Rom. 8:25, 'But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' What we hope for we wait with patience for; between hope and having there is an intervening time to exercise patience. There is want of the thing desired, and delays are troublesome. Now to keep looking is a work of patience.

2. It chiefly implies hope. This looking for is the formal act of hope, an actual expectation of blessedness to come. Now, because there is a bastard and blind hope, and there is a regular and good hope—2 Thes. 2:16, 'Who hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace'—therefore let me tell you—(1.) What this expectation is not; (2.) What it is.

[1.] Negatively, what it is not.

(1.) It is not a blind hope, such a hope as is found in men ignorant and presumptuous, that regard not what they do. Presumption is a child of darkness, as hope is a child of light; presumption is the fruit of ignorance and inconsideration. When men are once serious, they find it the hardest matter in the world to hope; for guilty nature in itself is more presageous of evil, more inclinable to fear and sorrow, than to joy and hope. But yet a blind confidence is very common, because men do not consider what they do, but hand-over-head make a full account that they shall go to heaven, without warrant and without evidence. And therefore you shall find it is one of the first things God works by the word, to break down our former carnal hopes, and make men see they are out of the way, lost and undone creatures. Paul in his presumptuous state thought he had as much to show for heaven as any man in the world: Rom. 7:9, 'I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' The commandment coming in full conviction upon his heart, he began to be serious, and then he found himself lost and obnoxious to God's judgment. The excellency of hope doth not lie in the strength of confidence, but in the clearness of your ground and warrant. In Mat 7 latter end, the scripture takes notice of two builders, the foolish and the wise; there was no difference in the building itself; both might raise a structure equally fair; but the difference lay in the groundwork and foundation; the one built upon the sand, the other upon a rock: therefore you are not to look so much to the strength of your hope, as to the evidence, the ground, the foundation of it. Do you know what you do when you so confidently believe your salvation? Presumption grows upon men they know not how; it is not an act of advice and consideration, and therefore will leave us to shame. A man had need have good grounds for his hope. True hope is a serious act, arising from grace, longing

after its perfection; and therefore we are said 'to be begotten to a lively hope,' 1 Peter 1:3. Seed desireth growth; everything aimeth at perfection. When grace is infused, presently there is a tendency and motion this way. Others may have strength of confidence, though a weak foundation whereon to build it, therefore their hope comes to nothing but shame and the greater confusion. Job 8:14, the hope of the hypocrite is compared to a spider's web. Oh! what a curious web doth she spin out of her own bowels! But as soon as the besom comes, down goes the spider and the web too; both are swept away and trodden under foot. So it is with hypocrites; they spin a fine web out of their own bowels, conceive rash but strong hope, a hope of their own forming and making; but when death comes, the man dies, and his hopes die with him. So Prov. 11:7, 'When a wicked man dies, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of the unjust man perisheth.' It is not meant only of his worldly expectations, though that is true; he that aspired to be great, and to feather his nest, and excel in the world, when he dies, all his plots and projects die with him; but it is meant of his heavenly hopes; when they come to enter upon their everlasting state, then they are sensible of their mistake. We are more sensible of what is near at hand than what is at a distance. Men grow wise when they come to die. Eternity is near at hand, and men begin to awake as out of their dream, and lose all their confidence; and when they thought they were full, they find themselves hungry. Again, the hope of the hypocrite is compared to the giving up of the ghost: Job 11:20, 'Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.' When the frame of nature is dissolved, it is done with bitter gripes and pain; the soul in a moment takes an everlasting farewell of the body; so all the hopes of the wicked vanish and are lost in an instant, and they are full of horror and sad despair. It is the greatest evil that can befall you, to lose all your hopes in an instant. Well, then, this looking for the blessed hope is not a slender imagination, an unadvised rash confidence, such as is lost whenever

we begin to be serious, either by the conviction of the word or the approaches of death.

(2.) It is not some glances upon heaven, such as are found in worldly and sensual persons. Sometimes worldly men have their lucida intervalla, their good moods, and now and then have some sober thoughts of heaven that rush into their mind. Balaam had his wishes: Num. 23:10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.' And the apostle speaks of some that had a taste, Heb. 6:4, snatch now and then some savour of the sweetness of heaven and spiritual comforts. A wretched worldling, in whose fancy the world plays all the day, riseth with him, goeth to bed with him, yet now and then hath his wishes, and some sudden raptures of soul, some flashes and motions; but alas! this is not the looking for the blessed hope, for that is a constant viewing of happiness to come. Sudden motions are not operative; they come but now and then, and leave no warmth upon the soul, as fruit is not ripened that hath but a glance of the sun; and you know a sudden light rather blinds a man than shows him his way; so these sudden flashes, enlightenings, and heavenly thoughts vanish, and leave a man never the better.

(3.) It is not a loose hope, a possible salvation, that can have such an efficacy upon the soul to urge and incline it to the spiritual life: James 1:8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.' When a man is double-minded, divided and distracted between hopes and fears, there will be much irregularity and unevenness in his conversation; he will be off and on with God. As their hearts are up and down and divided, because the success is doubtful, so also is their care of strictness weakened and broken: 1 Cor. 9:26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.' He alludes to the Isthmian games. In an ordinary race a man might run and be outstripped; the event was very uncertain, he might miss

of the goal; if the other sensibly got ground, then he was discouraged, and began to slack his pace out of hope; but, saith the apostle, 'I run not as one that is uncertain.' Here we are all sure to obtain, though we cannot keep pace with the foremost: and this is that which quickens industry, and stirs up those holy endeavours. The surer your hope is, the greater strength you find, and the greater power upon your conversation. Thus it is not a blind hope, or some glances upon heaven and the blessed things to come, that rush into the mind of a cursed worldling, nor a loose hope and bare conjecture; a possible salvation hath not such efficacy and power upon the soul.

[2.] Positively, what this expectation is of blessedness to come. It is an earnest and lively hope, a solid expectation of blessedness to come; and it bewrays itself by three things—serious thoughts, earnest groans, and lively tastes.

(1.) By frequent and serious thoughts. Thoughts are the spies and messengers of hope sent into the promised land to bring the soul tidings of what is to come. It is impossible for a man to hope for anything, but his mind will run upon it, and he will be thinking of it. We find it in all earthly matters, that hope sets the mind on work; and so we preoccupy and forestall the contentments that we expect; we enjoy them before they come by serious contemplation, feasting the soul with images and suppositions of the happiness we shall have when we come to fruition. Contemplation of heaven is the feast of the soul. Hope brings in the image and suppositions of what is to come as if it were already present. Certainly wherever the treasure is, the heart, the thoughts will be there. Hope carries the mind above the clouds, in the midst of the glory of the world to come, as if we did see Christ upon his white throne, and Paul with his crown of righteousness, and all the faithful ones in Abraham's bosom. If a beggar were adopted into the succession of a crown, would he not



please himself in forethinking of the happiness, honour, and pleasure of the kingly state? So we vile creatures, that are adopted to be co-heirs with Christ, if we did hope to be heirs of the kingdom of heaven, heaven would have more of our thoughts, and take up more of the musings of our souls. We should still observe what we muse upon most. Carnal thoughts, and carnal projects discover a carnal heart; when we are always thinking of plucking down barns and building greater, advancing our families and providing worldly increase; when we are talking to ourselves, as Luke 12:18, 'He thought within himself, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and build greater,' &c. The word *διελογίζετο* signifies he was framing dialogues with himself of bestowing his goods; this shows a carnal heart. So James 4:13, 'To-day or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.' It is usual with men to live upon the reversion of their hopes, and feed themselves with the pleasure thereof. As young heirs spend upon their hopes, and run out their estates ere they possess them, so doth the soul, either in matters carnal or heavenly, still feed upon its hopes. And therefore if there be such an earnest hope, you will be entertaining your spirits with suppositions of heaven, and framing images of the glory of the world to come.

(2.) It bewrays itself by hearty sighs, and groanings, and longings after this happiness: Rom. 8:23, 'And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body.' They that have once tasted of the clusters of Canaan, that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, have tasted of the goodness and sweetness of God in Christ, think they can never be soon enough with him in heaven. When shall it once be? They are still looking out; and

the nearer they come to enjoyment, the more impatient they are of the want. As natural motions are swiftest in the end—a stone, the nearer it is to the centre, it moves the faster—so the longer a christian lives in Christ, the more he sends forth his desires and heart after his happiness, and therefore groans, Waiting for the revelation of the sons of God, and for this blessed hope. The apostle says, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,' Rom. 8:19. The word ἀποκαρδοκία signifies a lifting up of the head, as we are wont to put out our head to see if we can spy a thing a great way off; as Judges 5:28, Sisera's mother and the ladies 'looked out at the window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming?' as if they would spy him afar off. So the soul is still looking out: When will the change come? when will it once be? They would have a fuller draught of the consolations of the Spirit, more freedom from sin, and a more entire love of God: they have had some taste already, therefore they long for the increase and full perfection of it.

(3.) By lively tastes and feelings. It is said of a believer, 'He hath eternal life,' John 3:36; that is, in the beginnings of it; he hath some taste here upon earth. Hope is called not only living, but 'lively hope,' 1 Peter 1:3, because it quickens the heart, and fills it with a solid spiritual joy; and Rom. 5:2, 'We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.' It is a joy that is for enjoyment and possession. In worldly things there is pain and travail, and burdensome expectation till we come to enjoy a thing; but a christian rejoiceth in his hopes. So 1 Peter 1:8, 'In whom believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.' It is true all feel it not in such a degree; it depends on a sense of grace, which all believers have not always; but all believers, whenever they meditate upon heaven, they find sweetness shed abroad in their hearts when they think what is provided for them by Christ. Worldly hope is only as a dream of a shadow; there is pain and travail in

expectation, and there is no satisfaction when we come to fruition; but our hopes in Christ fill the soul with this lively joy. Look, as the patriarchs that waited for the coming of Christ, the consolation of Israel, they hugged the promises: oh! here is a sweet promise that will yield a Messiah at length, that shall save the world! Thus they rejoiced in what they foresaw concerning Christ in vision, type, and figure. So christians that wait for happiness and blessedness to come, how do they find a great deal of sweetness shed abroad in their hearts by meditating upon their hope.

II. To show the influence it hath upon the spiritual life.

1. It purgeth the heart from lusts and the filthiness of sin: 1 John 3:3, 'Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.' How doth this hope make him purify himself? Thus; the things we look for are all holy and pure; it is a great part of our portion in heaven to be freed from sin, to be consorts of the immaculate Lamb. Now the soul will say thus, Do I look upon this as my happiness? Do I hope to be like Christ hereafter, and be freed from the burden of corruption, and can indulge and allow these lusts in my heart? A man hopes for nothing de futuro which he would not presently compass were it in his power. We do not look for a sensual paradise, but for a pure and blissful estate, that is made up of sinlessness and purity; and therefore, whoever hath set his heart upon the hopes of christianity, the vision of God, and fruition of Christ, he must needs begin here, especially since God hath required preparation; here we are to be made meet, seasoned and qualified, to accomplish the months of our purification, to prepare ourselves more and more for these glorious hopes.

2. It withdraws our hearts from present things: Phil. 3:20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour,

the Lord Jesus Christ.' A christian lives in the earth as if he were in the midst of the angels. We are weaned from the world by looking for better things, and so the world is outshined. As a man that hath looked upon the sun, his eyes are dazzled, and cannot see an object less glorious, so when we look within the veil upon our blessed hopes, the glory of, the world is obscured. The apostle renders this as a reason why Abraham was a stranger in the promised land, there where he had most right, yet he dwelt in tents: Heb. 11:9, 10, 'For he looked for a city which hath foundations.' Abraham had other expectations; he did not look upon the walled cities of the Amorites, but upon heaven that was founded by God himself; he had other thoughts. They that live to the world and to the flesh never tasted what eternal life means. Look, as the Israelites longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt before they had tasted the clusters of Canaan, so here the heart is carried out after better things. The soul must have some oblectation and delight, for love cannot be idle; it is carried out to present things if we know no better. See how fitly they are joined together in the text: 'Denying worldly lusts, and looking for the blessed hope;' thereby do we come to deny worldly lusts, by looking for the blessed hope. We should soon return to worldly lusts if we do not often look up and consider what God hath provided for us in heaven. A man whose heart is much in heaven, his affections are pre-engaged, and therefore the world doth him little hurt. Birds are seldom taken in their flight, but when they pitch and rest. Oh! if we had more of these heavenly flights; if the soul did mount upward more, it would better escape the snares of worldly things.

3. It urgeth to care, diligence, and constancy in obedience. Hope is the great spring that sets the wheels a-going: Phil. 3:13, 14, 'Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward towards those things that are before, I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.' What is the reason Paul

was so earnest that a little grace would not content him, but he was striving for more so earnestly and zealously? He was called to enjoy a high prize, a glorious reward. There is an excellent glory set before us; this race is not for trifles. Christians are the more cold and careless in the spiritual life because they do not oftener think of heaven. The end quickens to the use of means; as it is the measure of the means, so it sweetens the means, notwithstanding all difficulty. Why? Because it will bring us to such an end: 1 Cor. 15:58, 'Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.' You can never do enough for the Lord. Why? 'Your labour is not in vain in the Lord.' This will make you to be instant and earnest, and to hold out to the end in the midst of difficulties; heaven will pay for all. You have no cause to begrudge God any service; though it put the body to pains and labours, do not spare it; Christ will honour it sufficiently. The apostle hath an expression, 2 Thes. 1:10, 'That Christ will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.' The soul will remember the body as Pharaoh's butler did Joseph. How? In prayer and fasting and holy exercises. And when Christ comes to raise the body, he will put so much glory and clarity upon it that the angels shall stand wondering what Christ is about to do with a poor creature that is but newly crept out of dust and rottenness. Before a feast we use to take a walk. There is a world of glory provided for us in heaven. Though the work of God be painful, yet it is very fruitful. God will reward you as much as you can desire; and this makes you to be earnest and zealous, and to labour in the spiritual life. We compare the pains of duty with the pleasure of sin, but the comparison is not rightly made; you should compare the pleasure of sin with the reward. I confess you may compare Christ's worst with the world's best, the pains of duty with the pleasure of sin; the former is more sweet to a gracious heart; but the comparison should rather be made thus: compare the base dreggy pleasures of

sin with those pure pleasures that are at God's right hand, and with the happiness that is to come, which we expect in Christ.

4. It maketh us upright and sincere in what we do. That is hypocrisy and guile of spirit to look asquint upon secular rewards. You know the hypocrites that Christ taxeth, when they pray, fast, and do other duties to be seen of men, 'they have their reward,' Mat. 6:2. They have given God a discharge, they look for no more than they have already. As hired servants must have present wages and pay in hand, they wait not for the inheritance as children do. So carnal affections they look to therewards here below. If they may have the world, and live in honour and pleasure here, they give God an acquittance for anything else. But now this is sincerity to make God our paymaster to do all we do upon the encouragement of the blessed hope: Col. 3:24, 'Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.' You have a master good enough, you need not look elsewhere for your wages. And nothing on this side heaven will satisfy the soul, nothing but these glorious hopes.

5. This blessed hope supports the soul under afflictions and difficulties that do befall us in a course of godliness. We counterbalance what we feel with what we expect. We feel nothing but trouble, yet it is not in vain to serve God. I confess we are apt to think so. Saith David, Ps. 73:13, 14, 'Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.' My innocency is to no purpose: Mal. 3:14, 'Ye have said, It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?' It is a usual temptation, for we measure all things by sense and feeling, and sense makes lies of God. Ah! but consider, that which you feel is not worthy to be named the same day with that which you hope for: Rom. 8:18, 'I

reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.' Glory is revealed to our ears in the gospel, but it will be revealed in us hereafter: 2 Cor. 4:17, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Alas! this light affliction is but the scratch of a pin compared with the weighty massy crown of glory; for, saith the apostle, 'we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.' Christians, what do you make your scope? (for that is the word σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν). Is it to preserve your interest, to live delicately? Then the blessed hope is not for your turn. But when you have fixed your hopes upon these things, you will see this is but a small matter in comparison of what God hath provided for you. A christian's blessings are future, his crosses are present; therefore we need some support. Now hope is of great use in affliction and temptations; this appears by the comparisons that are used; it is called an anchor in the stormy gusts of temptations, and a helmet in all spiritual conflicts. There are fightings without and fears within; here is a helmet, here is an anchor; hope is the anchor of the soul; and the apostle reckons up all the properties of a good anchor; it must be firm, sharp, and enter into good ground; so saith he, Heb. 6:19, 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' Here is a sure holdfast, upon good ground; it is a weighty anchor, which will not bow nor break. Mariners when they have cast out a good anchor, which is fastened to the ship with a strong cable, they sleep quietly; though the winds blow, and the storms and tempests arise, they know the anchor will keep them from floating and dashing upon the rocks; so hope is a good anchor. Then it is a helmet: Eph. 6:19, 'And take the helmet of salvation,' that is, hope; 1 Thes. 5:8, 'And for an helmet the hope of salvation.' The apostle reckons up all the pieces of the spiritual armour; faith, that is a shield for the body; but hope that

is a helmet for the head. As long as we can lift up our heads, and look up to heaven, we are safe whatever befalls us; it will hold out in the midst of all the fiery darts that are cast at us.

6. This looking for the blessed hope is of use to resist temptations. Sin makes many promises, and so prevaieth by carnal hopes. Balaam was moved to curse God's people against his conscience; but when he boggled and stuck at it, Come, saith Balak, I will give thee gold and silver; this puts quickening into him. The fool in the gospel promised himself long life: Luke 12:19, 'Soul, soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.' So Jer. 44:17, 'We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.' And so the devil comes to Christ, and makes the temptation as strong as he can: Mat. 4:8, 9, 'He showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' And Babylon's fornication was presented in a golden cup; there are baits of honour and preferment to draw them to popery and heresy. Now faith sets promise against promise, and heaven against earth, and the pleasure at God's right hand against carnal delight. As one nail drives out another, so one hope and one promise drives out another. Carnal motions are defeated by spiritual promises, and those motions that are presented to the soul.

## **SERMON XIII**

Looking for, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

USE 1. Information.



1. It informs us that we may look for the reward. Those men would be wiser than God that deny us a liberty to make use of the Spirit's motives; they begrudge God's bounty. To what end should God propound rewards but that we should close with them by faith? Graces may be exercised about their proper objects without sin. It requireth some faith to aim at things not seen. The world is drowned in sense and present satisfactions; they are mercenaries that must have pay in hand; their souls droop if they do not meet with credit, applause, and profit; they make man their paymaster; they have the spirit of a servant, that prizes present wages above the inheritance; but it is the work of grace to look for the blessed hope, and a great help to us in our work. It was the comfort of Christ's human soul: Heb. 12:2, 'Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.' Christ as man was to have rational comforts and human encouragements. Nothing is sinful but coveting the reward whilst we neglect the work; when we will be mercenarii, but not operarii; we would receive the reward, but not do our work. We are all born libertines; we would sever the reward from the duty: Hosea 10:11, 'Ephraim is an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn,' but not to break the clods; in treading out the corn there was pleasure and profit, but in breaking the clods pain and labour. Or else we sin in having a carnal notion of heaven; our looking for heaven is like their looking for Christ as the consolation of Israel. Some of the Jews look for a carnal Messiah; so do many christians for a carnal heaven, for base pleasures, fleshly delights. Such hopes debase the heart. It is the privilege of our profession that we have a sublime hope. Or else we sin in looking for the reward as the fruit of merit; if we expect it as wages for work done, we are mercenaries. Sin and death are as work and wages: Rom. 6:23, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Eternal life is a donative. What is the reason of this difference? Because wicked men stand upon their own bottom, but

Christ hath obtained this privilege for us. Wicked works are ours, merely evil, but the good we do is by God's grace, as a servant tradeth with his master's estate. I am bound to do good, and am forbidden to sin; when I do that which is forbidden, I deserve punishment; but when I do that which is commanded, I do not deserve a reward, because I am bound to do it: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' It is mercy that we are called, mercy that we are glorified; neither before conversion nor after conversion do we deserve anything. We serve a good master, he hath provided comforts for us, not only against our misery, but our unworthiness; we have not only glory as a reward, but mercy as the cause of it, glory out of the hands of mercy. Thus must you look for the reward, and build your hopes of it. As you pray, so must you expect. Now you will not pray, Lord! give me heaven, for I deserve it; natural conscience would blush at the immodesty of such a request. Who would not have the title of inheritance rather than of hire? Again, our own happiness must not be our ultimate end. Man was made for a twofold end—to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever; they must both go together; we must desire the enjoyment of God that we may glorify God to all eternity, otherwise interest swayeth us more than duty. First, We love God out of interest, and are drawn with the cords of a man; as first the fire is kindled, and then it sendeth forth much smoke; afterwards we love God out of pure affection; at length, as the new nature gathers strength and perfection, men rejoice in God's glory as much as in their own salvation; it is a simple act of adoration. In heaven it will be so, we shall rejoice in God's glory as much as in our our own interest and profit.

2. It informs us of the reason why the world and sin have such a power over men, why they lie under the power of present things; we do not awaken our hopes, and consider blessedness to come so much as we should. It is not only a difference between sinners and saints,

but between christian and christian; one is more heavenly than another. As there is a difference between ordinary subjects and courtiers; those that are always in their prince's eye and company are more polite in their manners than others, so the oftener the soul is in God's court, the more holy; our hopes will have an influence upon our practice. It is hope that carries the soul aloft out of the reach of temptation, as birds when flying on high in the air need not fear nets nor snares nor the craft of the fowler. Keep hope alive, and then a christian cannot fail: Heb. 3:6, 'Whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end.' If a man had such a lively hope, and some taste and feeling of heaven and blessedness to come, and a constant groaning after them; if we could but glory in our hopes as much as if we had present possession, then we need not fear miscarrying.

3. It informs us that it is a false hope that doth not urge to practice and strictness of life. Some men make full account to go to heaven, but make no preparation for it; their course is another way; there is not only an unsuitableness to their hopes, but a contrariety. If there were only an unsuitableness, it were enough to discover the cheat, for we are 'to be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,' Col 1:12, and 'to walk worthy of God, who hath called us to his kingdom and glory,' 1 Thes. 2:12, and 'to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called,' Eph. 4:1. There is a suitableness between a man and his great hopes. When David was a shepherd, he spent his time in keeping his father's sheep, and had the heart of a shepherd; but when he was called to be king, then he behaved himself like a king, like a shepherd of the people. So a christian discovers his hopes in his disposition and in his practice, and doth walk as an heir of the grace of life. There may be a slight hope which hath no efficacy, but those serious sighs and hearty groans I speak of, certainly they will work a suitableness in the temper of our hearts

and the constitution of our souls, and we shall be more holy; there will be more worthy walking, more detestation of sin, more contempt of the world, more diligence in the spiritual life. When you walk as if your hopes were altogether in this world, when princes in scarlet embrace a dunghill, when those that are called to great and glorious hopes live as if their happiness were only here below, heaping up wealth, treasure, and worldly conveniences to themselves, it is a lamentation. If you saw a man labouring in filthy ditches, and sullyng himself as poor men do with mire and dirt, who would believe he were an heir-apparent to a crown, and called to inherit a kingdom? So when we live as men of the world, when there is an unsuitableness between us and our hopes, how do we walk as the heirs of grace? But now, when there is not only an unsuitableness, but an open contrariety in their practice, and yet they think to go to heaven, it is as if a man whose journey lay north should travel just south. Can that man look to be filled up with God when God is not in all his thoughts? Can he long for the company of Christ that slight his ordinances; Can he prize the communion of saints to whom good company is a prison? Can he look for an immaculate and sinless state to whom purity is an eye-sore, and who hates the power of godliness? Yet many such deceive themselves with false hopes, when there is not only unsuitableness, but a plain contrariety.

4. It informs us that an assured interest in heaven is no ground of looseness or laziness. Comfort serves to quicken, but not to slacken our endeavours. The more we look for heaven, the more it engageth us to strictness of life. The apostle, after he had professed his assurance, 'We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,' 2 Cor. 5:8. What then? ver. 9, 'Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' Here is a sure recompense; our great care is that we may live and die in his grace, because we are confident we shall live

with the Lord when we depart from the body: Jude 21, 'Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' When God is so gracious in Christ, providing such great things for such unworthy creatures as eternal life, and we come to receive glory out of the hands of mercy, what a mighty engagement is this to make us watch against all decays and coolings of love.

Use 2. To exhort us to this expectation or looking for the blessed hope. The method and way is first to believe, then to apply, then to expect.

1. Believe it, that there is such a happiness reserved for the children of God. Next to God's being we are bound to believe his bounty: Heb. 11:6, 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' These two principles, that God is, and that he is a rewarder, are the fundamental notions that keep up all religion. There is a mist upon eternity to a carnal heart; they are led by sense, and believe no more than they see: Heb. 11:1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' Fancy and nature cannot outsee time and look beyond death. Faith holdeth the candle to hope, and then we are able to look into the other world, and to see a happy state to come. Now because faith is weak in most, and we waver more in the belief of God's bounty than of his being, his Godhead is manifested by present sensible effects, but we scruple his rewards, which are wholly to come; therefore let us strengthen and help faith as much as we can. The word is clear in this point. Now God hath been true in all things: *Fidelis in omnibus, in ultimo non deficiet*—He that hath been faithful in all things will not fail us at last. The calling of the gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, the sending of the Messiah, these were things as invisible and as much to come as heaven is to us; now all these

things have been fulfilled, and why should we not trust God to the last? Experience is wont to beget hope: Rom. 5:4, 'And patience, experience; and experience, hope.' Can God lie, or truth itself be false? What need hath God to flatter thee or deceive thee? If we did preach a God that needed the creatures, then you might suspect what we tell you in his name; but he hath no interest to be gratified; his vehement longings are for your good and profit: Deut. 5:29, 'Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their children for ever.' God doth not say that it may be well with me, but with them. Again, let reason be heard to speak how suitable it is to God's nature. Consider, the being of God is infinite and eternal, and so is the reward; the apostle calls it, 2 Cor. 4:17, 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Araunah gave like a king. God's gifts are like himself, suitable to his infinite mercy and eternal duration; how likely is it that God will once show himself like himself! And they are suitable to the merit of Christ. Is God at such expense for trifles? The comforts of this world may be bought with gold and silver, but the apostle saith, 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, &c., but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' Why would God give so great a price out of his own treasury, but to take a debt upon himself, and to oblige his justice to be our friend? If Christ can be in the womb and in the grave, why may not we be in heaven? It is more credible to believe that a creature should be in heaven than a God should be in the grave; and Christ's abasement (which is first) is more than our advancement. There is not so great a distance between us and happiness as between Christ and misery. Men naturally being made capable of a higher condition of mind and affections, to love and know God, godliness must have a better recompense than is to be had in the world. These are but the offals of providence, enjoyed by God's enemies; they have

the greatest share: Ps. 17:14, 'From men of the world, which have their portion in this life.' The wiser men are, the more they contemn these things; children are taken with rattles. Grace cannot be satisfied with the world without a higher enjoyment of God. Pleasures are common to us with the beasts; wicked men flow in ease and plenty. A reward there must be; it is impossible a creature should rest in its own action. We see that natural actions that tend to maintain life have a sweetness and pleasure mingled with them, that we may not neglect them, or our own preservation, as eating and drinking, and the like; therefore virtuous actions, much more such as are against the hair and bent of nature, must have a reward, a reward better than the work, or else it would be lost labour. There is a disposition and instinct of nature towards eternal happiness. Man's soul like a sponge is thirsty, and seeketh to be satisfied: Ps. 4:6, 'Who will show us any good?' And every good will not serve their turn. Men at first take up with the creature, because it is next at hand, but it satisfieth not; their sore runneth till they come to enjoy God: Acts 17:27, 'That they should seek the Lord, if haply they may feel after him, and find him.' When we have all outward blessings, the soul of man is not filled up; there is something wanting to our peace and quiet. Solomon made experiments, but had no satisfaction. Thus you see there is no such reward so suitable to what is declared of God, of Christ, of the nature of man, of grace, as this blessed hope.

2. Apply it. Besides the truth of the promises, look to the clearing up of your own interest and title. It is a poor comfortless meditation to think of a blessed hope, and the certainty of it, unless we have an interest in these things; this will be but like the gaze of an hungry man upon a feast. The reprobates hereafter are lookers-on, and David speaks of a table spread for him 'in the presence of his enemies,' Ps. 23:5. Hope hath never a more lively influence than when it is founded in property and a sense of our own interest: Job

19:25, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth;' and 2 Cor. 5:1, 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;' 2 Tim. 4:8, 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.' There is not only an heaven, but for me. Thus are the saints wont to profess their interest and assured hope. But is hope only the fruit of assurance? I answer—It is the fruit of faith, as well as of assurance or experience; but certainly it is very comfortable when we can discern our own interest, and in some sort necessary. Before we can hope for ourselves, our qualification is to be supposed, for that is our evidence. Therefore I shall—(1.) Press you to get this assurance; (2.) Show what kind of application is absolutely required, that you may thus look for the blessed hope.

[1.] Let me press you to get an assured title to heaven. In a matter of such moment, would a man be at an uncertainty? Can he be quiet and not sure of heaven? Not to look after it is a bad sign. A godly man may want it, but a godly man cannot slight it. A man may want it, he may creep to heaven; some are 'scarcely saved,' 1 Peter 4:18. Others have 'an abundant entrance;' 2 Peter 1:10, 11, 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' For want of this you quite lose your heaven upon earth, which consisteth in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and you lose much of the influence of hope. Uncertain wavering thoughts have little efficacy. But a good man cannot slight it; it is a breach of a command which requireth diligence. It argueth spiritual security when men can be content to live long, and yet do not know what will become of them. How can you think of the coming of Christ without



terror? That which others look for and long for is your fear; as Felix trembled as soon as he heard of judgment to come.

[2.] I shall tell you what application there must be if we cannot attain to assurance. There are three degrees of application beneath assurance—

(1.) Acceptation of God's offer, that is one degree of application: Job 5:27, 'Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.' Put in for these hopes; and take God on his word; stipulate with him, and undertake thy part of the covenant upon a confidence God will not fail thee. As Moses, when the book of the law was read, Exod. 24:6, 'took half the blood and sprinkled it on the altar,' to show that God undertook to bless them; and ver. 8, 'the other half he sprinkled on the people,' by which they were engaged to obey. There must be in all christians 'the answer of a good conscience,' 1 Peter 3:21.

(2.) Adherence. Stick close to this hope in a course of obedience. If we do God's work, we shall not fail of wages: 1 Cor. 9:26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.'

(3.) Affiance, resting, waiting upon God, though with some doubts and fears, for the revelation of this glory. Though you cannot say, It is yours, yet wait with hope till your change come, looking for the mercy of Christ, so that you durst venture your soul in that bottom. This is 'committing our souls to him in well-doing, as to a merciful and faithful Creator,' 1 Peter 4:19. You put your souls into God's hands that made them.

3. Expect it. This is the formal act of hope which is pressed in the text. This hope and expectation of blessedness is the strength of the inward man. The devils have a faith, but because it is without hope it yieldeth no refreshment: James 2:19, 'Thou believest that there is

one God, thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.' The word signifies such a trembling as the raging of the sea; it is a light that does not refresh, but scorch. There would be comfort in hell if there could be hope there. It is the duty now in season; here we must expect: Rom. 8:24, 'We are saved by hope.' In innocency there was little or no use of hope, and in heaven there will be none at all; the object of man's happiness will be present and enjoyed; but now all is to come; we have only a taste and pledge to make us long for more and expect more. Faith by hope maketh them present substance: Heb. 11:1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for.' Things of eternal life seem as a shadow and fiction to a carnal heart. This hope is an earnest elevation of the mind to look for what faith counteth real.

Use 3. To direct us how to look for this blessed hope.

1. Consider it. Hope is a temperate ecstasy, a survey of the land of promise. As God said to Abraham, Gen. 13:14, 15, 'Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever;' so Ps. 48:12, 'Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof.' It is a great advantage to think often of heaven, it maketh it present to us. Heaven deserveth our best thoughts. We should always do it; in the morning it were a good preservative to keep us from being under the power of present things: Ps. 17:15, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' In some special seasons doth hope set the mind a-work. In times of trouble and present sufferings we enjoy a happy dedolency; the mind is untouched, whatever the body suffereth. When we are summoned to the grave, and bodily sicknesses put you in mind of death, when sense and speech fail, the love of God never fails; this pale horse is sent from Christ to carry us

to glory; and though we go down to the grave to converse with worms and skulls, this hope may comfort us, Job 19:26, 27, 'And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.'

2. Long for it. Hope cannot be without groans. Every day wind up your affections, for here is nothing but conflicts and sorrows. Love to Christ cannot be without him, it will never be content. Nature desires perfection: Col. 3:1, 2, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.' There is our God, our Christ, our rest: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,' Mat. 6:22; not only the mind, but the heart; what we are much thinking of, the desires will be working that way. The new nature cannot be without these desires; everything tendeth thither whence it came: Eph. 1:3, 'Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, in heavenly places.' God sits in heaven that dispenseth grace, Christ that conveyeth it; thence come our mercies, comforts, and joys; therefore it is against the tendency of the new nature not to be tending thither, where Christ is, who is our greatest happiness. There is your father, your elder brother, the best of the family, and your spiritual relations, whom you most valued; the best company is in the other world. Here you have maintenance as in a foreign land, but there is your interest and estate. How unworthy soever we are, there is infinite mercy to give it, there it acts like itself; infinite merit to purchase it, there we receive the full fruits of our redemption; and the present fruits of the Spirit are the earnest of it, as an earnest is something in part of a greater sum.

3. Wait for it. There are groans of expectation as well as of desire. You have a fair charter granted by God the Father, written with the blood of Christ, sealed by the Spirit. To make your expectation more firm, consider—

[1.] Christ's goodness and mercy: 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life,' Jude 21. He never discovered any backwardness to thy good, or inclination to thy ruin.

[2.] God's faithfulness: Heb. 9:18, 19, 'That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation.' God stands more on his word than on heaven and earth. If an honest man has made a promise of anything, he will make it good; much more may we depend on the faithful God.

[3.] God's power. If our souls were in our own keeping, we might fear; but 'we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,' 1 Peter 1:5. Abraham, being persuaded of God's power, 'against hope believed in hope,' Rom. 4:18.

[4.] Christ's merit and intercession: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' By his merit our right to heaven is purchased, and by his intercession it is maintained for us.

## **SERMON XIV**

That blessed hope, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

DOCT. 2. The hope of christians is a blessed hope.

Hope is here put for the thing hoped for; as Col. 1:5, 'For the hope that is laid up for you in heaven,' where hope is put for the object of hope. Now this matter or object of our hope is sometimes called life, sometimes glory, sometimes joy and pleasure. It is a life that never shall be quenched or put out: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' It is a glory that is eternal for duration; 2 Cor. 4:17, it is called 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' For the measure of it, it is above our conceit and expression, as much as a creature can bear. It is joy and pleasure without mixture and without end: Ps. 16:11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' Now this hope is said to be blessed, because it puts us into the fruition of absolute blessedness. We cannot conceive of it now to the full; when we come to enjoy it, we shall find it above all that ever we could conceive or hear of it. As much as we see and know of it showeth it is a blessed thing, but we shall understand it best when we hear the great voice calling us, Come up and see.

But a little to set it before you. In blessedness there must be a removal of all evil, and a coacervation and complete presence of all that is good. As long as the least evil continueth, a man is not blessed, only he is less miserable. If a man had all things that heart could wish for, what would it avail him? as Haman, when he wanted Mordecai's knee, Esther 5:13, 'All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.' Ahab had the kingdom of Israel, but yet he fell sick for want of Naboth's vineyard. If a man were never so well fitted for a journey, a little gravel in his shoe would founder him. As in carriages of war, though there be a great train, yet if one peg be missing or out of order, all stoppeth; or in the body, if one humour be out of order, or one joint broken, it is enough to make us sick or ill at ease, though all the rest be sound and

whole; so if there be the least evil, a man cannot be a complete happy man; complaining will not suit with blessedness. Now—

First, In the hope that we look for there is a removal of all evil. Evil is twofold—either of sin or of punishment; and in heaven there is neither sin nor misery.

1. To begin with sin, that is the worst evil. Affliction is evil, but it is not evil in itself, but only in our sense and feeling; if a man had a deadness, it is no pain to a benumbed joint to be scourged. But sin is evil, whether we feel it or no, but it is worst when we feel it not. Certainly that is evil which separateth from the chiefest good. Affliction doth not separate from God, it is a means and an occasion to make us draw nigh to him; many had never been acquainted with God but for their afflictions; but sin separateth us from God: Isa. 59:2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' Let a man be never so loathsome, yet, if he be in a state of grace, he is dear to God, the Lord taketh pleasure in him; though rough-cast with ulcers and sores, and thrown into a prison, yet God will kiss him with the kisses of his mouth. There is nothing so loathsome and odious to God as sin; this grieveth the saints most: Rom. 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' If any man had cause to complain of afflictions, Paul had; he was often in perils, whipped, imprisoned, stoned; but he doth not cry out, When shall I be delivered from these afflictions? Oh! but this body of death was worst of all; lusts troubled him more than scourges, and his captivity to the law of sin more than chains and prisons. This is the disposition of the saints; they are weary of the world, because they are sinning here whilst others are glorifying God, not only that they are suffering here whilst others are enjoying God. A beast will forsake the place where he hath neither meat nor rest. Carnal men, when they are

beaten out of the world; have a fancy to heaven as a place of retreat; but that which troubles godly men is their sin. Well, but in heaven there is no sin: Eph. 5:27, 'That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' There is neither spot nor wrinkle upon the face of the glorified saints. Their faces were once as black as yours, but now Christ presenteth them to God as a proof of the cleansing virtue of his blood. And how pure and clean they are, without spot nor wrinkle, the apostle's words, 'that he might present it,' imply as if Christ did glory and rejoice in their purity as the fruits of his purchase. There you are freed from all sins. With much ado we mortify one lust, but nature recoileth; as ivy in the wall, if you cut it down, it breaketh out again, It is much here if the dominion of sin be taken away; there the being of it is abolished, in heaven it is not at all; you will displease God no more, and are freed from all the immediate and inseparable consequences of original sin, distraction in duty, and the like. Here is no perfect love, and therefore the soul cannot be fixed in the contemplation of God; that is the reason of wandering thoughts; but there the heart cleaves to God without straggling. In heaven we shall be freed from pride, which lasts as long as life, therefore called 'Pride of life,' 1 John 2:16. We cannot have a revelation now but we grow proud of it: 2 Cor. 12:7, 'And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.' Nor can there be an influence of grace but we are apt to be proud of it; there is a worm in manna; but then we are most high and most humble, because most holy. O christians! is not this a blessed hope that telleth you of a sinless state, of being like Christ in purity and holiness? 1 John 3:2, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' What is it

that you have struggled with, and groaned under all your lives, but sin? Now that is blotted out when the days of refreshing shall come. And as there is no sin, so there are no temptations. In paradise there was a tempter, but none in heaven; Satan was long since cast out thence, and the saints fill up the vacant rooms of the apostate angels. The world is a place of snares, a valley of temptations; it is the devil's circuit, where did he walk but to and fro in the earth? but in heaven 'nothing entereth that defileth,' Rev. 21:27. No serpent can creep in there, though he could into paradise. O christians! lift up your heads, you will get rid of sin, and displease God no more. Here we cry, Lord deliver us from evil; and then our cries are heard to the full. Grace weakeneth sin, but glory abolisheth it, and the old Adam is left in the grave never to rise more.

2. The next evil is the evil of affliction. Whatever is painful and burdensome to nature is a fruit of the fall, a brand and mark of our rebellion against God; therefore affliction must be done away as well as sin if we be completely happy. As in hell there is evil, and only evil, a cup of wrath unmixed, without the least temperament of mercy, so in heaven there is happiness, and only happiness; sorrow is done away as well as sin. It is said, Rev. 21:4, 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' The afflictions of the soul are gone, there are no more doubts of God's love, nor sense of his displeasure; here though we are pardoned, and the wound be cured, yet the scars remain. Absalom could not see the king's face when he was restored. In wise dispensation God sometimes hideth his face from us here upon earth. We need to be dieted, and to taste the vinegar and the gall sometimes, as well as the honey and sweetness, that we may the better relish our christian comforts. The world is a middle place, standing between hell and heaven, and therefore hath something of both. The saints have their mixture of



pleasure and sorrow: Job 2:10, 'Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?' But there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore: Ps. 16:11, 'Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore;' there is no mixture of sorrow. Here we complain that the candle of the Lord doth not shine with a like brightness as in the months that are past; there our sun remaineth in an eternal high noon, without clouds and overcasting; Nox nulla secuta est, no night follows. The afflictions of the body are done away. Heaven is a happy air, where none are sick; there is no such thing there as gout and aches and the grinding pains of the stone. Here it is called 'a vile body,' Phil. 3:21, as it is the instrument of sin and the subject of diseases. We have the root of diseases in the soul, and that is sin; and the matter and fuel of them in the body, peccant humours and principles of corruption. As wood is eaten out with worms that breed within itself, so there are in our bodies principles of corruption that do at length destroy them; but there we are wholly incorruptible. Yea, because deformity of the body is a monument of God's displeasure, one of the penal events of sin, introduced by Adam's fall, it is done away. The body riseth in due proportion; whatever was monstrous or misshapen in the first edition is corrected in the second, like the erratas in a second edition. And for violence without, heaven is a quiet place; when there are tumults in the world, God is introduced as sitting in the heavens, a quiet posture: Ps. 2:4, 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.' There is nothing to discompose those blessed spirits; wicked men cannot molest them nor abuse them. Here the very company of wicked men is a burden; as Lot's righteous soul was 'vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked,' 2 Peter 2:7. David complains, Ps. 130:5, 'Woe is me that I dwell in Mesech, and sojourn in the tents of Kedar.' But there 'the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,'

Mat. 13:41. The wicked shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness; as when men will not be ruled, they are sent to prison. Here poor saints are subject to a number of infirmities, labour, thirst, hunger, cold, nakedness, and want, which all cease then. It is a rich inheritance, as well as a glorious one: Eph. 1:18, 'That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' These distinctions of poor and rich, as they are understood in the world, do not outlive time; we shall have enough of true riches, which is eternal glory, and the full fruition of God. Labour ceaseth, though there be a continual exercise of grace. All things rest when they come to their proper place, so do they that die in the Lord. We still serve God, but without weariness; yea, we are freed from the necessities of nature, eating and drinking and sleeping, to which the greatest potentates are subject; though they are exempted from hard bodily labour, yet they are not exempted from the necessities of nature. But there the use of meats and of the belly and stomach is abolished: 1 Cor. 6:12, 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.' It is a piece of our misery that our life is patched up of so many creatures; as a torn garment is pieced and patched up with supplies from abroad. The sheep or silkworm supplies us with clothing, the beasts of the earth and fishes of the sea with food, and all to support a ruinous fabric, that is ever ready to drop about our ears. But there we are above meat and drink and apparel; it will be our meat and drink to do our Father's will; nakedness will be no shame, we shall have glory instead of a robe. And the body will not be a clog to the soul, but a help. This mass of flesh we carry about with us is now the prison of the soul, where it looketh out by the windows of the senses; but there it is no longer the prison of the soul, but the temple of it. In short, all that I have to say upon this branch is comprised in Rev. 21:4, 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,

neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.' There is quite another kind of dispensation, no distraction of business; our whole employment there will be to think of God, and study God, but without weariness, satiety or distraction.

Secondly, In blessedness there is a confluence of all good. To the happiness of the creature it is necessary that his comforts should be full and eternal: Ps. 16:11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;' 2 Cor. 4:18, 'The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' That they may be full for parts, full for the degrees and the manner of enjoyment, and that they should continue for ever; that he may possess this happiness without fear of losing it, let us examine these things.

1. He must enjoy all good for the parts of it; the whole man in all his relations must be blessed; for man being ζῶον πολιτικόν, a sociable creature, is to be happy not only in his person, but in his company and relations; so we hope for an estate when our persons shall be happy, both in body and soul conformed to Christ, and we shall be blessed in our company and relations; we are brought into the presence of God, which is blessedness itself, and into the sight and fellowship of his blessed Son, and into the company of blessed angels and saints.

[1.] The happiness of his person, and there both of his body and his soul.

(1.) Of his body. It is good to consider that. It is now a temple of the Holy Ghost, and he cannot leave his mansion, and quit his ancient dwelling-place, and therefore he raiseth it up, and formeth it again into a complete fashion, like to Christ's glorious body: Phil. 3:21, 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like to his glorious

body,' for clarity, agility, strength and incorruption. Solomon's temple was destroyed, but the latter temple was nothing so glorious as the former. Men wept when they saw it: Ezra 3:12, 'But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men which had seen the first house, when the foundations of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice.' But it is not so here; what is raised shall be quite another body. For the present there is to be seen a beautiful fabric, wherein God hath showed his workmanship; every member, if it were not so common, would be a miracle, all is so ordered for the service and comeliness of the whole; but now it is a vile body, subject to diseases, fed with meat, humbled with wants, many times mangled with violence, dissolved by death, and crumbled to dust in the grave, like a dry clod of earth. This is the body that we carry about with us, a mass of flesh, dressed up to be a dish for the worms. Men labour with a great deal of do by embalming it with spices to keep it from putrefaction, but all will not serve the turn; it moulders at last. But this vile body shall rise in another manner, like to Christ's glorious body. When the sun appeareth the stars vanish, their lustre is eclipsed and darkened; but the Sun of righteousness, when he appears at the last day, doth not obscure but perfect our glory. But wherein shall our bodies be like to Christ's glorious body? The apostle will tell us that in another place: 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.' Let me single out three expressions; it is raised in incorruption, it is raised in glory, it is raised a spiritual body.

(1st.) It is an incorruptible body. Now it yieldeth to the decays of nature, and is exercised with pains and aches, till at length it droppeth down like ripe fruit into the grave; but hereafter it shall be clothed with immortality, wholly impassible. What a comfort is this

to them that are racked with stone and gout, humbled with diseases, or withered with age, to think they shall have a body without aches and without decays, that shall be always in the spring of youth! The trees of paradise are always green.

(2d.) It is a glorious body. Here it is many times deformed, at least beauty, like a flower, is lost in sickness, withered with age, defaced by the several accidents of life; but then we shall be glorious like Christ's body. The naked body of man at first was so beautiful that the beasts of the field admired it, and thereupon did homage to Adam; but we shall not be conformed to the first Adam, but the second Adam. When Christ was transfigured in the Mount, it is said, Mat. 17:2, 'His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.' There was such strong emissions of the beams of glory that they could not endure the shining of his garments, but it astonished the disciples; his garments could not veil, nor their eyes endure those beams of glory. Paul could not endure that light that shined on him when Christ appeared to him from heaven, but was utterly confounded and struck blind: Acts 9:3, 4, 'And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' By this you may guess a little what the glory of our bodies shall be, for we shall be like him. Moses, by conversing with God forty days, the complexion of his face was altered, so that he was forced to put a veil upon it. In this low estate in which we are, we must make use of these hints. If we lose a limb or a joint, he that healed Malchus' ear will restore it again.

(3d.) It is a spiritual body, either for agility, caught up into the air to meet the Lord, not clogged as now; or rather, because more disposed for spiritual uses, for the enjoyments and employments of grace.

Here it is a natural body, a great clog to us; it is not a dexterous instrument to the soul; we are not in a capacity to bear the new wine of glory; there it is made more capacious, as wide vessels, to contain all that God will give out. The disciples fainted at Christ's transfiguration: Mat. 17:6, 'And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid.' We cannot receive such large diffusions and overflowings of glory as we shall then have; every strong affection and raised thought doth overset us, and causeth ecstasy and ravishment; eminent objects overwhelm the faculty. But there it is otherwise; God maketh out himself to us in a greater latitude, and we are more able to bear it.

(2.) For the blessedness of the soul, which is the heaven of heaven. Our happiness is called 'The inheritance of the saints in light;' Col. 1:12, 'Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' It is not for a man that knows no other heaven but to eat, drink, sleep, and wallow in filthy and gross pleasures; it is an inheritance in light, and for saints, that know how to value intellectual and spiritual delights. But wherein doth the happiness of the soul consist, in knowledge or in love? Divines are divided, but certainly it is in both; our happiness consists in the love and knowledge of God, from whence resulteth union with God and fruition of God. But now, which is to be preferred, to know God, or to love God? that is a question. In one place it is said, John 17:3, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;' so that it seemeth to be the heaven of heaven to have the understanding satisfied with the knowledge of God. And Ps. 17:15, 'As for me I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' That is our happiness, we go to heaven to know more of God, and the acts of the understanding are most noble. On the other side, 1 John 4:16, 'God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth

in God, and God in him.' It is not sight merely that makes us happy, the embrace of the soul is by love, the possession of the soul is by acts of love. One saith, though not modestly enough, *Libentius sine aspectu te diligerem, quam te videndo non amarem* stella de amore Dei—I had rather not see thee than not love thee. Here in the world the hatred of God is worse than the ignorance of him, and therefore it should seem love should have the pre-eminence. But we need not make a fraction between these graces; by knowing, we come to love; and by loving, we come to know God; as light is, so is love, and so is enjoyment. Here we love little, because we know little: John 4:10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given thee living water.' And the more we love, the more we know; this is a fire that casts light. But to speak more distinctly—

(1st.) There is the perfection of knowledge. All the faculties must be satisfied before we can be happy, especially the mind, which is the noblest faculty, and that which maketh us men. There is a natural inclination to knowledge, and the soul taketh a great deal of contentment in the contemplation of any truth: Prov. 24:13, 14, 'My son, eat thou honey because it is good, and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul, when thou hast found it.' Right and clear thoughts of God breed a rejoicing: Ps. 19:10, 'More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb.' A man given to pleasures hath no such choiceness of delight; therefore this is no small part of our happiness in heaven to have more light and knowledge of God and of his ways. We shall know many mysteries of salvation, that now we are ignorant of; as the nature of God: Ps. 17:15, 'As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' The union of the two natures in the person of Christ: John 17:24, 'Father, I will that

they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.' Our union with Christ, and by Christ with God: John 14:20, 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.' The course of God's decrees and providences for our good: 1 Cor. 13:12, 'Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;' that is, we shall be able to see how the unchangeable counsels of God for our salvation have been carried on, through all the passages of the present life, to bring us safe to the heavenly state. These are the deeps of God, and now there is a darkness on the face of these deeps. The church is but a grammar school; heaven is an university. We shall have better eyes and other light; here prophecy is but in part, but there our intuition is immediate: 1 John 3:2, 'We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Now it is sicut vult, as he is pleased to reveal himself; then sicut est, as he is. Now we see what he is not, not corruptible, not mortal, not changeable, rather than what he is. Now we see him as he is in us, and as he is in other creatures; we track him by the effects of his power, and wisdom, and goodness; but then we shall see him as he is in himself; ipsum cognoscemus per ipsum, we shall know him by himself: 1 Cor. 13:12, 'Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face.' In the creatures there are vestigium, the tract and foot-print of God; in the law there is umbra, the shadow of God; in the gospel there is imago, the image of God, a fair draught of God, as in a picture; but in heaven there is facies Dei, the face of God. We shall have excellent books to study, the large manifestations of glory, the majesty of Christ's person, the Lamb's face, who is the bride; we shall be always sitting about the throne, and the Lamb in the midst. There God maketh out himself in the highest manifestations we are capable of.



(2d.) There is complete love. There is a constant cleaving of heart to God, without change and weariness, a love that never ceaseth working without weakness and distractions. If we delight in anything here, we soon grow weary, and have a change of objects; but God in heavenly communion is always fresh and new. Here are distractions and startings aside to the creature; but there is an eternal solace and complacency, a continual sabbath that never groweth weary and burdensome. All the heart and bowels run out after Christ; we shall never want the actual breathings of the Spirit. The Spirit came upon Sampson at times, so it doth upon us here; we have several motions and fleetings, but there Jesus Christ is a more lovely object, and the delights of the soul are carried out to him without satiety; we shall have a sweet complacency in and liking of him. Also outward things clog the appetite; as soon as we have them we despise them, because our desires are restless; we sip of them as the bee doth of the flower, and then we must have change, and go to a new flower; but here is an eternal complacency in Christ. Here we are troubled when we want outward comforts, and cloyed when we have them. Curiosity is soon satisfied, and fruition discovereth their imperfection; still the more they are enjoyed the less they are beloved; as Amnon hated Tamar when his lust was satisfied. Imperfections that before lay hid then appear to view, and so our affections are confuted by experience. But there the more we enjoy God, the more his infinite perfections are manifested, and our pleasure is augmented by our enjoyment.

(3d.) There is a complete union with God and fruition of him: 2 Cor. 5:6, 'Knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;' Phil. 1:23, 'I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ.' Here we are united to Christ by faith, but that is nothing to sight and immediate intuition; we lay hold upon Christ, but have not such an absolute possession of him. He is a head that gives out himself, not by necessity, but choice and

pleasure, therefore our communion with Christ is not so perpetual and familiar as it shall be then. As an iron that lieth long in the fire seemeth to be changed into the nature of it, so we are then more conformed and changed into the likeness of Christ: Ps. 16:11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' All comforts in this life we enjoy in God's absence, and have them at the second, third, and fourth hand, by the ministration of the creatures, sun, moon, and stars, or by the ministry of men. Now these are not vessels capacious enough to convey so much of God to us as we shall receive when God is all in all immediately: 1 Cor. 15:28, 'And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' There is no temple nor ordinances in heaven, but the Lamb is the light thereof. We shall enjoy God without means or intervention of ordinances. We are fed among the lilies, but it is but till the day break and the shadows flee away: Cant. 2:16, 17, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies, until the day break and the shadows flee away: turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.'

[2.] The happiness of his relations and society. In our company we shall be blessed, God and Christ, and saints and angels: Heb. 12:22–24, 'But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,' &c. We shall see God in Christ. The bodily eye, that cannot look upon the sun, shall be perfectly glorified and strengthened; though it cannot see the essence of God, yet it shall see greater manifestations of his glory than it is able to behold here. How will

the Father welcome us as he welcomed Christ! Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' So he will say to us, as Mat. 25:21, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' We shall not come into his presence with shame. Sin causeth shame, and maketh us shy of God; but as the ey cannot endure the light if it be wronged, so a wronged conscience makes us afraid of the presence of God; but when we shall be perfectly sanctified, and sin shall be done away, we shall be able to stand in the presence of God. So as to Christ; he cannot be contented without your company, and you should not be satisfied without his: John 14:3, 'And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and take you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' Oh! what a joyful meeting will there be between us and our Redeemer! it will be much sweeter than the interview between Jacob and Joseph. Christ longeth for the blessed hour as you do. The wise men came from far to see him in a manger; Zaccheus climbed up the tree to see him riding to Jerusalem. There will be another manner of sight of Christ in heaven than there was of him in the days of his flesh. When Joseph discovered himself to his brethren, and said, Gen. 45:4, 'I am Joseph, your brother,' what rejoicing was there? Much more will there be joy in heaven when Christ shall say, I am Jesus, your brother, your Saviour, your Redeemer; when he shall lead us to God in a full troop and goodly company, and say, 'Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me,' Heb. 2:13. What a blessed sight will that be! Then as to the angels, what welcome will there be between you and them! When Christ entered into heaven, they entertained him with their applauses and acclamations: Ps. 24:11, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in;' so will they welcome the saints to heaven with

acclamations. They delight in the good of men, in their creation, redemption, conversion, so surely will they delight in the glorification of a sinner. And as to the saints your acquaintance, with whom ye have prayed, suffered, and familiarly conversed, memory is not abolished in heaven, but perfected; those whom we knew here, we shall know again. A minister shall see his crown, and the fruit of his labours: 1 Thes. 2:19, 'You are our crown and our joy.' And those which have been relieved by us shall welcome us into heaven, who therefore are said to 'receive us into everlasting habitations,' Luke 16:9. Yea, we shall know those that we never saw; why else is it made a part of our privilege 'to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven?' Mat. 8:11. As Adam knew Eve as soon as he saw her, and in the transfiguration Peter knew Moses and Elias, who were dead many hundred years before, so shall we know one another; certainly we shall not go to a strange people where we know nobody. As men at a feast are free and familiar with one another, we shall be discoursing of God's wisdom, mercy, and justice in the work of redemption. So did Moses and Elias talk with Christ: Luke 9:30, 31, 'Behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.' Of the wonderful providence of God in conducting us to glory, as travellers in their inn take pleasure in discoursing with one another of the dirtiness and dangers of the way. The saints are clothed with majesty and glory, more lovely object than ever they were upon earth; and here is an innumerable company of them. With what joy were the disciples rapt when they saw but these two prophets, Moses and Elias! Mat. 17:4. Heaven is called not only a palace, but a city, a world to come, where there is a multitude which no man can number. This for the parts of this happiness.

2. For the manner and degree of enjoying, it is full. We are filled with the fulness of God, and shall eternally lose ourselves in an ocean of sweetness; the soul is more capable, stretched out to the greatest capacity of a creature, yet God filleth it. Here we have but a few drops, there we shall be filled up to the brim, and have as much as we can hold: Ps. 17:15, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' There shall be complete joy and satisfaction; all want, sorrow, and sin shall be done away; we shall enter into our master's joy. We do not say the sea entereth into a bucket or cup, or a river into a man. In heaven the soul is so full of joy and glory as is inexpressible.

3. For the duration of it, it is eternal. Our happiness is immortal, we can never lose it, which doubleth the joy and contentment of that state. God's love is everlasting, and so shall our happiness be; there will be no fear of losing it: Rev. 22:5, 'They shall reign for ever and ever.' We shall never lay aside our diadem of glory, it is a garland that shall not wither. It is not only a certain and eternal state, but a state of actual delights. Christ's manifestations are not lessened by enjoyment, but they are like the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil, never spent; but we shall always have the actual comfort of his presence.

## **SERMON XV**

That blessed hope, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

USE 1. For information in seven particulars—

1. That the children of God are not so miserable as they appear; they have other hopes and enjoyments than are seen, a large estate that lies in an invisible country; it is not terra incognita, a land unknown,

but it is a land unseen. Pearls and precious things lie out of sight, so doth the glory and blessedness of a christian. Our happiness is a mystery to a carnal heart; it lieth in another world: 1 John 3:2, 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.' Here we have a right, but the children of God are subject to the chances and accidents of the present world as well as others. Our happiness is only to be seen with a spiritual eye and with spiritual light: Eph. 1:18, 'The eyes of your understanding being opened, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' However christians seem in the eye of the world, mean, afflicted, despicable, yet they are blessed creatures. Look, as beasts know not the excellency of a man, so carnal men know not the excellency of the saints. The whore of Babylon, the corrupt church, is set out in her glorious outside with a golden cup, so carnal men, saith the apostle, 'make a fair show in the flesh,' Gal. 6:12; that is, excel in pomp and worldly splendour; but a christian's glory and blessedness is under a veil and disguise, which shall not be fully taken off till the day of judgment: Col. 3:3, 4, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Look, as in a dark lantern the light is hid, till the cover be removed little of the brightness of the light is seen, so there is an eclipse upon the christian's glory; now it is covered and veiled, and therefore now the christian passeth under censures and reproaches; thus was Christ in the world and we must be like him, but then all shall be discovered. A garden and a field differ little in winter, so doth a christian and other men till the great imperial day of Christ, then shall we put on our best robes. Yea, this happiness in a great part is hidden from ourselves. If we hearken to sense and present experience, there is not such a miserable sort of people in the world as God's dearest servants are; 1 Cor. 15:19, 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' It is true by the perspective of faith we may have a glimpse now and then.

Holy meditation strikes out and opens a window into the new Jerusalem, and we have some sight of it. A young heir doth not know the particulars of his estate, neither do we exactly know the happiness of our portion and inheritance in light.

2. It informs us what cause we have, not only to be patient, but to be thankful during the time of our pilgrimage here, while we are liable to sin and sorrow; we may bless God aforehand. That is one reason why God hath revealed these things before we come to enjoy them, that we may give thanks for our hopes. Abraham, when he had only a grant and a promise of Canaan, not a foot of land actually possessed, there he built an altar, and offered sacrifice and praise, Gen. 13:17, 18; so this is one effect of the certainty of faith, it beginneth the life and work of heaven, and can praise God before enjoyment. Though we be subject to sin and misery here, yet, in despite of sense, faith will praise God and rejoice in him before we enjoy him. Thus the apostle blesseth God for his hopes: 1 Peter 1:3, 4, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.' Certainly we may bless God where God blesseth us; our blessing is but the echo of his: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' And therefore we have cause to bless him for our hopes as well as our enjoyments, for the best of our portion is to come; therefore, whenever we think of eternity, we should presently fall a blessing of God, however it be with us for the present.

To this end let me show you how much we expect, and how much we are engaged to every person of the Godhead.

[1.] How much we do expect. There is freedom from eternal torments, and possession of eternal glory: 2 Thes. 1:10, 'Even Jesus, who hath delivered us from wrath to come.' Wrath present is nothing to wrath to come. Now God manageth all things by creatures, and no creature is sufficient to manifest all God's wrath. Those everlasting flames that are the portion of the damned, this is that from which we are delivered. We tremble at the name of hell; what should we do at the sense of these torments that are without end and ease? The grips of conscience for an hour, how terrible are they. Then what is it to lie under the wrath of God for ever and ever? We were involved in the same guilt, in the same polluted mass with others, therefore we might be bound up in the same bundle, to be cast into hell as well as they. Why are we taken and others left to perish? Oh! bless God for this, that we are as brands plucked out of the burning; we are bound up in the same guilt and misery: Zech. 3:2, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' Though you feel the smart of the rod upon your backs, remember this is nothing to hell, damnation, and wrath to come; and this is given to prevent that: 1 Cor. 11:32, 'When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.' What cause have we to bless God, that we may think of hell as a danger that we have escaped by Christ. But then for heaven, the positive part of this blessedness, you have a right, though not an actual enjoyment. Sometimes heaven is said to be kept for us, and sometimes we are said to be kept for heaven: 1 Peter 1:5, 'Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' Christ holds heaven in our right, in our stead, and in our names, and we are kept by the power of God for heaven. Again, heaven is prepared for us: Mat. 25:34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And we are prepared for heaven: Rom. 9:23, 'And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory.'



[2.] The greatness of your engagement to all the persons of the Godhead.

(1.) To God the Father. Admire the love of God, that poor worms should be so exalted, that a clod of earth should shine as the sun, that those dark and impure souls of ours should be purified and glorified. God could not satisfy himself with temporal kindness, with loving us for a while, but he must love us for ever: Ps. 103:17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him.' From eternity to eternity God is God and our God. Nay, and small things would not content him, but we must be interested in a complete blessedness: 1 John 3:1, 2, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Oh! we should often work this upon our hearts, the great love of God in predestinating us to such a glory. There is a great deal of mercy laid out upon us during our pilgrimage, but more laid up for us: Ps. 31:19, 'Oh! how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!' Oh! the greatness of love. Infinite mercy sets itself a-work, to see what it can do for man, a poor wretched creature, a thing of yesterday, a rebel, an enemy to God. Think of it we may, but we cannot express it to the full. The least of God's mercies is more than we can acknowledge, and deserves praise; much more this full portion, for here God sets himself to make a creature as happy as it is capable. The Lord hath gone to the utmost in nothing but his love; he never showed so much of his wisdom and power, but he could show more; but he hath no greater thing to give us than himself and his Christ, he cannot love us more; there can be no more done, there can be no higher happiness than the eternal enjoyment of himself. All the promises of the word come short of what you shall enjoy. That which Paul saw and heard

in heaven in his ecstasy, were ἄρρητα ῥήματα, 'words that could not be uttered,' 2 Cor. 12:4. The scriptures, that are sufficient to make the man of God perfect here, profess an insufficiency, weakness, and imperfection when they come to speak of heaven and the glory of it: 1 Cor. 13:9, 'For we know in part, and we prophesy in part,' is spoken with respect to heaven and happiness to come; there the scripture can speak but in part, there are no words nor notions in the world sufficient to express what God hath provided, and we have not ears to hear it. All the notions now we have of things must be taken from what is obvious to sense and present apprehension; and therefore certainly, because heaven surpasseth all that hath been, we cannot apprehend the glory of it. The scripture leaves it rather to be admired in silence; there are joys unspeakable; there is no language intelligible to us that is fit to represent heaven. Oh! then, admire the love of God the Father, that hath provided such great things for us.

(2.) Consider how deeply we are engaged to Jesus Christ. To deliver us from wrath to come, he himself was made a curse, and tasted the vinegar and gall: Gal. 3:13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Something he suffered that answered wrath to come. In hell there is *pœna damni*, and *pœna sensus*, the loss, the pain and sense of God's wrath. The Lord Christ had for a while the suspension of the joys and actual consolation of his divine nature, a loss that cannot be imagined: Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' there is his loss. Then he had an actual feeling of the wrath of God; therefore he saith, Mat. 27:38, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;' there was his sense of pain. He was forsaken that we might not be separated from God for ever, and his soul was heavy to the death that we might not be cast into eternal burnings. Then for the positive part, that we might have everlasting glory, Christ left his heaven that we might enjoy ours; he came from heaven, and is gone to heaven again, and

will come from heaven the second time, and all to bring us thither with the more triumph; so that going and coming, coming and going, he is still ours. He came at first out of the bosom of God, to establish the merit, and pay the price for our glory. God sold it not at an easy rate; the blood and agonies and shame of the Son of God must go for our glory; it was no easy matter to bring sinful creatures so near to God. The Lord would not so much as treat with apostate angels; when once they were sinners, they were no more to remain in his presence, nor to come near him, but they were cast out of heaven. The door was shut against sinning creatures, but Christ came to open it. Christ came to open paradise that was guarded with a flaming sword; he caught the blow, that we might have communion with God, and therefore he sueth it out as the fruit of his sufferings. When Christ was about to die, he made his last will and testament. Heaven was his by purchase, to bestow upon all his heirs. He had bought it at a dear rate, therefore now he shows what he would do with it: John 17:24, 'Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me may be where I am, that they may behold my glory.' And then he is gone to heaven again as our harbinger, to prepare a place for us: John 14:2, 'I go to prepare a place for you,' to take up mansions and rooms for us in his Father's palace. He is gone as a guardian or feoffee in trust, to seize upon heaven in our right, to keep it during our nonage, and he will come again in person, as the husband of the church, to bring us into his Father's house with triumph; therefore it is said, Rev. 4:10, that the elders did 'cast their crowns before the throne,' not as despising their glory, but as professing their homage and dependence; and Rev. 5:8, 9, 'The four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, &c., saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' His abasement was for our preferment; and therefore even here upon earth may we bless God

(for the elders represent the church upon earth) for his great mercy to us in Christ.

(3.) Consider how much we are engaged to God the Spirit, who fits and prepares us for this happy state, and seals up our interest to us; therefore it is called 'the earnest of the Spirit:' 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given to us the earnest of the Spirit,' 2 Cor. 5:5. The Holy Ghost shapes and fashions all the vessels of glory, fits and prepares them for heaven. It is the Spirit of God dwelling in us that wrought us and fits us for this great and blessed hope; therefore whenever you think of it, your hearts should be raised in thanksgiving. It is not only their duty to praise God that are in actual possession of glory, but ours also to whom these hopes are revealed. Rev. 5:8, there was a mixture of 'harps and vials full of odours, which are the prayers of all saints.' Compare this with ver. 11, 'And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and elders.' Not only angels and blessed spirits, but saints on earth; all join in concert, praising the Lamb. We must praise the Lord in the time of our pilgrimage, for this great estate reserved for us in heaven.

3. It informs us how desperately wicked the hearts of sinful men are, that can run the hazard of eternal death, and forfeit this blessed hope of eternal life, for a little carnal satisfaction. Survey all the temptations of the world, how much they come short of it! If the heart were not desperately wicked we would not be carried out to these things. What is vainglory to eternal glory? What are a few dreggy delights to those pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore? What are the riches of the world to our glorious inheritance? You would count him a mad gamester that would throw away whole lordships and manors at every cast. A sinner forfeits a blessed hope that is above all the kingdoms and possessions of the

world. It is for this you will be the scorn of angels at the last day: Ps. 52:7, 'Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.' This will make you ashamed in the great congregation, that you were so foolishly bent to your own ruin. Nay, this will torment you for ever. Nothing torments men more than their foolish choice. Conscience will for ever tell them with what disadvantage they have forsaken God for a thing of nought. Disappointment to a reasonable creature is the worst vexation; and what disappointment is more than to be disappointed of our glorious hopes, and that for trifles and a little carnal satisfaction? This will be our shame and torment to all eternity, We may guess at the gnawings of conscience in the damned by the horrors of carnal men when they come to die. Oh! then how do they bewail the folly of their choice. Oh! that they had been as mindful to serve God as to provide for the world, as careful to satisfy the motions of the Holy Ghost as to satisfy a lust and carnal desire! When they are on a deathbed and upon the confines of eternity, then all worldly comforts cease, and there is a real confutation of the folly of their choice, a sting then begins that never ceaseth: Jer. 17:11, 'At his end he shall be a fool.' When he comes to die, his conscience will rage and call him fool, beast, and madman, for hazarding such eternal joys for a trifle.

4. It informs us of the excellency of the gospel or christian profession. Wisdom should be justified by her children. And all that do profess religion should see the excellency of it, what there is in their beloved more than in another beloved, Cant. 5:9. This there is in the christian religion; there are purity of precepts: Ps. 19:7, 8, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' Then there is sureness of principles, of trust

and dependence established between us and God, that we may depend upon God with comfort and satisfaction; there do you find rest for the soul: Jer. 6:16, 'Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Then there are no such rewards anywhere as in the christian profession: 2 Tim. 1:10, 'Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.' The heathens had dreams of Elysian fields, and Mahomet tells his followers of a sensual paradise; but life and immortality is a revelation proper and peculiar only to the gospel. The heathens were at a loss for the reward of virtue. Austin out of Varro gives us an account of two hundred and eighty-eight opinions concerning happiness and the chief good of man; but now here is all brought to light; we may look beyond the grave now, and there is not such a mist and darkness upon things to come, God having acquainted us with the gospel. Nay, there is more revealed than was in the time of the law. If God had still kept this secret in his own bosom, what a support should we have wanted in our trouble, what encouragement to the practice of holiness! Oh! therefore prize the gospel, it is the charter of your blessed hope.

5. It informs us what little cause we have to be slack in God's work, or to begrudge the pains of his service: 1 Cor. 15:58, 'Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.' The children of God are wont to think they can never do enough for God, that hath found out such a reward for them in Christ. A thousand years' service will not deserve one hour's enjoyment of this blessed hope, much less eternal happiness. When we come to see what shall be bestowed upon us, we shall be ashamed that we have done no more work for God, having so much wages, and such excellent encouragement. Mat. 25:37, the saints are brought in there saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and

gave thee drink?' being ashamed. Ah! Lord, this is nothing; what have we done? At the day of judgment there will be the highest exaltation of the saints, and yet the lowest self-abasement; they will wonder even to admiration of angels. There will be Christ's owning them, and they disclaiming their own services and all their works, and Christ rewarding them. And therefore grudge not if you have the strictest precepts of any religion; remember you have the noblest and highest reward.

6. It informs us what cause we have to contemn all earthly things, though they be never so great and glorious, because of this blessed hope. There are two considerations that will make us contemn the world, and they are suited to the two essential parts of man, and we should ever think of them. We carry about us a mortal body and an immortal soul; the body lasts but for a while, and the soul survives and outlives the body's happiness. Now we toil ourselves in gathering sticks to our nest, when to-morrow we must be gone. Alas! here 'we dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth,' Job 4:19. Our estate in this world is represented by a tabernacle, which is a movable habitation; but our estate in heaven is represented by a temple. Here it is but a tabernacle, and that of clay, that will be crumbled into dust; nay, we are said to be crushed before the moth, and a moth is but a little enlivened dust, and so is man. The world is but a house of potters' vessels, that will be soon broken; and shall we, for the conveniences of a temporal life, prejudice and run the hazard and loss of our eternal hopes? Shall we injure the soul to gratify the body? that is the way to destroy both for ever. Our great care should be for that place where we live longest; in the other world we have the longest life and the most glorious possession, therefore our great care should be for that.

7. It informs us what little cause we have to envy carnal men; the hope of your profession is a blessed hope. This was David's preservative; he was daily in danger of his life, and his enemies were fat, and shining in the pomp of the world, and how doth he comfort himself? Ps. 17:15, 'When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness;' as if he had said, Alas! their felicity is but a sorry thing; they are filled, and I shall be filled too. David sums up their happiness under two heads. Whatever here we have, it is either for personal use or for our posterity. A worldly state is only valuable upon these two grounds, what we may use for the present, and what we may transmit to our children. Now, what a sorry happiness is this to what I expect?

[1.] For personal use, ver. 14, 'Their bellies are filled with thy hid treasure;' that is, with the rarest dishes and best meats which God's storehouse doth afford. By 'hidden treasures,' is meant food and other worldly comforts, therefore called 'hidden treasures' because it doth not lie within every one's grasp and reach; they are not vulgar and common delights. The meaner sort their hand will not attain to it. Lo! here is all that which God allows them for their portion, the filling of the belly; and alas! this is but the happiness of beasts, who eat with less remorse: yet all their happiness is to fill their belly with better food than the poorer sort, which indeed is a misery rather than a happiness, for what doth this but nourish sensual lusts, and strengthen and hearten our enemy. And gorgeous apparel is but a supply from creatures beneath us; it is but stercus in vultum, dung neatly wrapped up. Here is the sum of all a carnal man's happiness, that which God allows him for his portion. But a christian hath better fare; if he goes into the sanctuary, there is enough; but if he goes into heaven, there is a great deal more. David defeats the temptation by this, Ps. 73:16, 17, 'When I sought to know this, it was too hard for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God,' to enjoy God in his



ordinances, and the present glimpses of God's face. Present communion with God is far to be preferred above all the dainties in the world. But that is not all; we shall be satisfied for ever. We may go into heaven as well as into the sanctuary and behold God's righteousness: 'When I awake,' that is, out of the dust, 'I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.' A child of God hath his content and happiness to the full when he comes to die. A carnal man's back hath been richly clothed and his belly filled, but when he comes to die he hath a sad doom: 'Son, remember thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus his evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,' Luke 16:25; it was said to Dives, who fared deliciously every day, and was clothed in purple and fine linen. Well, you have your portion, and must look for no more; you give God a discharge for aught else. But for God's children, then their happiness begins; they are going down to sleep in the grave, and when they awake they shall be filled; they have not only God's favour here, but eternal felicity hereafter. They that are called to a feast will not fill themselves at home with coarser fare. The rich glutton, who had his belly full of hid treasure here, was shut out, but Lazarus is carried into Abraham's bosom and feasted there; for this was their table-gesture to lie in one another's bosoms. Christians, reserve your appetite a little; you will be satisfied; it is but staying a little longer for a better meal. We expect to be like angels, let others be like beasts whose happiness lieth in feeding.

[2.] Then, for the other part, the transmission of honour and ample revenues to posterity. It is true, man is much carried out this way; he would fain advance his house, and live gloriously in his posterity. Posterity is a shadow of eternity; children are but the father multiplied; when the father's thread is spun out, then the knot is knit: his name and memory is continued in the world by his children; therefore men would live in their posterity, and have their families

great. But this is a sad exchange to forfeit heaven that our children may enjoy the world; as many times it falls out that the father goes to hell for getting an estate, and the son goes to hell for spending it. Though they have an ample patrimony, yet they know not who shall enjoy it; 'Who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?' Eccles. 2:19. A man hath no knowledge of future events, nor no power of them. So that you see still we have no cause to envy worldly men even in this happiness. We are better provided for, having a covenant interest that countervails all: 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed.' Though we cannot leave them gold, land, and ample estate, yet you leave them a God in covenant, who hath undertaken for you and yours. And many times they have temporal blessings for their father's sake, the blessings of Ishmael, if not of Isaac.

Use 2. Direction, that we may not seek blessedness elsewhere. Some seek it in a wrong way. Carnal men think that there is no such happiness as in letting loose the reins to carnal lusts, and living as they list. This is the basest bondage that can be: 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.' The work is drudgery, and the reward is death; they are entangled in snares and held in chains; and is this an happy life? This doth but increase our misery, and make way for more shame. Yet carnal men are much taken with this kind of life; they wonder how men can abjure the pleasure and contentment which they fancy: 1 Peter 4:4, 'Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot.' They think themselves very wise in following the counsels of their own hearts, and doing as others do that are like themselves. You do but make yourselves more responsible to God's justice. Worldly comforts cannot make us happy; it appeareth by our many inventions: Eccles. 7:29, 'God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions.' Every sinner

hath his wanderings. Man, being off from God, never cometh on again of himself, but wandereth infinitely, and beats out himself with his own inventions. As a wayfaring man, who hath once lost his direction, turneth up and down, and knoweth not where to pitch, so are all endeavours fruitless till God direct us. We are to follow God's counsel, not the counsel of the ungodly: Ps. 73:24, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after receive me to glory;' as a clock runs at random when the balance is once out. The Lord is willing to direct us: Ps. 25:8, 'Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.' He is too wise to be deceived, and too good to deceive. O sinners! learn the upright way. When we are weary of wandering, and willing to be directed, such as submit themselves to God shall never want a guide. Creatures cannot make us happy; such is the restlessness of the soul, that we must have shift and change. Envyng one another showeth the narrowness of our comforts. Gripes of conscience spoil all; as Belshazzar in his cups was affrighted with an handwriting upon the wall. Says the young man in the gospel, Mat. 19:16, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' What lack I yet? saith the moralist. In false worship men are unsatisfied: Micah 6:6, 'Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord? and bow myself before the high God?' It is not a loose profession of the gospel that will make us happy: Mat. 11:29, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Nothing can make us happy but what is a full relief from sin and misery. Here is rest for our souls; the foundation is laid in justification and sanctification. Here is our reconciliation with God, hereafter is our advancement.

Use 3. It is an invitation to the practice of holiness. Blessedness is a great motive; David begins the book of Psalms with it, and Christ his sermons; there is enough in it to allay the sorrows of the present life, and fill up the desires of the life to come. All would be blessed and

happy, but we must take the right course; say, as Christ's hearers, John 6:34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread;' as Balaam, Num. 23:10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.' Be not content, as Balaam, with a vision of Jacob's happy seats: Num. 24:5, 'How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!' As the nobleman that saw the plenty of Israel but did not eat thereof: 2 Kings 7:20, 'And so it fell out unto him, for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.' The damned at the last day are lookers-on, but not partakers of the blessedness of the righteous: Luke 13:28, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.'

Use 4. Exhortation to those that have an interest in this blessed hope. Behave yourselves as those that are called thereunto; think of it often, discourse of it often, and live suitably to it.

1. Often meditate of the happiness that is laid up for you, and warm yourselves with the thoughts of it. The mind ruminateth on happiness. Your minds should be there: Col. 3:2, 'Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth.'

2. Confer of it often: 1 Thes. 4:18, 'Comfort one another with these words,' against all the changes and dangers of this life. Alas! how carnal and flat is our discourse! 'He that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth,' John 3:31.

3. Live more suitably to it: 1 Thes. 2:11, 12, 'As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.' Make eternity your scope: 2 Cor. 4:18, 'Looking not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are not seen,' σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν. There should be a greater proportion

between your hopes and your lives. Behave yourselves as those that are interested in this blessed hope. Be not dejected with every cross, nor overcome with every bait and temptation, nor live in a base and low manner; this is not becoming your hopes. Show your interest herein by the heavenliness and courage of your spirits.

## **SERMON XVI**

And the glorious appearing, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

IN the encouragement to the duty of our heavenly calling we have the substance of our hopes, and the seasons when we shall come to enjoy them to the full.

1. The substance of our hopes, 'Looking for the blessed hope.'
2. The time when our enjoyment shall be full, when body and soul shall be glorified, that is, at the time of Christ's appearing, 'At the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' Every one would have the blessed hope, but first there is a glorious appearing.

In this second branch there is the person that must appear, and the kind or manner of his appearing.

1. The person who must appear, Jesus Christ, described by a name of power, 'the great God,' and a name of mercy, 'and our Saviour;' as usually such kind of attributes are mingled in scripture, power and goodness.
2. The kind or manner of his appearing, it is glorious; επιφανειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ, the appearance of the glory of the great God. The apostle opposed the second coming of Christ to the first;

then it was an humble mean appearance, now it is full of glory. But what is meant by this glorious appearing? Some dream of his personal reign before his coming to judgment, but that is a fancy. The scripture only acknowledgeth two comings of Christ: Heb. 9:28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin to salvation.' There is only his first and his second appearing. After he had once offered himself, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, there is no more corporal presence of Christ upon earth. But will there not be at least a glimpse? Will he not come in the clouds for a while to convert the Jews, and set things to rights in the world? Will he not appear for a very little while, and so vanish again as he appeared to Paul at his conversion, Acts 9:3. So some think, and therefore distinguish between his appearing and his coming, but without warrant from scripture; for these two, appearing and coming, are all one; and the expressions are promiscuously used in scripture: Col. 3:4, 'When Christ, who is our life shall appear;' 1 John 3:2, 'When he shall appear we shall be like him.' So that this appearing is his coming to judgment; this is that we must look for. And therefore the point I shall first observe is this—

Doct. That it is the duty and property of God's children to look for Christ's second coming to judgment.

There are two choice scriptures that do describe the communion of the church with Christ, and the dispensations of Christ to the church, and they both conclude with a desire of his coming. In the Canticles, where the church's communion with Christ is described, this is the last, the swan-like note which the church sings, 'Come, Lord!' And so in the Revelations, where God's providences to the church are described, this is the last note, the swan-like song, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' Compare Cant. 8:14 with Rev. 22:20. In the former it is said, Cant. 8:14, 'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe,

or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.' Christ is not slack, but the church's affections are very strong and vehement; all the seeming delay is occasioned by the earnestness of our desire. A harlot would have her husband defer his coming; but the church, like a chaste spouse, thinks he can never come soon enough. Those that go a-whoring after the world neither desire Christ's coming nor love his appearing; but those that are faithful (as the spouse is to Christ) his is the desire of their souls, 'Make haste, my beloved.' So Rev. 22:20, Christ saith, 'Surely I come quickly;' and the church, like a quick echo, takes the words out of Christ's mouth, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' There is the same spirit in the church that was in Christ; the spirit of the head is in all his members, and therefore they speak the same thing, and long for the same thing. Christ speaks in a way proper to himself, 'Surely I come;' and the church speaks in a way proper to herself, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' He by way of promise, and we by way of supplication. Christ's voice and the church's voice are unisons. Here is his proclamation, 'Surely, I come;' and here is the church's acclamation, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' Christ says, 'I come,' as desiring our company; the church says, 'Lord, come,' as desiring his company. And thus we are taught to pray in the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' that we may always keep those desires afoot, that Christ's kingdom, in the whole flux, from the beginning to the last period, may come. The day of judgment is the most imperial act of Christ's kingly office, and therefore we do not only pray for the beginnings here, but also for the consummation hereafter. And we that live in the latter ages of the world have an advantage of the church in the primitive time. It was the solemn prayer of the church heretofore (as Tertullian showeth us), *pro mora finis*, for the delay of Christ's coming, that his designs and decrees might be accomplished in the world, that the kingdom of grace might be spread far and near. And we that live in the dregs of time pray for the hastening of Christ's coming, for the embracing of our great and glorious hopes,

that the name of God may be no longer dishonoured, that the kingdom of sin, Satan, and antichrist, may have an end. They expected the revelation of antichrist, and we his destruction. Thus the saints are described to be those that look for a Saviour: Phil. 3:20, 'For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' Paul speaks in his own name, and in the name of all that were like himself, 'We look,' &c. The saints here are a company of expectants, always waiting for the good hour of their preferment when Christ will come, that he may conduct them to everlasting glory. And they not only looked for it, but longed for it; and therefore it is said, 'they love his appearing,' 2 Tim. 4:8. It is notable Paul doth not mention there other marks and characters; not for me only, but all that believe and faithfully serve and obey Christ; but he describes them by this, which is an essential character of the saints, for it notes the disposition of their hearts, 'Not for me only, but for all those that love his appearing.'

There are several reasons may be given why this is the duty and property of the children of God still to look for Christ's glorious appearing. Look upon their temper, their relation, their privileges, and the profit they gain by this expectation.

1. Look upon the temper of the saints. Within them there is the Spirit, faith, love and hope, and all these put them upon this desire. There is the Spirit: Rev. 22:17, 'The Spirit and the bride' (that is, the Spirit in the bride) 'say, Come,' The Holy Ghost breeds and stirs up desires, and begets those holy motions in their hearts, and the church answereth his motions. This is a disposition above nature, carnal nature saith, Stay; but the Spirit saith, Come. If it might go by voices in the world, whether Christ should come or no, do you think carnal men would give their vote this way for Christ's coming? The voice of corrupt nature is, Depart: Job 22:14, 'Therefore they say



unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;' that is the language of their hearts. Carnal men are of the mind of the devil. When Christ wrought a miracle in casting out a devil, and discovered somewhat of his divine power, the devils were afraid, as if he were coming to judgment already: Mat. 8:29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The devil cannot endure to hear of Christ's coming; no more can carnal men, for they are of his mind. If thieves and malefactors might have the liberty to choose whether there should be assizes, yea or nay, do you think they would look for and long for the judge's coming and the day of his approach? So corrupt nature hath no desire of this day. It is the Spirit in the bride that says, Come; as soon as the Spirit of grace works in us, there is a bent and inclination this way; 1 Peter 1:3, 'Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.' Spiritual desires come from heaven, and thither they tend. As soon as the Spirit works grace in the heart, it looks out this way; the heart is bent thither from whence it receives all it hath, as all creatures love the place of their original. The great work of the Spirit is to bring us and Christ together. The Spirit comes from the Father and the Son, to bring us to the Father by the Son; and therefore the Spirit stirs up those holy groans in us, When will he come? They look upon the graces of a christian; there is faith, love, and hope. (1.) Faith: The ground of this looking is the promise; now faith stands waiting for the promise as if it were already begun to be accomplished. Look, as Rebecca espied Isaac afar off, so faith espies Christ afar off. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and looks upon Christ as if he were already on his way, and so makes the soul stand ready to meet and receive him. As a loving wife stands upon the shore, and looks for the return of her husband, and the sight of every ship makes her to realise by an active and loving fancy the sweetness of an interview, so faith stands waiting for the coming of Christ and the approaches he makes towards the church. (2.) Love: 1 Peter 1:8, 'Whom having not seen ye love.' The

saints love Christ whom they never saw. We know Christ by hearsay here in the church, not by sight; he woos us, as princes use to do, by picture; therefore they long for his appearing. Whosoever is a friend to Christ will find his heart long for Christ, of whom he had so often heard in the word, and so often tasted in the supper. Love is an affection of union; it desires to meet the party loved; so is love to Christ; it is not satisfied with the present state, but it cries out, Come, come; why is his chariot so long a coming? It longs to see him whom it hath heard of so often and so much, and of whose sweetness it hath already tasted; for this love is not only kindled by the knowledge we have of him by hearsay, but by experience. Christ first comes in the heart by grace, and then the soul, having tasted the sweetness of it, longs for another coming. When will he come in the clouds, that we may see him as he is? And as love to Christ, so also love to the saints enkindles this desire. We have not all our company here in the world; and till we all meet together we shall never be satisfied. (3.) Hope, that is another grace, God fitteth us with graces as well as happiness. The Lord doth not only provide a glorious estate for us, but grace to expect it, and stirs up affections in us suitable thereunto. As in the privative part of salvation, Christ doth not only deliver us from the hurt of death, but from the bondage and fear of death. Despair is the beginning of hell. So in the positive part of salvation, the Lord doth not only provide heaven and happiness for us, but hope that we may look for this happiness: 'We are begotten again to a lively hope.' 1 Peter 1:3; 'And to wait for his Son from heaven,' 1 Thes. 1:10. Hope was made on purpose for this thing, that we may expect our full and future happiness. When the affection of hope is elsewhere placed, and turned to carnal things, it is like a member out of joint. It was made and framed on purpose that we might look for this glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

2. Look upon their relation to Christ. There are two relations the scripture usually takes notice of with respect unto the day of judgment—Christ is our master and our husband. As he is our master, we must look for him. It is the property of a good servant to wait for his master's coming: Mat. 24:46, 'Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.' Here we have only present maintenance, but hereafter we shall receive our wages: Rev. 22:12, 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.' A servant of God should remember that when Christ comes he will not come empty-handed; he is your good and bounteous master. Here you have but an earnest, as when you hire a man, you give him earnest. But now, because God would not have our affections to be servile, therefore there is a sweeter relation; we are to look for him not only as a lord and master, but as an husband; and therefore it is the 'bride that saith, Come,' Rev. 22:17. Here we are only contracted to Christ, he hath passed his promise to us, but the day of judgment is the day of solemn espousals: Hosea 2:19, 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever.' Here in the covenant of grace Christ doth pass a promise to the church; here he comes to give us a pledge and take a pledge from us. As Tertullian saith, Christ took from us the token and pledge of our flesh, and is gone to heaven to make all things ready; and he hath left with us the token of his own Spirit, that so we might long for the time when he shall come again for the consummation of this happy and glorious marriage that is between him and us. We are to wait for glory, as a servant for his master, and as a bride or virgin betrothed doth wait for the coming of him that hath promised marriage to her.

3. Look upon a christian's privileges which we shall then enjoy, and certainly christians must needs desire Christ's coming. The day of judgment is the day of manifestation, the day of perfection, the day of congregation, and the day of glorification.

[1.]. It is called a day of manifestation of the sons of God: Rom. 8:19, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' All now is under a veil; your Christ, your life, your glory is hid. Our persons are hid under obscurity and abasement: Col. 3:3, 4, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.' Look, as Moses told those rebels, when they would level the officers of the church, Num. 16:5, 'To-morrow the Lord will show who are his,' so when once the night of death is passed over, to-morrow, when we awake out of the dust of the grave, then Christ the natural Son will appear in all his royalty and glory, as the great God and Saviour of the world, and then also the adopted sons shall be manifested; we shall put on our best robes, and be apparelled with glory, even as Christ is. In winter the tree appears not what it is, the life and sap is hid in the root; but when summer comes, all is discovered; so now a christian, he is under a veil, but in this great day all shall be manifested.

[2.] It is a day of perfection. Everything tends to its perfect state, and so doth grace. We see the little seed that lies under ground breaks through the clods and works its way farther, because it is not come to the flower and perfection; so grace still tends and longs for perfection; then we shall have perfect holiness and perfect freedom; Christ to the glorified saints will be a perfect Saviour. Death, which is a fruit of sin, is still continued upon the body, therefore Christ is but a Saviour in part to the spirits of just men made perfect; but then the body and soul shall be united and perfectly glorified, that we might praise God in the heavens. Christ's coming is to make an end of his redemption, of what he hath begun. At first he came to redeem our souls and break the power of sin, but then he comes to redeem our bodies from the hand of the grave and from the power of corruption; the one is done by humiliation and abasement, the other by power.

The scripture speaks as if all our privileges in Christ were imperfect till that day. Regeneration, adoption, union with Christ, they suffer a kind of imperfection till then. Regeneration, the day of judgment is called by that name: Mat. 19:28, 'In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory.' Then all things are made new; heaven and earth is new, bodies new, souls new. Then adoption is perfect: Rom. 8:23, 'Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.' What is the meaning of the apostle's expression? As soon as we are planted into Christ are we not the sons of God? Yes; now we are sons, but the heir is handled as a servant during his nonage: 1 John 3:2, 'Beloved, now we are the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be;' we wait for the adoption. Justification that is perfect then: Acts 3:19, 'Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Then our pardon shall be proclaimed in the ears of all the world, and we shall have absolution out of Christ's own mouth; then shall we come to understand what it is that the Lord saith, 'I will remember your sins no more, and your iniquity shall be blotted out.' Then for redemption: Eph. 4:30, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption;' Luke 21:28, 'Look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Oh! how doth the captive long for his liberty; so should we long for that day, for it is the day of our redemption. Now the body is a captive, and when the soul is set at liberty the body is held under the chains of death. Ay! but then Christ comes to loosen the bands and shackles of the grave, and free the bodies of the saints. Look, as the butler was not afraid when he was sent for by Pharaoh, because Joseph had assured him he should be set at liberty, so Christ comes to set you fully at liberty, not only the soul, but the body; therefore to think and speak of that day with horror doth ill become them that expect such perfection of

privileges, to be acquitted before all the world, and to be crowned with Christ's own hands.

[3.] It is a day of congregation or gathering together. The saints are now scattered, they live in divers countries, towns, and houses, and cannot have the comfort of one another's society. But then all shall meet in one assembly and congregation. It is said, Ps. 1:5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' There will be a time when Christ's church shall be gathered all together into one place. As the stars do not shine in a cluster, but are dispersed throughout the firmament for the comfort and light of the world, so are the saints scattered up and down in the world according as they may be useful for God; but then, when the four winds shall give up their dead, and the saints shall be gathered from all the corners of the world, this shall be the great rendezvous. Look, as the wicked shall be herded together, as straw and sticks are bound in a bundle, that they may set one another a-fire, drunkards with drunkards, adulterers with adulterers, and thieves with thieves: Mat. 13:40-42, 'As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' The wicked shall be sorted with men like themselves, and so increase one another's torment; so shall all the world of the godly meet in one assembly and congregation, and never separate more. In this life we cannot enjoy one another's fellowship for divers reasons; God hath service for us in divers countries; but such a happy time shall come when we shall all make but one body; therefore the saints are still groaning and longing for that happy day, we for them, and they for us; not only the saints upon earth that are left to conflict with sin and misery, but the saints in heaven are still groaning, as the

souls under the altar: Rev. 6:9, 10, 'How long, O Lord! holy and true.' Look as those in a shipwreck that have gotten to the shore stand longing and looking for their companions, so glorified saints that have gotten safe to shore, still they are longing and looking when the body of Christ shall be made perfect, and all the saints shall meet in one solemn assembly. This is the communion between us and the saints departed, they long for our company, as we do for theirs. Here the tares are mingled with the wheat; and besides the persecutions of the wicked, their very company is a burden. Jacob's cattle and Laban's are together, but then they shall be separated, and the saints shall be gathered together, and sit as judges of them, giving their vote with Christ in their condemnation.

[4.] It is a day of glorification to Christ, and therefore the saints long for it; a day when Christ shall be honoured, and get to himself a glorious name. God got himself a great name when he drowned Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the sea; oh! what will it be when he shall cast all the wicked into hell! Now Christ will come to show the fulness of his majesty, the terror of his wrath, and to glorify his justice upon wicked men. Christ showeth his majesty every day, but we have not eyes to see it; our eyes are dazzled with worldly splendour, but then all mists shall vanish. The saints, that love the glory of God, must needs long for that time when Christ shall be seen in all his glory, when God shall be dishonoured no more, and the kingdom of sin and Satan have an end, and wicked men shut up under their everlasting state. And then from the saints, God hath perfect glory in them and from them: here God hath not his perfect glory from us nor in us. This is the comfort of God's children, that God is glorified in their glory, that they may live to praise him for ever, without weakness and distraction: and that is the reason of those expressions, 'To whom be glory for ever and ever.' They delight in their own glorious estate, because they shall ever be in a capacity

to bring glory to God. Nay, then, God shall be glorified in all his counsels and decrees, in the wisdom of his providence, and in the course of his judgments; for in the day of judgment the full history of the world shall be brought before the saints, whereas now we see it but by pieces.

4. Why the saints look for Christ's appearing, is the profit of this expectation which they shall receive; partly as it engageth to a heavenly conversation: Phil. 3:20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for a saviour.' Where should we converse most but where Christ is? Now where is Christ but in heaven? And therefore our minds should be ever running upon it, our eyes ever looking that way, and our hearts ever longing for him. Partly as it engageth us to faithfulness in our relations; there is a day coming when we shall give an account for the duties of our relations, because that is the particular sphere of our activity: 2 Tim. 4:1, 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom.' Paul there presseth Timothy to discharge the duty of a minister, and so for a master of a family, and for a servant, Your relations are not things of chance, but they fall under the special care of God's providence, and therefore you must be accountable for them. Here God hath confined you by the wisdom of his providence to serve the great ends of your creation; therefore, whatever is omitted, you are to give an account of your relations; magistrates, ministers, masters, servants, all of their several relations. Partly as it calms the heart against the injuries and molestations of the present life: 1 Peter 2:23, our Lord Christ 'when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously;' so you must learn of him; when you meet with trouble and hard usage, and unworthy dealing in the world, commit yourselves to God; the judge is at the door, and he will review all things again. Look, as Paschalis,



a minister of the Albigenses, when he was burnt at Rome, cited the pope and his cardinals before the tribunal of the Lamb, thus do you. Partly as it engageth to perseverance. If a man hath followed a distressed and afflicted party for a long time, if nothing comes of it, he tires; but remember, if we follow Christ here, all our pains will be recompensed to us: 1 John 2:28, 'Abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Christ will come, and that with salvation to them that look for him; therefore let me be faithful in my duty.

Object. 1. But how can we look for it, when we know there are some signs that precede the coming of Christ? Therefore certainly he is not like to come in our days. Will he alter the prefixed time of his approach, and change the jaccets of that great journey.

Ans. (1.) Though Christ keepeth his pace, yet it is good for us to alter ours; though we cannot hasten his coming, yet let us be always ready: 2 Peter 3:12, 'Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God.' It is good for us to get ground upon our fears and our sins, and to declare our readiness to meet with Christ. Every day we live in the world is a day lost in heaven. (2.) If any age had cause to think Christ would come, certainly we have. It was not far off in the apostles' days; they were called the last days; but ours are the very dregs of time. When we see an old man weak and feeble, aches and diseases of the present life increase upon him, we say, Certainly he cannot live long; so if we look upon the temper of the world, sure it cannot endure long; Christ will come to set all things at rights. One forerunner of Christ's coming are the dreams and delusions that are abroad. *Mundus senescens patitur phantasias*—As the world grows old, it is much given to fancies, as old men are to dotage and dreams. (3.) If Christ come not in our days, yet death is at hand: Heb. 9:27, 'It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.'

Every man's particular judgment follows upon his departure out of the world, and then the general judgment follows, as death finds him, either among the sheep or goats. Judas died sixteen hundred years ago, yet as he died so shall he be found. After death there is no change of state; therefore your business is always to be ready to depart in peace, and hasten to an eternal state.

Object. 2. How can this be the property of God's children to desire his coming? Are they always in this temper and frame? Many weak ones tremble at the thought of it for want of assurance of God's love; it is the terror and bondage of their lives to think of Christ's coming; and sometimes the saints do not actually feel such an inclination and strength of desire.

Ans. (1.) The meanest saint hath some inclination this way. Can a man desire that Christ may come into his heart, and will there not be such desires that he may come to judgment, since comfort and reward is more naturally embraced than duty? The very first work of grace is to raise and beget this hope: 1 Peter 1:3, 'Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.' (2.) There may be sometimes a drowsiness and indisposition when their lamps are not kept burning: Luke 12:36, 'And be ye always ready, as those that wait for their Lord.' When they are fallen asleep, they may for the present wish that Christ may not come and take them in this condition; as the wise virgins slept as well as the foolish; so God's own children many times find themselves indisposed for his coming. Careless carriage weakens their hope and the remissness of their watch, yet in all there is a spirit this way, which beginneth with the new birth. A wife desires her husband's coming home, but it may be all things are not ready and in so good order as they should; so all christians desire the coming of Christ, but sometimes they are not so exact and watchful,

and therefore their affections are not so lively. Drowsiness creeps upon their hearts, and then God rouseth them by afflictions.

Object. 3. But is this the property of God's children, when we see carnal men, sometimes out of weariness of the present life and trouble of the world, will even long for his coming, and wish for death?

Ans. That is an offer of nature after ease, this is a desire stirred up by the Spirit. Sometimes God's children in their passions desire to be taken out of the world; as Jonah: chap. 4:8, 'He fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live;' and Elijah: 1 Kings 19:4, 'He requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.' But this is but a shameful retreat from duty, and the heat and burden of the day, and the labours of the present life; these are froward thoughts, not sanctified desires, words of a feverish distemper, not of affection, but it comes from the sickness and weakness of their souls. But this I speak of is a solid looking for, desire, and longing for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

Use 1. It showeth what they are who wish that it may never come. Some would be glad in their hearts to hear such news, that Christ's coming would never be; it is their burden and torment to think of it; as Felix trembled when he heard of judgment to come. These men have the spirit of the devil in them; if they had the Spirit of God in them, would it be so? surely no. A carnal man cannot say the Lord's prayer, for he is afraid he shall be heard. *Optas ut veniat, quem times ne adveniat?* saith Austin. How canst thou say, Thy Kingdom come, when thou art afraid lest God should come?

Use 2. To press us to this earnest looking. Christ looketh, he is not slack: 2 Peter 3:9, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise.' If

all things were ready, he would come presently. Before he came in the flesh, his delights were with us: Prov. 8:31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' And he longeth now he is in heaven: Rev. 22:12, 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.' The angels expect it; they would not be found liars, they told us of it: Acts 1:11, 'This same Jesus that is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.' The saints groan, 'How long, O Lord? how long?' Devils tremble at the thought of it: Mat. 8:29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The creatures expect it in their kind: Rom. 8:19, 'For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' All things by a natural instinct are carried to their perfection. Evil men cannot endure to think of it, as Felix trembled at the thoughts of judgment to come. Let not the saints stand out, but expect it earnestly. How much was the first coming of Christ wished for and desired! Abraham rejoiced at the thoughts of it: John 8:56, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.' Kings and prophets desired to see these things: Luke 10:24, 'For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.' Old Simeon, Luke 2:25, 'was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel;' yet then he was a child in the cradle, now in glory riding on the clouds, then he came in the similitude of sinful flesh: Rom. 8:3, 'God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;' but now he shall appear without sin: Heb. 9:28, 'Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.' This earnest looking implieth strong faith, longing desires, frequent thoughts.

1. Strong faith. Reason saith it may be, faith saith it shall be. Divine justice must have a solemn triumph; conscience is afraid of it. Our

reward may be delayed, but it cannot stand with the justice of God that it should be abolished and taken away. There is confusion in the world. Dives flowed with ease and plenty when Lazarus was rough-cast with sores. We need to be awed with shame as well as fear. Faith saith he will come; we have his word for it; as unlikely things have come to pass that have been foretold. Were the old believers deceived that expected his coming in the flesh? That a few fishermen should preach the gospel to all nations? this is already done. Christ is contracted with us now, he will come to marry us; he went not away upon discontent. He that loved us so as to come from heaven to earth to take our nature, will he not come in glory? We have of his Spirit, and we enjoy his ordinances as a memorial till he comes, and we have many love-tokens sent us as a pledge that he will come.

2. Longing desires. Our hearts should even spring and leap within us when we hear of Christ's coming. Thus the believers of the old testament, how did they rejoice to hear of a Messiah to come: John 8:56, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.' Abraham rejoiced to think that a son should come of his loins in whom all the world should be blessed: Heb. 11:13, 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.' How did the patriarchs hug the promises! Oh, sweet promise! this will yield a Messiah, a Christ to the world.

3. There should be frequent thoughts of his coming, as if you always heard the trumpet. Every time thou lookest to heaven, think, I have a Christ there, a rich jewel kept safe; and whenever you see the clouds, think of Christ's coming and going. These clouds were chariots by which Christ went triumphing into heaven, and in like manner he will come again: Dan. 6:10, 'Daniel went into his house, and his windows being opened towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his

knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks unto his God.' Daniel had reason to look towards the temple, though ruined, because of the promise of God to his people that prayed towards the temple; so now and then we should look up to heaven; there is Christ above within the heavens. We are called often to lift up our hearts to God, and our eyes to heaven, from whence we look for a saviour; there is our treasure and our Jesus.

Use 3. Of trial. It is good to see how we stand affected towards this appearing. Nothing can content true christians in the world. Do we look beyond it? Whither is the bent of our hearts? How is with them?

1. If there were this looking, there would be preparing. A man that expecteth the coming of a king to his house, he will furnish his house accordingly, and make all things ready. Surely you look for nobody when you do not suit and prepare yourselves to entertain them. When the house is sluttish, and the kitchen cold, do you look for great guests? What are we to do to prepare ourselves for Christ's coming?

[1.] Judge yourselves: 2 Cor. 13:5, 'Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates.' By judging yourselves God's act is anticipated.

[2.] Get into Christ: Rom. 8:1, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' They that are in Christ need not fear God's judgment; you may set Christ's righteousness against Christ's judgment. Guilty felons desire not the judge's presence. Art thou in the case wherein thou wouldst be found of him? 2 Peter 3:14, 'Be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.'

[3.] Walk strictly. We are between the two comings of Christ, his first and his second coming; let us live soberly, righteously, and godly. When a man is providing matter of condemnation for himself, can he be said to look for Christ's coming?

2. How do you entertain Christ for the present in your hearts and in his ordinances? Can a man slight ordinances, and expect Christ's second coming? A woman that never careth to hear from her husband cannot be said to desire his coming; so if Christ has often knocked at the door of our hearts, and we will not give him entrance, how can we be said to look for his appearing?

## SERMON XVII

And the glorious appearing, &c.—TITUS 2:13.

I PROCEED to the manner of his appearance—the glorious appearing. The note is—

Doct. 2. That Christ's second coming to judgment will be very glorious.

Here I shall show—(1.) How glorious it will be; (2.) Why it will be so glorious.

I. How glorious it will be. You may conceive of it if you consider the preparation for his approach, the appearance itself, and the consequences of it.

First, It will be glorious in regard of the preparation for his approach. The scripture mentions two—the trumpet of the archangel, and the sign of the Son of man.

1. There is that great noise of the voice of the Lord, that begets a terror in the world, which is ministerially managed by an archangel, though the power and success be of God. That great noise startles the dead in their graves, and summons all the world to appear before Christ's tribunal. There is much spoken of this in scripture: 1 Thes. 4:16, 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;' Mat. 24:31, 'He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Some expound this trumpet analogically, some literally. Analogically; some think it only signifies the power



and virtue of Christ, by which all the dead are awakened out of their sleep, and forced to appear before his tribunal; and they say it is therefore expressed by a trumpet, because the solemn assemblies of Israel were wont to be summoned by the sound of a trumpet. But why may we not take it literally for the audible sound of a trumpet? Look, as at the giving the law, the voice of the trumpet was exceeding loud, so such an audible voice, like the voice of a trumpet, is there when Christ comes to judgment, to require an account of the performance of the law, which is, as it were, a terrible summons to all the world, and a near sign of his coming. Look, as at his first coming Christ had his forerunner and harbinger, John the Baptist, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'The kingdom of God is at hand,' so at his second coming Christ hath his forerunner, an archangel, that shall sound a trumpet, which maketh his coming glorious, because it shall awaken and startle all the world. This sound shall be heard all the world over by the dead; as the prophet speaks, Ezek. 37:7, 8, of a noise and clattering among the bones, and bone ran to bone, and then they were clothed with flesh and sinews, so such a noise shall there be among the bones when Christ comes to judgment. Here in the church God speaks in a stiller voice, but it is not regarded; he speaks by his angels and messengers; they sound the trumpet to the spiritual battle; they pipe, but few dance, till by his mighty power he raiseth sinners from the dead. So at the last day God hath his messengers; there is the archangel that is to manage the ministerial excitation, and the mighty power of God accompanies it to make the dead live and awaken out of sleep.

2. There is a sign of the Son of man; that is spoken of Mat. 24:30, 'Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.' What it is we cannot certainly tell, until experience manifests; sure

we are it must be such a sign as shall make the world sensible of his approach. Some think it shall be some strange star, such as there was at his first coming; the wise men were conducted to Christ by a star: this is but a mere conjecture. Others suppose it shall be the sign of the cross which shall appear in the heavens, because that is Christ's badge, by which he was known here in the world. The great subject of the gospel is Christ crucified, therefore it is called the 'word of the cross;' and so they think the sign of the cross shall be impressed upon the heavens in the sight of all the world. To confirm the conjecture, they urge the appearance that was made to Constantine in his war against Maxentius, the tyrant and persecutor of the church; he saw the sign of the cross, say they, with this inscription, ἐν τούτῳ νικήσεις—By this shalt thou overcome. But Eusebius describes it otherwise, as an X, the first initial letter of Christ's name. But many of the ancient writers went this way, they thought that this way the scandal of Christ is best taken away; the cross, which is now the scandal and offence the world takes at Christ, then shall be his ensign and royal standard, which shall be impressed upon the heavens. Look, as kings when they make a triumphant approach, have their banner carried before them, so Jesus Christ shall have his cross, which is the sign of the Son of man; but in such a point I dare not thus peremptorily dogmatise. Others more probably (and to which I incline) interpret it of some forerunning beams of majesty and glory, which shall darken the great luminaries of the world, the sun and moon, and so strike terror into the hearts of men. The glory of Christ, which is described to pass through the heavens like lightning, shall be like those morning beams and streaks of light before the body of the sun be risen; as Paul was struck blind with the sight of Christ, 'he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him,' Acts 26:13. Certainly some sign there shall be that shall make the world fall a-mourning. And it is notable that these preparations and beams of majesty are sometimes

expressed by light, and sometimes by fire; by light, to note the comfortableness of it to the godly; it is as the light of the sun, which doth not scorch, but refresh and revive, and cheer the heart: light is comfortable. But then at other times it is represented by fire: 2 Thes. 1:8, it is said, 'The Son of man shall come in flaming fire,' or, as the apostle's word is, ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς, in fire all a-flame, to show the dreadfulness of his appearance to the wicked. Look, as Joseph told the butler and the baker what Pharaoh would do to them, hang the one and exalt the other, therefore when the messenger comes for them, the butler's heart leaps for joy he was to be preferred, but the baker thought of nothing but dreadful execution that was presignified; just thus shall it be with the wicked and the godly; the sign of the Son of man shall be comfortable to the godly, but it shall be as a flame of fire and devouring burnings, dreadful and formidable to the wicked, whose execution and final judgment now draws near. So much for the preparation.

Secondly, The appearance itself. And there you must consider Christ's personal glory, his attendance, and his work.

1. His personal glory. Certainly that must be exceeding great, if you consider the dignity both of his person and employment.

[1.] The dignity of his person. Mat. 24:30, it is said, he shall come 'in great glory;' at other times, 'in the glory of his Father,' Mat. 16:27; that is, he shall come as God's own natural Son, with such a glory as cannot be communicated to any creature. His first coming is like the carpenter's son, mean and despicable; but his second coming is like God's Son. Now, that you may conceive of this glory, you must guess at it by several hints. There shall be great glory put upon the saints: 'Then shall the righteous shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of the Father,' Mat. 13:43; and Christ will be 'glorified in his saints, and

admired in all them that believe,' 2 Thes. 1:10. But we do not come in the glory of the Father; when we are glorified, we are not deified; yet our glory shall be so great that men and angels shall stand wondering what God hath done to us. But now Christ is God-man in one person, and that mystery is now to be discovered to the uttermost, the union of the two natures in his person; and therefore he must have such a glory as never creature was capable of, nor can be. He doth not only appear in the text as 'our Saviour,' but as 'the great God.' Guess at it again we may by other appearances of God. When Christ came to give the law, his voice shook Mount Sinai, that Moses trembled and quaked at the hearing of it: Heb. 12:21, 'So terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.' Guess at it by the light at Christ's birth, that came from heaven, and shone round about the shepherds, so that they were exceedingly afraid: Luke 2:9, 'The glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.' Guess at it by the glimpse of his divine glory which Christ gave us in his transfiguration: Mat. 17:2, 'His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light,' when his disciples fell upon their faces, and could not endure the shining of his garments. So by the appearance of Christ to Paul that was struck blind for three days: Acts 9:3, 'And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.' And by the terror the prophet Isaiah felt when he saw God in vision: Isa. 6:5, 'Woe is me, I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' Because of some relics of corruption, therefore was it terrible and formidable to him. But this glory, though it shall be very great, yet it shall be comfortable to the saints, for sin and weakness shall be done away.

[2.] Especially if you consider his office. He is a judge of all the world, and therefore he shall come with all things that are becoming such a judge. He shall sit upon a visible throne, where he may be

seen and heard of all. You know, in earthly judicatories, when great malefactors are brought to trial, the whole majesty and glory of the nation is brought forth; the judge comes in gorgeous apparel, accompanied with the flower of the country, nobles and gentlemen, and a great conflux of people, to make it the more magnificent. So here Christ, the judge of all the world, comes becoming the judge of the world that sits upon a throne of glory and majesty: Mat. 25:31, 32, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with them, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations.' All the world shall be summoned before him. Thus for his personal glory.

2. In regard of his attendants, who are angels and saints, this appearance must needs be very glorious.

[1.] There are angels, multitudes of them, that come with Christ, and with such a glory as cannot be conceived of: Mat. 25:31, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.' Mark the emphasis of the expression, 'All the holy angels shall come with him.' When a prince removes, the whole court removes with him; so when Christ removes out of heaven, the whole court of heaven removes with him. As Chrysostom saith, Heaven now shall be left void; all the angels shall come out with Christ, that they may be present at this great act. Those blessed mansions shall be forsaken for a while, that they may be present with the judge of the world. Look, as the angels were present at the giving of the law, so also will they be present when the sentence of the law comes to be executed. Thrones, principalities, powers, and dominions, angels, however distinguished, were all made by Christ; he is their head, and they are given to Christ by his Father, as he is Mediator, to be his servants in the mediatory office. And therefore Christ always useth angels. In his conception the angel Gabriel came to Mary. At his nativity, an host of

angels came down to acquaint us with the glad tidings of salvation. In his passion, he was comforted by an angel; at his resurrection, there were angels at his grave; at his ascension, he was carried to heaven by angels; and in the government of the church, in the present dispensation, Christ useth angels more than we are aware of. These principalities and powers are conversant about and in the church; and in the last day's act he shall come with his holy angels. Whether these angels shall then visibly appear, I dispute not; certainly their attendance upon Christ is partly as a train, to make his appearance more full of majesty, and partly because Christ hath a ministry and service for them. Partly as a train to Christ, and to make his appearance more full of majesty. They that waited upon Christ at his ascension will now come to wait upon him at his coming to judgment. Public ministers of justice are made, formidable by their attendance and officers. Christ will come like a royal king in the midst of his nobles; and partly because they have also a ministry and service at that day; they are to 'gather the elect from the four winds,' Mat. 24:31. The angels love to be conversant about the saints. They that carried their souls to heaven shall now be employed to bring their bodies out of the grave. The holy angels shall conduct the souls of those that die in the Lord to heaven: Luke 16:22, 'The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.' So also those angels shall now be employed in bringing their bodies out of the grave. They are still serviceable to the saints, and this is the last office of love they can perform to them, therefore they do it cheerfully. And to the wicked, their office is to force them into Christ's presence, and to bind them up in bundles, as tares for the fire, Mat. 13:40, 41. Also, the angels have this ministry and service, to be employed as witnesses; they attend now upon the congregation, to observe your behaviour; therefore the apostle disputes concerning unseemly gestures: 1 Cor. 11:10, 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.' They are privy to our

conversations, and able to give an account of our lives. In the assemblies there are more meet than are visible; devils meet, and good angels likewise, to observe your carriage, that they may give account to God. And no sooner shall the sentence be pronounced, but it shall be executed. In a condescension to our capacity, God is pleased to represent the work as done by the ministry of angels. We can understand better the operations of an angel than the operations of Almighty God, because they are nearer to us in being, and are of an essence finite and limited.

[2.] The saints, they are his attendants too. Some shall come from heaven with Christ, others shall be 'caught up in the air to meet the Lord,' 1 Thes. 4:17. Certainly the wicked shall be left still to tread upon the earth. And this contributes much to the glory of the day, because when Christ appears we appear with him in glory; we shall be like him, we shall suddenly attain to that fulness of glory that their hearts could never conceive of. Oh! what a glorious day must that needs be when so many suns shall meet together! Every one of the elect shall shine more than the sun. Then our spiritual empire and dominion begins; we come to share with Christ in the glory of his kingdom, to be associated with him in judging of the world. Do not then please yourselves with fancies of temporal happiness. 'The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning,' Ps. 49:14. When is that? After they have slept their sleep of death, then God's saints and servants, that are now scorned, censured, and persecuted, in the morning of the resurrection, when they awake to meet with Christ, then doth our glory begin. We are all for a while to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. But look upon all the draughts of the last judgment, and you shall find this method; sentence begins with the godly, but execution begins with the wicked. The books are opened, the godly are called, and they are first acquitted, that afterwards they may join with Christ to judge the world: 1 Cor. 6:2,

'Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world.' The first process is with the godly, that their faith may be found to praise; but first the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment: Mat. 25:46, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal;' that by others' misery they may be more apprehensive of their own felicity.

3. Another thing that makes the day glorious is his work and powerful executing the work of the day. Jesus Christ is to gather the wicked together, dragging them out of their graves with horror; then to extend and enlarge their consciences, that all their doings may come to remembrance; and then to cast them into eternal darkness, to chase them with the glory of his presence into hell, dragging them out of their graves with terror: Rev. 6:16, 'They said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' They are ashamed to look Christ in the face, whom they have slighted, despised, neglected in the world. Then they shall be ashamed to see the godly preferred; as Haman did fret to see Mordecai put upon the king's horse, and led through the city with triumph, so they are envious to see the preferment of God's children. Then they are cursed out of Christ's presence, and go away yelling and howling, and are led away to their final state, as Haman's face was covered, and then led away to execution. Now Christ hath the most glorious conquest over his enemies that ever he had; now he shows himself like a king, in punishing his enemies and rewarding his friends. In punishing his enemies, stubborn knees shall bow to him; it is not done fully till now. Isa. 45:23, there is a decree, 'I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.' It is a prediction of Christ's sovereignty, and it is ratified with an oath; all God's holiness and glory is laid at stake that it shall



be accomplished. Now this prophecy is twice alleged in the New Testament: Phil. 2:10, 11, 'At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess.' There it is made the fruit of Christ's ascension; what is swear in the prophet, there is confess; they are both acts of worship, and given to Christ. Presently God gave him this power upon his ascension, for his ascension was his solemn inauguration into the kingly office. Christ was a chosen king, and anointed from all eternity. While he was here in the world he was a king, but when he ascended up on high, then he was a crowned king, and God undertook to make good this prophecy, 'That every knee should bow to him;' as David was anointed by Samuel, but crowned at Hebron. But some will say, We do not see that all things are put under him; there are damned spirits that resist his counsels, and there are wicked men that rebel against his laws; every knee doth not bow, and every tongue doth not call him Lord. But wait a little, the work is a-doing. Christ's royal office receiveth several accessions of glory and degrees of perfection, till the day of judgment, and then it is discovered in a most imperial manner. The apostle quoteth this place to prove the day of judgment: Rom. 14:10, 11, 'Why dost thou judge thy brother? and why dost thou set at nought thy brother? We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' How doth he prove that? 'For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God;' implying that at the day of judgment this promise shall be fully made good. This is the consummate act of his regal office; then devils and wicked men shall all be made to stoop to Christ. Christ's kingdom is a growing kingdom: Isa. 9:7, 'Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.' Not only of his government, but of the increase of his government; then it is at its full strength. Therefore it is called 'the day of the Lord;' 2 Peter 3:10, 'The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.' Then Christ discovereth himself as

Lord in all his royalties and greatness, and makes his enemies shake before him. Then also he shows himself to be a king to his people: Mat. 25:34, 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand.' Mark the special title that is given to Christ when he invites the saints into his bosom; then we come to receive from Christ the most royal donative and highest fruit of his kingly office.

Thirdly, The consequents of that day. I shall name three—sending of persons judged to their everlasting state, giving up the kingdom to his Father, and burning the world.

1. The sending of persons judged to their everlasting state, the elect into glory, and the wicked into torments. For the elect: Mat. 25:34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Oh! you have been too long absent; Come, blessed children, come into my bosom; come, possess that which was prepared for you before you had a being in the world. And then for the wicked, by a terrible ban and proscription they are excommunicated and cast out of the presence of the Lord: ver. 31, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' A terrible ban and proscription! As Haman's face was covered when the king was angry, and so he was led away to execution, so the wicked banished from Christ's presence are accursed to all eternity, and so enter into their eternal state. Now from this sentence, either of absolution or condemnation, there is no appeal; it is pronounced by Christ as God-man. On earth many times God's sentence is repealed. God may speak of the ruin of a nation, but free. grace may interpose: Jer. 18:7, 8, 'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.' *Deus mutat sententiam, non decretum*—In

the world, though God doth not change his decrees, yet he changeth his sentence many times; the sentence shows what might be, the decree shows what shall be. But now this sentence shall never be reversed. Now is the day of patience, then of recompense; the day of patience is past. It is said, Luke 2:14, 'Peace upon earth.' God may proclaim war against a soul or people, that he may awaken them to look after their peace; but this is a sentence that shall never be changed. The execution is speedy. Here many times the sentence is passed, but 'not speedily executed against an evil work,' Eccles. 8:11; but here Christ's sentence presently begins, and the wicked in the very sight of the godly are thrust into hell: Mat. 13:30, 'Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn;' which doth awaken the grief and envy of the wicked, when they shall see others gathered into the great congregation, and themselves thrust out. And then the godly have a deeper sense of their own condition. When contraries are put together, they do mutually illustrate one another; so when we see the misery of the wicked, this matures our apprehensions, and makes us have larger thoughts of our deliverance by Christ. And then the sentence is accomplished upon the whole person, and that for ever. Upon the whole man, 'Go ye cursed,' and, 'Come, ye blessed;' both body and soul share in the reward and punishment. And then the sentence is eternal; it remains for ever. Why? For the reward is built upon an infinite merit. The Lord Christ's blood is of an infinite value; the virtue of it lasts to all eternity to secure heaven to us. And the punishment is eternal, because an infinite majesty is offended. In short, God is never weary of blessing the godly, and never weary of cursing the wicked, and accomplishing his judgment and displeasure against them.

2. The next consequent is the resigning and giving up of the kingdom to the Father. You have it described, 1 Cor. 15:24–28. I suppose this

giving up of the kingdom is not taken for the resigning of his kingly office; for Christ still holds the government, and wears the crown of honour to be the head of the church. But kingdom here is put for 'the subjects of the kingdom.' He shall finish the present manner of dispensation, and present all the elect to God, and give them up as a prey snatched out of the mouth of the lion; and this is called presenting his spouse to God: Eph. 5:27, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church.' Christ hath shed his blood, and washed her clean, and decked her with all the jewels of the covenant; and then, he shall present her to God; and the form of surrender you have, Heb. 2:13, 'Behold I and the children God hath given me.' Behold, here I am, and all thou hast given me; there is not one wanting. Oh! what a glorious sight will this be to see the great shepherd of the sheep leading his flock into their everlasting folds, and all the elect following Christ with their crowns of glory upon their heads, singing to the praise of the Lamb, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' &c. To see them with harps in their hands, triumphing thus in the salvation of God, all enemies gone, and the church lodged in everlasting habitations! Besides, consider the acclamation and applause of the angels. Oh! how should we strive to be one of this number!

3. The next consequent is the burning of the world; that is described at large, 2 Peter 3:10–12, how that fire shall come out from God, and burn and devour all things, and melt the very firmament. Certainly that fire is to be taken literally, for it is opposed to water, the first water by which the world was destroyed. Now by this fire I conceive the world shall not be consumed, but renewed and purged, because in the everlasting state God will have all things new. He will not only have the bodies and souls of the saints new, but will have new heavens and new earth; for it is 'a deliverance from the bondage of corruption,' Rom. 8:21. If the world shall be no more the habitation

of the saints, yet God will renew the world, that it may be a continual monument of his power. Now this burning of the world some place it in preparation before the day of judgment; but I conceive it is a consequent, for it seemeth to be an instrument of vengeance on the wicked. I will not say, with the schoolmen, the feculent and drossy part of this fire is reserved for the torment of the wicked in hell, but in general it shall be the instrument of God's vengeance upon them; so much is asserted, 2 Peter 3:7, 'The heavens and earth that now are, by the same word are kept in store, and reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and the perdition of ungodly men.' There are some that say this fire shall begin the day of judgment. Et causam dicent in flammis—The wicked shall plead their cause in flames; but this were to execute before the sentence. Sodom's fire was dreadful, but nothing to this burning. It was a dreadful sight when God rained hell out of heaven, and the poor tormented creatures ran screeching and yelling to and fro because of those flakes of fire and brimstone; but this fire shall come out of the throne of the Lord: Dan. 7:10, 'A fiery stream issued and came out from before him,' to consume his adversaries, and to remain in hell with them for evermore, which will be much more dreadful. God hath diluvium ignis, as well as aquæ, a deluge of fire as well as of water. As one saith very wittily, As at the first he drowned the world propter ardorem libidinis, because of the heat of lust, so in the end he will kindle a fire to burn the world propter teporem charitatis, because of the coldness of love. The object of your adulteries will be burnt; God will have nothing impure in the everlasting state, the world shall be purged with fire. Thus you have seen how the appearance of Christ will be glorious.

II. Why the appearance of Christ will be so glorious.

1. To recompense his own abasement. His first coming was in humility; he came riding upon the foal of an ass, but now on the clouds; they are as it were his royal chariot. Then he came with fishermen, a few apostles to be his messengers, but now he comes with angels. Then he came in the form of a servant to be judged; now he comes as the Son of God, to be the judge of all the world. When the day of judgment is spoken of, Christ is called the Son of man: Mat. 25:31, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory;' Mat. 26:64, 'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;' and Dan. 7:13, 'Behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.' Why so? He that was the Son of man, that came in such a mean condition at first, shall then be glorious, and so it taketh off the scandal of his present estate. He that appeared in so low a condition, that was betrayed, crucified, spat upon, pierced, dead, buried, then shall be crowned with glory and honour. When he came to teach us righteousness, he came as the Son of man: but when he comes to reward righteousness, then he comes as the Son of God.

2. That he might show himself to be fully discharged of sin. The glory bestowed upon his human nature by God the Father noteth his plenary absolution as our surety. We hear that he is taken up into glory, that God hath acquitted him, that 'he was taken from prison and from judgment,' Isa. 53:8; but then we shall see it with our eyes, when the Father sends him from heaven with power and great glory. At the first Christ came like a man, charged with sin, in the garb of a sinner; therefore it is said, Rom. 8:3, 'God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;' but then, Heb. 9:28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin.' The first time the world looked upon him as one that was forsaken, stricken, and smitten of God; but then he

comes as one that is honoured of God: his second coming shall make it evident that he is discharged of the debt which he took upon himself. The apostle doth not say, Those that look for him shall be without sin, but he shall be without sin. The discharge of our surety is enough; it is a sign the debt is paid.

3. He comes in great glory, that he may be as a pledge and pattern and cause of our glory. Christ's coming is still suited to his work. There is his first coming, and that is in humility, for we fell by pride; he came to redeem us, therefore he comes humbly and lowly, in the form of a servant, as one that came to suffer, not to ruffle it in the world, and tread upon the necks of kings. Then there is his spiritual coming into the heart to sanctify it; this coming is invisible; it is with great power, but hidden. But. when he comes to glorify us, his coming is suitable to his work, that is visible in power and great glory; therefore it is said, Col. 3:3, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear; then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Christ is to have all first, and we at secondhand, when he comes in grace: John 17:10, 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.' So we must be glorified at secondhand; first Christ, and then we.

4. Christ comes not simply to glorify us, but to bring the saints to heaven with the more state. O christians! remember Christ thinks he can never do you honour enough. Christ doth not send for us, but he will come in person: John 14:3, 'I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' Look, as the bridegroom comes with the youth and flower of the city, to bring in his bride in state, so Christ brings the flower of heaven, all his holy angels, to conduct us in state to our everlasting mansions.

5. He comes in glory, that all creatures might see his glory to the full. Men and angels were made for this spectacle, that they might behold the glory of Christ. It was evidenced in part at the resurrection: Rom. 1:4, 'And declared to be the Son of God with, power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' But that was but a private and more covert declaration to the Jews; and when it was published to the world in the gospel, many believed not. We have the spiritual evidences of it to faith, but not to sense and sight. But now the personal union shall fully and undeniably appear, which before appeared but in part; he is now declared to be the great God.

6. His appearing shall be glorious, because then Christ shall have the full conquest over all his enemies. Some of his enemies are still let alone for our exercise; Satan is not destroyed. The infernal spirits are held with the chains of an irresistible providence, and shall then be brought trembling into the presence of Christ: Jude 16, 'The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, to the judgment of the great day.' They are now in expectation of greater doom and terror: Mat. 8:29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The good angels come forth as Christ's companions, the evil angels as his prisoners. The saints shall judge angels as well as men: 1 Cor. 6:3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' Christ will have his people come and set their feet upon the necks of their enemies; for the present God hath a ministry for them; but though the devils now tempt, trouble, and molest the saints for their exercise, yet then the saints shall triumph over them, when they shall be brought like captives into Christ's presence.

Use 1. For information in two things—



1. That humility is the way to glory. This lesson we learn from the two comings of Christ, first in an humble manner, and then in a glorious manner. The devils aspired after greatness; they would be great and not good. The fallen angels set us an ill copy, but Christ came to set us a better. He came not from heaven to teach us to make worlds and work miracles, but to teach us to be humble and lowly: Mat. 11:29, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' The way to spiritual preferment is to be low and vile in our own eyes; as the ball that is beaten down riseth the higher.

2. We learn what cause we have to be patient under present abasement. Jesus Christ is contented for a while to lie hid, and not to show himself in all his glory till the end of the world. In the days of his flesh he was trampled upon by wicked men; and now he is in heaven, he is despised in his gospel, in his cause, and in his servants, though his person be above abuse; but he is content to tarry till the day of manifestation, when he will appear in all his glory; so should we.

Use 2.

1. Here is comfort to the godly. To you Christ's appearance is glorious, but not terrible; it is as light, but not as fire; the trumpet sounds, but it summons you to be crowned. The sign of the Son of man shows your Lord is come; it is as the shadow of the husband before his person appeareth: this is your Jesus. Certainly they that have an interest in him will not be afraid of him; for his angels are your guardians, his saints your companions; his appearance is to pronounce your pardon; a crown shall be set upon your heads in the face of all the world. That which is so formidable and dreadful to our thoughts in itself is all comfortable to a child of God. Christ comes as God, but still in the human nature, as your brother. If he be glorious

it is for your sakes, that you might be like him; he comes as a pattern of your glory.

2. Here is terror to them that lie in their sins. How can they hear of these things without astonishment? You that despise the still voice when God speaks to you by the angel of the church, what will you do when you hear the great trump which will be an alarm to death and execution? Your avenger is come. Christ's sign is not light, but terror to you. If you tremble not, you are worse than Felix, an heathen, for Felix's heart trembled when he heard of judgment to come, Acts 24:25; he had a more tender conscience. Nay, such as do not, they are worse than Satan; for the devils fear and tremble, James 2:19. Loose and carnal persons scoff at that at which devils tremble. It is storied of a king that wept when his brother came to him: being asked the reason, Oh! saith he, I that judge others must be judged myself! Shall not I tremble at the great trumpet that shall awaken the dead? Oh! take sanctuary in grace.

3. Here is advice to all. It is a good check to sin; it stays the boiling of the pot. Remember, when thou art in the career and heat of thy lusts, 'for all these things God will bring thee to judgment,' Eccles. 11:9. Whenever thou sinnest, thou art entering into the lists with Christ, as if thou wert stronger than he. But man, canst thou grapple with him? Then it is an engagement to repentance. When Jacob heard Esau was coming with a great power and force against him, he sends to make peace with him. You have heard that Christ comes in a glorious manner, and will be terrible to his enemies. Let us compromise all difference between us and God. Oh! go and make peace with him. It is Christ's own advice: Luke 14:32, 'Or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.' And repent, saith the apostle, 'that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the

Lord,' Acts 3:19. Then it is of use to make you constant in walking in the fear of the Lord: Eccles. 12:13, 14, 'Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man: for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' Especially it is an engagement to faithfulness in your calling, especially ministers: 2 Cor. 5:9, 'Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' Again, it urgeth you to keep the commandments; Christ will bear you out: 'Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Tim. 6:14. And then he presseth to diligence; he comes with crowns in his hands to reward all that are faithful to him: 1 Peter 5:4, 'And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away;' 2 Tim. 4:1, 'I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearance, and his kingdom;' 1 Thes. 2:19, 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?' The day of judgment respects our callings, especially as ministers; Christ's officers must give an account; and in whatever condition God hath set us in, wherein he expects a trial of our faithfulness, we are to consider what we must do.

## **SERMON XVIII**

Of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.—TITUS 2:13.

I COME to the description of the person who shall appear, who is described by a title of power and a title of mercy and love, because in Christ's person there is greatness and goodness mixed; for he is called 'the great God;' there is his attribute of power and majesty;

and then there is a comfortable name and title, 'Our Saviour.' That both these titles do belong to the same person, the fathers have abundantly, proved against the Arians. In the original there is but one article, τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, 'that great God and our Saviour.' We have just such another expression, 1 Cor. 15:24, 'He shall deliver up the kingdom to that God and Father,' τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ; that is, to God even the Father. So here 'the great God and Saviour,' that is, the God that is the Saviour. Besides, there is another argument that the words must be referred to the same person, because it is never said anywhere the Father doth appear, but only Jesus Christ, and therefore the appearance of the great God must needs be applied to Jesus Christ.

I shall handle these titles conjunctly and severally.

I. Look upon them conjunctly and together, and there you may observe the mingling of words of power and words of goodness and mercy in Christ's style and title. I observe it the rather because it is often found in scripture. But for what reasons are these titles of mercy and power thus mingled and coupled together?

1. For the comfort of the saints, to show that Christ in all his glory will not forget himself to be a Saviour. At the day of judgment, when he comes forth like the great God with all his heavenly train, then he will own us, and will be as tender of us as he was upon the cross. The butler in his advancement, when he was at court and well at ease, forgot Joseph in prison; but Christ in his advancement doth not grow shy and stately. We may have boldness in the great day, for he will not only come as 'the great God,' but also as 'our Saviour.' We have the like expression, Heb. 8:1, 2, 'We have such an high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens.' And what follows? 'A minister of the sanctuary.' Jesus Christ certainly

had a gracious welcome into heaven, and was exalted by the Father; but even now he is our faithful agent in heaven. This is made to be the excellency and height of his condescension, that he came in the form of a servant, in the fashion of an ordinary man, poor and despicable. Then he came to do the church service, and now he is gone to heaven in all his glory; still he is there as a servant, as one that is to negotiate with God for holy things, to tender our prayers to the Lord, and to pass our blessings to us; this is Christ's employment in heaven.

2. To show the mystery of Christ's person, in whom the two natures meet; there is not only the majesty of the Godhead, but also the human nature by which he claims kin of us. I observe it because the scripture takes notice of it: Isa. 9:6, 'To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' What a mixture of titles is here! He is called 'a child,' yet 'the everlasting Father;' 'Wonderful,' yet the 'Counsellor;' one that is intimate with his people, he gives sweet counsel to them. He is called 'the mighty God,' and then presently 'the Prince of Peace.' Christ's person is the greatest mystery and riddle in the world; he is God and yet man. He is, as the apostle saith, Heb. 7:3, 'Without father and without mother,' as Melchizedec; yet he had both father and mother, a father in heaven, and a mother upon earth. He was without mother as to his divinity, and without father as to his manhood. Another place where the same method is observed: Zech. 13:7, 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my fellow.' He is called 'the Man,' but yet God calls him 'his fellow;' our brother, and God's son. There are so many mysteries that meet in Christ's person, that under the law he could not be figured and represented by one sacrifice, Lev. 16:15, 21. There were two sacrifices chosen to represent Christ; there was the goat to

be slain for the sin-offering, and then the scapegoat; one was not enough, because there are in Christ two natures—a God that could not die, and a man that could not overcome death. The goat that was slain showed he was crucified in the flesh, and the goat that was let go showed that he did yet live by the power of God: 2 Cor. 13:4, 'For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.' Or as another apostle hath it: 1 Peter 3:18, 'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.' There was his human nature as he was man, that he might die to answer the goat that was slain; then his divine nature that he might live and overcome death.

3. To compare his two comings, and to show that Christ doth not forget his old work. His first coming was in humility, to save, not to judge: John 12:47, 'I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.' So 1 John 4:14, 'We have seen and do testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.' But then his second coming is in more majesty; then he comes as a God to judge. To consider him as a severe judge, that would make our heart tremble; but to consider him as a Saviour, that is comfortable; then he remembers his old relation for the elect's sake. In short, he is 'the great God, and our Saviour,' to show his double work and office at the last day; he is 'a Saviour' to his own people when he comes to show himself to be 'the great God,' to punish the wicked that would not accept of grace and salvation.

4. To give us a taste and pledge both of his willingness and ability to do us good. He is a mighty God, and yet a Saviour: certainly there is a difference between God and man. If we pardon and do good, it is out of need, because we dare not do otherwise; but Jesus Christ is the mighty God, strong enough to revenge, yet our Saviour, gracious enough to save and pardon. The coupling of these words shows that Christ is not a Saviour out of necessity, but good-will. Men forbear

their enemies out of policy, not pity: 2 Sam. 3:19, 'These men the sons of Zeruah are too hard for me.' Power makes us cruel. Who finds his enemy, and slays him not? 'If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?' 1 Sam. 24:19. Among men observe it, and you will find the weakest are most pitiful and merciful. Why? Because they need pity and commiseration themselves from others. But now Jesus Christ, that hath the greatest power, hath also the greatest mercy and the greatest love. He is the mighty God, but yet the Prince of Peace. He will be a mighty God rather in saving than in destroying; though he hath all power in his hands, yet he will exercise it in acts of mercy. We abuse our power to acts of oppression and violence. Oh! when shall we learn of Christ to be mighty and yet saving; there cannot be a happier conjunction than when greatness and goodness, power and good-will, are met together. Remember, power is only given us to do good with it; and to do good is some resemblance of Christ. What a comfort is this to the faithful, that Christ is 'the great God,' and also 'a Saviour,' both able and willing to do them good, and to bestow abundance of grace upon them!

5. To show what Christ is to the saints. Whenever he shows himself a Saviour, there he doth also show himself to be a mighty God. Together with acts of grace and favour there are issued out acts of power and strength; there is a concomitant operation of power, together with an act of pardon and grace. I find the scripture speaking of this; he pardoneth as a strong God: Micah 7:18, 'Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?' &c. In the original, who is  $\text{לֵא}$  which signifies a strong God like unto thee: and so Junius renders it. So Exod. 34:6, 7, 'The Lord, the Lord God,'  $\text{לֵא}$ , the strong God, 'merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.' Moses plainly alludes to it: Num. 14:17, 18, 'Now I beseech thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as

thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.' Whenever God shows grace in pardoning sin, he shows power also in subduing sin. So Ps. 62:11, 'God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongs to God.' And presently, ver. 12, 'Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.' Both these are dispensed together. Those that come to God for relief are under a double trouble—distempered affections as well as a guilty conscience; therefore know for your comfort, mercy and power belong to God, and in the dispensation they usually go together: 2 Peter 1:3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.' Christians, if you go to God aright, you go to him not only for life, that you may be respited from destruction, but for godliness; not only for acts of grace, but for acts of power; as wrath and power are suited to the reprobate, so mercy and power to the godly.

6. To show that Christ is not only a desirable friend, but a dreadful adversary. You must close with him as a Saviour, or else you shall find him to your cost to be a mighty God. You must submit to him or be destroyed; you must accept of mercy or feel the power of his wrath. And thus in scripture Christ is represented with a golden sceptre and with an iron mace, to dash his enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel. You must touch his golden sceptre, or feel the weight of his iron rod. He that saveth can punish, and crush as well as comfort. Again, we read of a banner of love and of a flying roll of curses; and therefore, as there is mercy and sweetness in Christ, so he is represented as a dreadful adversary. Usually we presume on God's mercy and fear man's power, but this should not be so. Oh! observe the counsel the Lord gives: Isa. 27:5, 'Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me.' Blessed God! who is able to grapple and deal with thee in thy strength? but we overcome by yielding. Let us humble ourselves betimes; that is taking hold of



his strength, and making power our friend. It is an allusion, not to a wrestler, for so how can our hands be strong and our hearts endure in the day he shall deal with us? but to a suppliant; when a parent or master is ready to strike, the child takes hold of his arm, and seeks terms of peace, and entreats him to pacify his wrath; so saith the Lord, Make strength your friend, then his power, which otherwise would be your enemy is engaged to you.

7. To preserve that mixed affection which best becomes the present state we are in. Our state is mixed, and we act best under a mixed affection. God would have us not only love him, but fear him; and therefore he is represented as a mighty God as well as a gracious Saviour, that we may come to him with reverence, and yet with confidence. That is the proper temper of a gracious spirit in all our addresses to God: Ps. 2:10, 'Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.' Fear mixed and tempered with love is most regular, so is love that is guided with fear; therefore, when you pray to him, and worship him, and serve him, remember he is the 'great God;' but lest that should breed bondage and dejection in your spirits, remember he is also 'our Saviour.' How sweet would this be, if we could but make use of both these titles whenever we have to do with him! Our affections should be mixed as Christ's titles are. It is said of the church, Acts 9:31, 'They walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.' This doth well together—fear God and rejoice in God. Do not dally with a Saviour, and please yourselves in cherishing a loose comfort, when you neglect duty, and are touched with no awe of God; and then do not indulge a legal dejection; the 'great God,' whom you dread and reverence is your 'Saviour.' Therefore are the titles of Christ mixed, to beget a sweet temperature of fear and love. So much for the conjunct consideration of the words.

II. Let us come to handle them apart particularly, but briefly—

First, Of the style of his power, 'The great God.' Here is a pregnant testimony of the deity of Christ.

Doct. That Jesus Christ, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is the great God.

He is called 'the great God,' partly in opposition to those λεγόμενοι θεοὶ, that are only called gods, the vanities of the gentiles. There are many that are called gods: 1 Cor. 8:5, 6, 'For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' And partly in opposition to the gods of man's making; so the devil is gotten to be a god: 'The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not,' 2 Cor. 4:4. So we read of those 'whose god is their belly,' Phil. 3:19. As the strength of men's desires run out, so they set up many gods, either Mammon or Bacchus. And partly in opposition to those representative gods, magistrates, who are called gods: Ps. 82:6, 'I said ye are gods.' They resemble God in their power and sovereignty, and administration of justice, and large opportunity of doing good. But the chief reason why Christ is called 'the great God' is to show that he is not inferior to the Father; to remove the scandal of his abasement; he is not a God by courtesy or grant, but by nature, equal in power, and majesty, and glory, to God the Father.

To confirm this I shall prove—(1.) That considering his work, he ought to be God; no inferior mediator could serve the turn; (2.) That he is God, and able to perform this work.

First, Consider his work, and so he ought to be God. The work of the Mediator could be despatched by no inferior agent. Consider the Mediator in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and king.

1. For his prophetic office. As a prophet, he was to be greater than all prophets and apostles. It is above man's capacity to be the great doctor of the church. In regard of his outward work, the discovery of the gospel, and of the riches of God's grace, it could be made by none but he that was in the bosom of the Father: John 1:18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' None could tell us what bowels, what affections, what purposes of grace the Father had concerning sinners, but Christ that was in his bosom: Mat. 11:27, 'No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.' As an external lawgiver in the gospel, Christ, the great doctor of the church, ought to be authentic, a lawgiver from whose sentence there is no appeal, a lord in his own house: Heb. 3:4–6, 'For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house.' Moses was but a servant, who received the external law from Christ upon Mount Sinai; it was Christ whose voice shook the mount, Heb. 12:26. But chiefly in regard of his inward work, as he is to be a fountain of wisdom to all the elect: 1 Cor. 1:30, 'But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom.' Men may teach the ear, but Christ must teach the heart. Blind men cannot see the sun though it shine ever so clearly. Light has come into the world, but darkness comprehends it not; we must have eyes as well as light, now it is only divine power can open the eye of our understanding, and give us spiritual illumination.

2. As for his kingly office a finite power would never suffice for that. Christ is to break the force of enemies, to raise the dead, to pour out the Spirit, to bestow grace and glory; all these are Christ's donatives as king of the church. As a king he is to be an original fountain of life to all the elect: 'As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me,' John 6:57. All these things are the glory of God, which he will not give to another, and they cannot be performed by any but God. The creatures are limited; they have not such a vastness in them, that out of their fulness we might receive grace for grace, as we do from Christ: John 1:16, 'Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.'

3. For his priestly office, this shows he ought to be God. Of this there be two acts—his oblation and intercession.

[1.] For his oblation and sacrifice, he must offer up himself, one for all, and that but once, and that to expiate sin, and procure the favour of God for ever; now who could do this but God? He must offer up himself; he must be priest as well as sacrifice, therefore must have a power over his own life, to lay it down, and take it up; and that no creature hath; for whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. And thus had Jesus Christ an absolute power of life and death over that nature he assumed; therefore it is said, Heb. 9:14, 'Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.' Then one must be offered for all: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'If one died for all, then were all dead.' Therefore that person which suffered was to be virtually all those for whom he suffered, that is, infinitely as good and better than all. Look, as they said to David, Thou art better than ten thousand of us, so Jesus Christ, that was given one for all, must be such a person as is better than all men. A general given in ransom will redeem thousands of private soldiers; so the worth of Christ's person made him equivalent in dignity to the worth of all those whose persons he sustained. In all

ages his death is a standing remedy; God had more satisfaction than if angels and men had been made a sacrifice. And mark, it was done but once. The wages of sin was eternal death; now something there must be to recompense and countervail the eternity of the punishment, and nothing could counterpoise this but the infiniteness and excellency of Christ's person; therefore we are said to be redeemed by the blood of God: Acts 20:28, 'Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;' that is, with the blood of that person that was God. It was necessary he should come out of his sufferings, for if he were always suffering we could have no assurance that God was satisfied. If our surety were not taken from prison and judgment, how should we know the debt was paid? Isa. 53:8. How shall this be reconciled, that he is to suffer but once, and but a while, and yet to do that which should countervail eternity? It was because of the value of his person, as a payment in gold takes up lesser room than if paid in silver. Then his aim in all was to expiate sin, and nothing but an infinite good could remedy an infinite evil. The person wronged is infinite, so is the person suffering; and then he was not only ἀντίλυτρον, a ransom to redeem us from hell, but ἀντάλλαγμα, a price given to God, to purchase for us heaven and eternal glory. An ordinary surety, if he pays the debt, he frees the debtor from bonds, and hath done his work; but Jesus Christ was no ordinary surety; he was to bring us to grace and favour with God, and to merit heaven for us; now such a person as could lay an obligation upon God must needs be infinite.

[2.] Then for intercession, the other act of his priesthood. He that intercedes with God must be God, to know our wants and necessities. As the high priest had the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast and shoulders, Exod. 39:8–14, so Jesus Christ hath the names of all the elect; he knows their desires, wants, conflicts; he is to negotiate with God in behalf of all believers, that he may despatch blessings

suitable to their state. Now who can do this but God, who knows the hearts and tries the reins? Who could know our needs, our wants, our thoughts, sins, prayers, groans, desires, purposes, throughout all the world? Who can wait upon our business day and night, and continually interpose, that wrath do not break out upon us, but such an all-sufficient Saviour as he is?

Secondly, That he is God, and so fitted for this work. In times of delusion it is good to settle foundations, and give you grounds of faith. It may be a discourse upon the godhead of Christ men may think unnecessary: 1 John 5:20, 'This is the true God and eternal life;' Isa. 9:6, 'The mighty God;' and here in the text he is called 'the great God;' Rom. 9:5, 'God blessed for ever.' These proofs are so pregnant that they need no illustration. And certainly he is not God by grant or courtesy, but it doth unavoidably follow, if he be God, he must be so by nature, for the Lord will not give his glory to another. Nay, Col. 2:9, 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' that is, essentially; not only divine qualities, such as are infused into us, but the whole essence of the Godhead was in him as in its proper residence. Again, Phil. 2:6, 'Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' It was not a usurpation of another's right. And you know this doctrine Christ himself preached: John 5:18, 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.' Certainly when Christ said God was his Father, he did not mean it in an ordinary sense, as he is our God and Father, but as his eternal everlasting Son. Thus Christ is the great God.

Use 1. Let us observe the love of Christ in becoming man, and let us improve it.

1. Observe it. Men show love when they have another's picture about their necks. What love did Christ show when he took our natures! To see the great God in the form of a servant, hanging upon the cross, this is wonderful condescension. Christ's incarnation was a glorious contrivance: 1 Tim. 3:16, 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' If God had not revealed it, it would have been blasphemy for us to think it. Angels stoop to see it, the prophets studied it again, how should the saints admire it! Among the friars they count it a mighty honour done to their order if a great prince, when he is weary of the world, cometh and taketh their habit, and dieth in their habit. Certainly it is a mighty honour to mankind that the Son of God should take upon him the nature of man, and die in our nature, and that the Word should not only be made flesh, but be made sin, and made a curse for us.

2. Improve it.

[1.] Let us be desirous to be made partakers of his nature, as he is of our nature: 2 Peter 1:4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye may be partakers of the divine nature.' Christ's partaking of our nature was his abasement; the sun of righteousness went backward; but our partaking of the divine nature is our preferment.

[2.] Let us use ourselves more honourably for Christ's sake. The Philistines would no more tread on that threshold on which their idol Dagon fell, 1 Sam. 5:5. Shall we defile that nature which the Son of God assumed? Certainly 'every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour,' 1 Thes. 4:4.

Use 2. Here is an invitation to press us to come to Christ, or by Christ to God, Christ is worth a thousand of us. We are to seek a match for our master's Son. Our way to win you is to tell you what he is, that

those who have given up their names to him may keep themselves as pure virgins till his coming: 2 Cor. 11:2, 'I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ.' Now, that you may be wrought upon, I will tell you what he is. He is God-man in one person; he is man, that you may not be afraid of him; and God, that he may do you good. He is the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the heir of all things, the Saviour of the world, a proper object for your faith: 1 Peter 1:21, 'Who by him do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.' He knows your wants, and is able to supply them; yea, 'he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; Heb. 7:25. Though we are unworthy, yet he needeth no portion with us; we can bring nothing to him, but he hath enough in himself, I am God all-sufficient; as Esther had all things for her purification given her at the king's cost. Nay, it is danger to neglect him: Heb. 12:25, 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.' It is God woeth you; he will take you with nothing; you bring him nothing but necessity, but he will pay all your debts. Nay, nothing can hurt you as long as he is on your side: Rom. 8:31, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Do not leave, then, till you can say as Thomas, John 20:28, 'My Lord and my God.' Take him, but give him the honour of a God, adoration, invocation, faith, and love.

### Use 3. Direction.

1. If we would see God, let us look on Christ as we look on the sun in a bason of water. Christ is the character of his Father's person: Heb. 1:3, 'Who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.'



2. If we would see sin without horror and despair, let us look on Christ; all the heavenly powers could not bring us into favour with God again.

Secondly, For the title of mercy and love. Christ is a Saviour as well as the great God. How is Christ the Saviour? Take it thus, positively as well as privatively; he doth not only free us from misery, but gives us all spiritual blessings: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' As he frees us from misery, so he gives us everlasting life: John 3:16, 'That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Then he is a saviour, not only by way of deliverance, but by way of prevention; he doth not only break the snare, but keeps our feet from falling; he not only cures our diseases, as a physician when we are sick, but he leads, guides, and keeps us as a shepherd. We do not take notice of preventive mercy. How many times might we fall if we had not a saviour? Prevention is better than escape; better never meet with danger than be delivered out of danger. There is an invisible guard; we are not sensible of it, but the devil knows and is sensible of it: Job 1:10, 'Thou hast made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side.' Again, he is a saviour by way of merit and by way of power; not only to rescue us from Satan, but to redeem us to God. If a man would deliver a condemned person, it is not enough to take him by force out of the executioner's hands, but he must, satisfy the judge. Thus hath Christ done, not only delivered us from the power of darkness, but God in Christ is well-pleased; he hath satisfied his Father's wrath. Again, before his exaltation he redeemed us, then he deserved our salvation, and afterwards he works our salvation. When he was upon earth he was a saviour by merit, therefore it is said we have salvation by his death: 1 Thes. 5:9, 'God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by

our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.' And after his exaltation he works out our salvation, and so we are saved by his life: Rom. 5:10, 'Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' Living and dying he is ours, that so living and dying we might be his. Again, he saves not only for a while, so as we might be lost afterwards, but for ever; therefore it is called eternal salvation: Heb. 5:9, 'And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.' He saves us not only from temporal misery, but from hell and damnation; he saves not only the body, but the soul. Nay, he saves not only from hell, but the very fear of it: Heb. 2:15, 'And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' He not only delivers us from the hurt of death, but the fear of it. He doth not only give us heaven, but hope, and frees us from bondage and despair. He not only saves us from the evils after sin, but from the evil of sin. So Mat. 1:21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins;' and there is the chief point of his salvation. In short, he not only saves us in part, but to the utmost: Heb. 7:25, 'Wherefore he is able also to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.' He not only gives us grace at first, but all things that are necessary to life and godliness.

Use 1. Bless God for Christ, that he hath taken the care of our salvation into his own hands. He would not trust an angel with it, none was fit for it but him: Isa. 59:16, 'He saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him.' Christ did as it were look down from heaven, and say, Alas! there are poor creatures like to perish for want of a saviour; I will go down and help them myself. Look, as when Jonah saw the storm, he said, 'Take me up, and cast me into the sea, and then shall the sea be calm to you,' Jonah 1:12; so when the Lord Christ saw the tempest raised, he

said, Cast me into the sea. 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,' Heb. 10:9. The storm was raised for Jonah's sake, but we raised the storm, and yet Christ would be cast in to appease it; therefore bless God for Christ.

Use 2. Get an interest in him. Oh! be not quiet till you are able to say, Our Saviour. You can take no comfort in the great God until the next title follows, and you can call Christ your Saviour; but that is matter of joy and comfort: Luke 1:46, 47, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.'

But what shall we do that we may apply this?

1. Reject all other saviours: 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' Acts 4:12. Mark, when God threatened a deluge to sweep away the old world, there was no safety but in the ark; if the world had devised other ships, yet they would not hold out against the flood; so whatever you do, unless you close with Christ, and are grafted and implanted into Christ, as members of his body (for he is only the saviour of his body), you are not safe. But especially take heed of making a saviour of self, that we are wont to set up instead of Christ, of setting up the merit of thy works, and the power of thy nature; the one renounceth the humiliation of Christ, the other his exaltation. Be at a loss till you close with Christ, for Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. The sinking disciples cried, 'Lord, save us, we perish,' Mat. 8:25. It is long ere God bringeth us to this. We never look after Christ till we are ready to perish and be undone. Why should we make choice of a saviour but in case of danger? Faith necessarily implies this, a renouncing ourselves, not in words, but in the temper and frame of our hearts. You cannot practise swimming on shore or on the firm land, but then

we strive to swim when we are ready to perish in the flood; so when you are utterly lost in yourselves, then you will look after Christ.

2. Be earnest with God for an interest in Christ, and for the manifestation of it. Cry out with David, Ps. 35:3, 'Say to my soul, I am thy salvation.' You must choose Christ as a Saviour. Faith is a consent to take Christ as God offers him; you must consent to the articles of the covenant of grace, that you will have no other Saviour but Christ: Lam. 3:24, 'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul.' And go to God that he would ratify your choice by his consent; desire God that he would say, Amen, that Christ might be thy Saviour. You had better be a beast than a man if you have not an interest in this salvation. The death of a beast is the end of his woe and labour, but then yours begins. The greatest part of salvation is to be delivered from evil to come; therefore be earnest with God, that your interest in this salvation might be cleared up.

## **SERMON XIX**

Who gave himself for us, &c.—TITUS 2:14.

IN this paragraph I have observed—(1.) The teacher; (2.) The lesson; (3.) The encouragements to learning. The teacher is the grace of God. The lesson is the whole duty of our heavenly calling. The encouragements to learning are twofold—some taken from the hope of eternal life, and some from the end and effect of Christ's death. I have finished the former, and now come to the latter sort, taken from the end and effect of Christ's death. So that, whether we look forward or backward, we still meet with obligations to obedience. Forward, there is a glorious and blessed hope; backward, there is a great obligation established upon the creature, 'The Lord Christ gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity.' Certainly there is a

lawful use of hope that hath a great influence upon grace, but the great principle of the gospel is gratitude and thankfulness to Christ; therefore let us look upon this second encouragement. We enter upon other services out of hopes, but we enter upon Christ's service out of thankfulness and gratitude; it is an ingenuous service.

In this verse you have—

1. Christ's act—'He gave himself for us.'

2. His aim, 'To redeem us,' &c; and this is expressed partly by the privative part, 'To redeem us from all iniquity;' and partly by the positive part of it, 'And purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Here is redemption and sanctification. I observe it the rather because both parts are suited to the exhortation. There was the privative part, 'Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;' and suitably hereunto we are 'Redeemed from all iniquity;' then the positive part, 'Living soberly, righteously, godly.' So Christ did not only die to free us from hell, but to make us holy; where we have the inward constitution, 'To purify unto himself a peculiar people;' and the outward conversation, or the sign and manifestation of it, 'Zealous of good works.' All these things are arguments to enforce the matter in hand. There is the act of Christ. Shall Christ die for us, and we cherish his enemy? Shall he be our Saviour, and we hug and cherish that which is contrary to him, worldly lusts and ungodliness in the heart? Then his aim, he died to free us from the bondage of sin; therefore they that would have their sins live are said to put their Redeemer to shame, and make his kindness void. Then Christ died to make us a peculiar people, and shall we live as the rest of the multitude do? We expect great benefit from him, therefore certainly we must be holy, and not pick and choose how we would have him a Saviour unto us.

I begin with the first thing, Christ's act, 'He gave himself for us;' that is, to be an expiatory sacrifice. He gave himself to die for us: John 17:19, 'I sanctify myself for their sakes;' that is, set apart myself as a sacrifice;' 1 Tim. 2:6, 'Who gave himself a ransom for all.'

The point is, Christ's willingness to suffer for the fallen and lost creature.

1. I shall demonstrate it by some expressions by which it is discovered.

2. Give the grounds why Christ gave himself by such a willing resignation to be our propitiatory sacrifice, to be a ransom to God.

1. For the expressions of his willingness; and there I shall begin with his eternal longings to be with the sons of men before ever there was hill or mountain in the world: Prov. 8:31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' Mark, long before ever the world was, Jesus Christ was feasting himself with the thoughts of his own grace, and what he would do for men. He desired the making of the world, and fixing the bounds of our habitation, that he might be with us; there was his end. Angels were the workmanship of his hands as well as men; nay, in their frame and constitution they were more noble creatures than man; yet Christ doth not say, My delight was to be with angels, but with the sons of men. I was thinking of the day I should come into the world, and die for men, and purchase exceeding grace for them. The next expression is Ps. 40:7, 8, when God's decree came to be expressed and made known to the church, see what Christ saith, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' For the understanding of this place, you must know the divine justice is there introduced as proposing its demands; God in his justice, as it were, speaking thus

to Christ, Son, I am weary of sacrifice and burnt-offerings: hitherto I have showed myself gracious to the world, whilst burnt-offerings stood; now I resolve to show myself just; as the apostle explains this, Rom. 3:26, 'To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just.' As long as God accepted of burnt-offerings, he was a God of patience and forbearance, and not willing to execute his wrath upon creatures; burnt-offerings served the turn. But, saith God, the world shall know, though I pardon, yet I will be just; therefore now you must take a body, man's blood is tainted, and you must be formed in fashion like one of them, and stand in the sinner's stead. I shall expect from you satisfaction for every elect person; you must give your cheeks to the nippers, and your back to the smiters; you must be tempted by the devil, hunted and baited by men, to be responsible to my just wrath. The decree is passed, a body is prepared, you must take it, and go down to the sons of men; you are the sinner in the law if you take this body. These were the demands of God to Christ. Now, saith Christ, 'Lo I come to do thy will.' Father, I am willing to stand in their stead, to accept of all, to be responsible to thy justice. So when Christ was come in the flesh: John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' What was the work for which God sent Christ? Sad work, to make reconciliation for sinners, to die in their stead; and yet, saith Christ, 'This is my meat.' Look, as a hungry man prizeth his food, so doth the Lord Christ value and prize his work, nay, infinitely more. Christ himself was then hungry, and had sent to the market to buy provision, but he had now met with other meat to eat, he was dealing with a poor lost soul. Nay, we have not yet the full of the expression, for Christ seems to speak there by way of excellency; this was his choice dish, the diet that suited with his appetite. God hath vouchsafed us great store of creatures, but some meats we relish better than others; as Isaac loved his venison, that was meat for his tooth. And when we come to a feast, every one saith of the dish he

most affects, This is my meat; so Christ seems to speak, 'My meat,' by way of eminency; that is the dish I affect, that my soul longs to taste of; it is to do my Father's work, and to be employed for the salvation of sinners. Nay, yet further; Christ seems to speak by way of appropriation, 'My meat;' that is, mine alone; he alone tasted of this cup. At this table none eat but he, none was to taste of his Father's wrath but he, none was to drink of this bitter cup but he. Again, Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' The baptism Christ speaks of there was the baptism of blood, to make a laver of his own blood. He was about to make a bath for sinners, to wash our garments white; and he thought he never could soon enough empty his veins, and go to the last work wherewith our redemption was to be accomplished, to close up all with his death: I am straitened and troubled in spirit till the time come. Another emphatical expression we have, Luke 22:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.' Why was Christ so earnest to eat that passover? Because it was the last; it was a passover that was sauced with gall and vinegar, much more sharp than that which the Jews offered him upon the cross; it was the immediate forerunner of his agonies and bitter sorrows in the garden; yet 'With desire have I desired it.' It is a Hebraism: Oh! my soul vehemently and earnestly hath longed for this time. Another expression we have, Mat. 16:22, 23. Peter had dissuaded Christ from suffering: 'Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.' Christ rebuked him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan;' compared with Mark 4:10. With the same indignation that he rebukes the devil tempting him to idolatry, he rebukes Peter dissuading him from suffering. His heart was set upon the work of our redemption, therefore Peter is thus rebuked. Another expression of his willingness is his bidding Judas hasten his work: John 13:27, 'What thou dost, do quickly.' Certainly it was not out of an approbation of his sin, but a testimony of his love; the sooner the better. Christ,



when he considered that poor creatures had souls to save, and all was not finished; thought the traitor was too slow, for he desired to get his body upon the cross, and finish all his work for our salvation. Again, his behaviour at his death showed his willingness. Christ had the command of legions of angels, but would not suffer one disciple to draw his sword. He might have prevented all, and have withdrawn himself from their fury, for he foreknew what would befall him. He had been discoursing with his disciples, and encouraging them to bear the trial patiently, yet doth not forsake the place of his usual resort; he goes to the garden where he knew Judas would betray him, being willing to despatch all. One expression more we have, which gives you an account of his patience in suffering: Isa. 53:7, 'He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.' The poor sheep when under the shearer's hands is meek and dumb, and the lamb goes to the slaughter without howling and crying; so doth the Lord Christ go to the altar quietly without struggling.

II. For the grounds of this willingness. They are his own love and his obedience to his Father's will. Sometimes it is said that Christ gave himself, and sometimes it is said that God the Father gave Christ. Christ gave himself: Gal. 1:4, 'Who gave himself for our sins.' God the Father is said to give him: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.' In some places it is made an act of his own personal love: Gal. 2:20, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me; and Eph. 5:25, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.' At other times it is made to be an act of obedience: Phil. 2:8, 'He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross;' and John 10:18, 'This commandment I received of my Father.' Indeed there was a concurrence of both, of love in Christ, and obedience to his Father.

1. There was a love to us. Christ was drawn to this work with no other cords but his own bowels. It was love that brought him out of, heaven, and love nailed him to the cross, and love laid him in the grave, and made him free among the dead. If you ask, Upon what errand came the Son of God out of the bosom of the Father? I answer Upon a design of love. Of what sickness he died? I answer—Of love; not by constraint certainly; though he died a violent death, it was merely by consent: John 10:18, 'No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself;' Rev. 1:5, 'To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.'

2. There was his obedience to God. As Jesus Christ was God, so by one and the same will doth the Father give Christ, and the Son give himself; for the Father's will is his will: they are one in essence, therefore one in will, and one in operation; and what the Father doth, the Son doth, because of the unity of essence: John 5:19, 'What things soever the Father doth these also doth the Son likewise.' But this is not all; consider Jesus Christ is mediator; so there is a consent of obedience to the Father, and so as the Father appoints he presents himself as the price and sacrifice for sin. *Homines, non propter homines, sed propter Deum dilexit*—He loved men, not for men's sake but God's. The meaning is, the goodness of the creature is not the cause of Christ's love, but his love to God; and that gives us sure ground of hope. Christ loves us not for our own sakes, but for his Father's sake.

Now give me leave to show why it was necessary that Christ should give up himself; partly out of love, and partly out of obedience.

1. It was necessary that he should give up himself out of obedience, partly that his love might be rational. The Lord is a God of judgment, a wise God, and all he doth is with reason. Now the only supreme

reason why Christ loves us is the will of God and the command of his Father. Solomon saith, Prov. 17:18, 'A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.' How is that? That is, before his friend asks or desires it: it is a fault to be over-forward and prodigal of favours. It is a rational love that is in Christ, and partly he doth it out of obedience, to preserve a respect to God the Father. Christ loves us for his sake, and therefore we should love God in Christ the more. And partly it is the wisdom of God that the reasons of love should lie without man himself, and be found among the divine persons, because of the Father's good-will and command.

2. It was convenient that Christ should give himself out of his own love, partly that Christ might be a fit mediator. It cannot stand with God's justice to punish an innocent person for a nocent, unless he himself be willing; therefore, that Christ might be a mediator, he had a will of his own, otherwise God could not in honour exact the debt of Christ, but that there was a voluntary susception; he took it upon himself. The Lord Christ, when he condescended to the Father's motion, when by his own will he gave up himself, and set himself wholly apart to be our Redeemer, God might justly require the debt of him. When Paul would take Onesimus' debt upon himself, Philemon might justly require it of him: Philem. 18, 19, 'If he have wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.' Or I may illustrate it thus: In the case of Jonah, the mariners were loath to throw him overboard; but when he saw the tempest, and said, 'Cast me into the sea, and there shall be a calm,' then they took him up and cast him in. So when the Lord Christ saw the tempest of his Father's wrath that was rising against sinners, he saith, Cast me into the sea. Indeed there was a difference; the tempest there was for Jonah's sake, but this was for our sakes: 'I saw there was no intercessor,

therefore my own arm brought salvation.' The Father's ordination had no place or room without Christ's voluntary susception and undertaking. And partly too to set off the worth of his love. Willingness and freeness commends a kindness, and makes it great. What more free than a gift? Therefore his passion was voluntary. Extorted courtesies lose their value, therefore Jesus Christ gave up himself to be a sacrifice for us. But the chiefest reason is this, Christ willingly offered up himself, that all things might come freely and sweetly from his Father to us, that so God might 'rejoice over us to do us good,' as the expression is, Jer. 32:41. All a wicked man's blessings seem to be extorted from providence; they have them not from the heart of God, but from God's anger, as the murmuring Israelites had quails. But now, that we might have mercies from God's heart, and not from his hand only, that mercy might come from love, and all run in a free channel to us, and as a gift, therefore did Christ give himself.

Object. But did not Christ pray that the cup might pass from him? And did not he fear, and his human nature stagger and recoil at the greatness of his sufferings? We read of 'prayers, tears, and strong cries,' Heb. 5:7; and therefore how was Christ so willing?

Ans. Christ's prayers were rather for our example and comfort than to decline the suffering: Heb. 4:15, 'He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' He was to show himself true man, and therefore was to have human love, human abhorrences, and human aversations. He was to put on all the innocent passions of our nature; it was not convenient Christ should suffer as a stock and dead lump of flesh. In short, in his sufferings Christ was to discover a double relation—he was to act the part of a private person and of a public person. Of a private person, to show the verity of his human nature; and of a public person, to discover his willingness to die for the elect. Now he doth both these. It is the nature of man to shun that which is

grievous and painful to him; he was to look upon his sufferings as contrary to the perfection and liberty of his human nature, and so he was to pray, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' But now, as a public person and as mediator, so he was extremely willing to do this office of love for us. The innocent passions of his human nature discover the greatness of his sufferings, they made his manhood recoil and stagger, as being amazed at the dreadful of that he was to suffer. And though his private human nature be allowed to speak, 'Father, let this cup pass,' yet his public relation hath a casting voice, and his submission as a public person showeth his willingness to endure these sufferings; therefore he saith, 'Not my will, but thine be done,' and freely yields up himself. These fears of Christ certainly were no shrinking from the work, but only a natural consternation and retirement from what is dreadful. Christ's fears were a part of that fire whereon our sin-offering was to be burnt and roasted; and therein he showed his willingness, that he freely gave up himself to be scorched with those dreadful apprehensions of God's wrath. For it is very notable his agonies came not upon him before he pleased; for it is said, Mat. 26:38, he went into the garden, and then began to be sorrowful. Christ could have kept it off longer, and brought it on sooner. And then his tears were but the overflowing of his love; he had an ocean in his heart, and suffered it to flow out in his eyes; it was part of the deluge wherein he would drown the world of sin; therefore these do not disparage, but increase his willingness.

Use 1. To press us to thankfulness. Here are many circumstances—the giver, the gift, the manner of giving, the end of giving and the persons to whom.

1. The giver, and that is Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever. Usually men make a market of their courtesies, they give to them that can give again and make them recompense; but he is that

blessed Lord to whom nothing could accrue from us. In short, the Father gave him, and he gave himself. There is infinite love in that God the Father gave him: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.' It tells you not how, but leaves you to wonder and admire at it. I would represent it a little to you, and therefore let us measure it by created affections. The affections of the Virgin Mary to Christ is the fittest glass I can represent it by. From her he took his substance, that had the interest of an earthly mother. Now, how was she troubled! What commotion was in her bowels! The Holy Ghost expresseth it: Luke 2:35, 'Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.' She was like one wounded to the heart when she saw Christ hung upon the cross, yet he took but his human body from her. If there was such a commotion in the bowels of the Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord, what then was it for God the Father to give up his only Son? His love was infinite, yet he gave up Christ. We read of some fathers who have much denied themselves. Abraham offereth Isaac, Jephthah offereth his daughter, Lot would have given his daughters to save his guests. These are but obscure shadows of the Father's giving up of Christ, in whom he took infinite complacency and contentment. And then bless God for this willing condescension of the Lord Christ, that his heart was so taken with the motion the Father makes to him: Son, you must be responsible to my justice, and take a body. Christ replied, 'Lo, I come;' and Isa. 53:11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' To bring sons to glory cost the Lord Christ much travail of soul; but, he saith, All this is well enough; if he shall see the fruit of it, It is enough, I am satisfied; this is enough for all the temptations in the wilderness, enough for all the agonies in the garden, enough for all the sorrows on the cross, if a few creatures might be saved and brought to God. And consider, the Father's giving, and the Son's giving, they are not contrary, and do not destroy one another. The Father's love doth not

lessen Christ's, but commend it, that he hath the same good-will to us as the Father hath. Jesus Christ as mediator is the servant of God's decrees. Many times the servant hath not the same affection to the work as the master hath. But it is otherwise here; God's heart and Christ's heart is set upon the work. God sets him apart to be a mediator, and Christ sets himself apart to see what he can do to save creatures. Oh! bless the Lord. Thus for the giver.

2. The gift, 'He gave himself,' not an angel. Among all the treasures of heaven and earth, there was nothing more excellent and precious than the Lord Christ. He doth not give gold and silver, but himself to die for us: 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, &c., but with the precious blood of Christ.' And how doth he give himself? Certainly his whole self, body and soul. His godhead was engaged in this work, though that could not suffer: 'He shall make his soul an offering for sin,' Isa. 53:10. Christ's soul was to stand in our souls' stead. His soul was heavy to the death, as well as his body abused, mangled with whips, and exposed to sufferings. And the Godhead itself assisted; all was interested in it. So that look, as when the sun shines upon a tree, though you cut the tree you do not cut the sun, so the Godhead stood by but suffered nothing. Christ suffered not only death but desertion. The soul's forsaking of the body at death was nothing so heavy as God's forsaking of the soul, when he cries out, 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Mat. 27:46. Many forsook him; his disciples left him; they all fled; but Christ complains not of this; but there was the suspension of the wonted joys of the Godhead, and that troubled him; this was the passion of his passion. The moon loseth no brightness when it suffereth an eclipse by the interposition of the earth, but shines as bright as ever; so the Lord Christ lost nothing, but only there was an eclipse of God's countenance, and this was the terror and anguish of his soul.

3. Consider the manner of giving, it was free and voluntary, without reluctancy, which was the great argument of his love; freely and willingly he gave up himself: Gal. 2:20, 'The life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' Faith pitcheth upon this circumstance, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me,' to urge us to the spiritual life.

4. Consider for what end it was: Eph. 1:2, 'He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour.' The sacrifice that was offered for the whole congregation was to be killed without the camp, and the blood to be brought with sweet perfume to the mercy-seat; so the Lord Christ comes out of heaven to be killed on earth, and then is gone to heaven to present his sacrifice to God as a sweet perfume. He gave himself to be a ransom for us, to die a shameful and accursed death on the cross; he gave himself to be substituted in our room and stead. The sadness of every loss is according to the measure of enjoyment. Life died, righteousness was made sin; oh, blessed exchange!

5. Consider for whom he doth it. The apostle saith it was for us, not for angels. Though they did far exceed man in excellency of nature, yet God would not treat with the lost angels; they were never recovered; but he gave himself for us men. Nay, not only for us that were his creatures, but that were his enemies, vile and unworthy sinners: Rom. 5:8, 'God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' A man would even die for a good man, though there be but a few such persons in the world; but here the just dies for the unjust: 1 Peter 3:18, 'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' Now this commends his love indeed, in that it was for us vile miscreants, dust and ashes. Adam sold us for a thing of nought, an apple, and so the Lord might have condemned us, cast us



off, and created another world of nobler creatures than the present race of men, or might have redeemed us at a cheaper rate. Let all this quicken us to thanksgiving.

Use 2. Exhortation. If Christ hath given himself it presseth us—

1. To accept Christ, and entertain him in our hearts. Shall Christ give himself, and will not we accept the gift? It is true, when he gave himself for us, he gave himself to God the Father; as you know the price must be paid to the creditor. Satisfaction is made to the judge. But as he gave himself for us, so he gives himself to us, and thus he is offered in the gospel. Therefore it is said, Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for our sins.' In the gospel God holds out Christ, and makes an offer. Sinners, will you take him? Shall Christ offer himself thus, and shall not we esteem and value this gift, and entertain it in our hearts with all thankfulness? Certainly we do not know what a gift Christ is, and therefore we do not prize it: John 4:10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given thee living water.' Here is the best gift ever God can give. If we knew Christ, our affections would not be so cold. God is represented in scripture with two hands, and he hath gifts in his right hand, and gifts in his left hand. There is Jesus Christ, grace, pardon, and salvation, and all that is dear and precious; these are the blessings of his right hand. In his left hand there are riches and honour, estate, lands, houses, supplies of the present life. Now, art thou a goat or a sheep? one that shall stand at God's left or right hand? Thou art known by thy choice. All that are for the world run for a worldly portion and neglect Christ. We count those children foolish who prefer an apple before a jewel. So here the Lord sets out to us Christ and the things of this life, and men prefer the base

contentments of the world before Christ. Therefore let us accept of Christ if he hath given himself for us.

2. It exhorteth and presseth us to a spiritual consecration, to give up ourselves to Christ: Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Jesus Christ gave himself as a sin-offering, and we must give up ourselves as a thank-offering unto God. Now, let me tell you your giving up yourselves is a far other manner of giving up than Christ gave up himself. You never keep yourselves so much as when you give up yourselves to God. All the receiving is on our part. God would have us give up our hearts to him. How? That we might be made better. Better be given up to God than left to ourselves. Christ gave up himself to be crucified, but we give up ourselves to be glorified. And Jesus Christ gave up himself voluntarily, there was no necessity lay upon him; but woe unto us if we give not up ourselves to God, there is a necessity laid upon us; we do but give God his due and his own, but Jesus Christ had power over his life, to lay it down, and take it up, for he was an absolute master of his life; but we are dependent, under an obligation; therefore our giving is but to make our relation to God more explicit. And again, Jesus Christ could sanctify himself; he was priest, altar, and sacrifice, and brings all out of his own store; but all we have is from God. It goeth under the name of our deed, but the sacrifice, fire, and altar all come down from heaven; yet the act must be done by us.

And here take these two cautions—

[1.] You must do as Christ did, give up your all, body, soul, estate, goods, good name, life, parts, interest, relations; write upon all, Holiness to the Lord; there must not be a hoof reserved; for these

things are but trifles in comparison of what Christ parted withal for us. Some stick at one thing, some at another; some divide the body and the soul. In times of safety, when the public profession of religion is honourable, then men will give up their bodies to Christ; their eyes shall be lifted up in prayer, and their tongues shall speak well of Christ, but their heart is not given him. In times of trouble, then they could give God their souls; but profession is suspended, the body must be spared and excused. And then in the soul, some make an untoward division between conscience and affections; fain they would have Christ to pacify and satisfy their conscience, but they give their hearts and affections to the world. Some could give up their parts for Christ. Oh! they could plead for him, and do some good act of kindness, but not a penny of their estates. Christians, you must not thus stand hucking with God, and play Pharaoh's trick, but all must be given up. The devil knows, when we divide, the whole will fall to his share. It would be sad if God should deal with you as you deal with him, and glorify no more than you give him, take the body into heaven, and leave the soul in hell.

[2.] You must not retract your vows. It is dangerous to alienate things once consecrated, to say with him, 'I go, sir, and went not,' Mat. 21:30; or as Ananias, to keep back part of the money for which he sold his possession, and yet the thing was in his own power. But you are not in your own power; it is not indifferent whether you will give up yourselves to Christ or no, but it is a duty; and therefore live as if thou wert not thine own master, but act for Christ, think for Christ, and do for Christ; it is not an hard law. Consider what Christ did: 'Christ pleased not himself,' Rom. 15:3. He had a private will as well as you, but he denied it, and yielded to the public will. Christ did not obey his private will to the prejudice of his public, therefore let it not be grievous to renounce your will: 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for

all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.'

3. It presseth you again to a like readiness in Christ's service as the Lord Christ showed in the service of our souls. Why should we be so backward to come to the throne of grace, when Jesus Christ was not backward to go to the cross? We go grudgingly when he went so willingly to suffer for us. When the business was propounded to him, he said, Ps. 40:7, 8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.' So when there is a warm suggestion upon your hearts: Ps. 27:8, 'Thou saidst, Seek my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' said Paul when he surrendered himself up to God, Acts 9:6. If Christ was longing, When will the world be made, and the bounds of their habitation fixed, that I might dwell with them? Oh! we do not long for heaven as Christ longed for earth. He could expect nothing but hard usage, grief, and death; he came to taste the vinegar and gall, and we do not long to taste of the feast of love. If love brought down Christ to us, why cannot it carry us up to God? When you are backward to believe and pray, let it shame you that Christ was so willing. And in the Lord's supper, let it shame us that we have less appetite to feast our souls with the benefits of the cross than Christ had to endure the death of the cross. Can we say with Christ, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover?' Here is a cup of consolation tempered with Christ's hand, and we have no earnest groans after it. Christ could say, 'It is my meat to do the will of God;' and certainly it should be so to us. In the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done,' immediately goes before a petition for daily bread, to show it should be more desirous for us to do God's will than to eat our daily bread. Christians, when will you learn of Christ? We plead and stand disputing every inch with God. When you feel any

reluctancy and regret of spirit, remember Christ offered up himself willingly. Christ's work was sad work, but he did not say, It is a hard work, and is like to cost me dear, and I shall meet with an unthankful world, and my doctrine is like to be despised among the nations; he pleaded none of these discouragements. Oh! when shall we learn to do as Christ, not to reason, but run the ways of God's commandments? Ps. 119:10, 'With my whole heart have I sought thee.' It is not obedience if it be not willing: Ps. 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' When difficulties arise, consider Christ's torment and suffering abated nothing of his love: John 13:1, 'Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.' In the midst of his agonies he still said, Luke 22:42, 'Not my will, but thine he done.' Let us be content not only to do but to suffer: 2 Sam. 15:26, 'Behold, here I am; let him do to me what seemeth good unto him.'

Use 3. Here is encouragement in believing.

1. In troubles of conscience. Christ willingly offered up himself; he went as a lamb to the slaughter, therefore he is 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,' John 1:29. Willing sacrifices are acceptable to the Lord; he loveth a cheerful giver. God had no respect to Cain because he offered with a grudging mind. The sacrifice that came to the altar struggling was counted unlucky; if the beast did roar, or bleat much, or showed much reluctance, it was an ominous sign. More particularly the great aggravation of sin is the willingness of it; not the grossness of the act so much as the propension and bent of the will. If thou hast been a willing sinner, and art now troubled about it, here is a willing saviour; he suffered as earnestly, and with as much strength of desire, as ever you committed sin: Luke 22:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.' Stop the mouth of conscience by considering the burning

desires of his hearty good-will, with what desire, haste and speed, with what vehemency he did long to suffer.

2. In your prayers and addresses for mercy. He that gave himself for us will he not give us anything? He that was ready to die, will be ready to help; 'Lo, I come,' Ps. 40:7. So when we call upon him: Isa. 58:9, 'Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am;' Rev. 22:12, 'Behold, I come quickly.' He giveth the same answer to our requests as to the Father's commands. Wait with hope. Christ, that gave himself for us, will give himself to us.

## SERMON XX

That he might redeem us from all iniquity, &c.—TITUS 2:14.

I COME to handle the second encouragement, namely, that which is taken from the merit of Christ's death. And therein—

1. Here is Christ's act, 'He gave himself for us,' to be an expiatory sacrifice and ransom for souls.

2. I come to the second branch, and that is Christ's aim, 'He gave himself;' but why? 'To redeem us from all iniquity,' &c. Here is the privative and positive part of this deliverance; first redemption, then sanctification.

The privative part we must first take notice of, and that is redemption, a phrase which the apostle useth here to enforce us to a

denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts.

Here I shall first handle the nature of redemption in general, and then particularly show how we are redeemed from iniquity.

I. For the nature of redemption; it is the great gospel privilege, and therefore needs to be explained.

To redeem another, it signifies to free them from any distress, especially from captivity and bondage. The word will be best explained with respect to the customs and the figures of the law of Moses, for certainly from thence it was taken. Now under the law there was a twofold redemption—such as was immediately made to God, or else to man.

1. To God. I observe that there was a kind of ransom that every man was to give for his soul: Exod. 30:12–15, 'When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number, then they shall give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague amongst them, when thou numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary; an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and upward, shall give an offering to the Lord. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.' Whenever they were numbered by head and by poll, that the plague might not break out among them, they were to give a ransom for their souls, which showed that all our souls were forfeited by sin to God, and it was in God's power to take them when he pleased; therefore every man was to give this acknowledgment. And some conceive the plague which fell out in David's time for numbering the

people was for want of giving this ransom to God. Now the poor and rich were both to give equally the same ransom, the poor to give no less, and the rich no more, viz., half a shekel, to show that all souls before God are equal; the debt was equal, and that the price of Christ's blood was equal. We were all forfeited to God, but all the elect have an interest in the same redeemer. This will somewhat explain the mystery.

2. In that law there was another redemption that was to be made to man, and so there was a twofold redemption figured in the legal dispensation.

[1.] There was a redemption of the inheritance, or of the person of the brother that was waxen poor, and so through poverty had sold himself or sold his land: Lev. 25:25, 'If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold;' and vers. 47, 48, 'And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by thee wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family, after that he is sold he may be redeemed again, one of his brethren may redeem him.' The Goel, or the next of kin, was to redeem both the land and person so sold. All this noteth our state by nature. We forfeited our inheritance, and sold ourselves to work iniquity; there was a voluntary forfeiture on our part, and we could not redeem ourselves, for we were waxen poor; and when we had sold ourselves, all of the kindred were altogether waxen poor, and could not redeem us: Ps. 49:7, 8, 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.' Therefore Jesus Christ comes from heaven, and takes flesh, that he might be of our blood and kin, and so jure propinquitatis, as being next of blood, he had a right to redeem



and help us, when we had forfeited ourselves, and were become slaves and vassals of sin and Satan.

[2.] There was the redemption of captives. I confess I do not find express mention in the law of this kind of redemption, though some types of this captivity there were, and therefore here we must allude to the customs of all nations. Therefore I shall show—(1.) To whom we were captives; (2.) The manner of redeeming captives both among the Jews and all nations.

First, To whom we were captives; to God, to Satan, to sin.

1. To God. We were the prisoners of his justice and wrath, and therefore called 'Prisoners in the pit in which there is no water,' Zech. 9:11. It is a description of our natural bondage. In our original state we were God's creatures, but in our degenerate and fallen estate we are God's prisoners.

2. We were captives to Satan as God's executioner, given up to his power, that he might blind, harden, and lead us to all manner of sin by a just tradition: 2 Tim. 2:26, 'That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.' Natural men are at the will of another. As Christ told Peter, John 21:18, 'Another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not,' so Satan leads and carries us up and down, but it is there where we would ourselves be; we consent to this bondage, and are acted by the spirit of the devil, and are at his beck. Nay, that is not all; but we are also given up captives to Satan, that we might be tormented by him; therefore he is said 'to have the power of death,' Heb. 2:14. The devil, as God's executioner, hath a great power over carnal men, to stir up bondage, and fear, and horrors of wrath, and to take them away to torment, though not as he will, but as God willeth. Satan is our keeper, as God is our judge; and conscience, which was made to

be God's deputy, is as it were Satan's underkeeper, stirs up fear, and holds us in chains of darkness.

3. We are captives to sin. Every natural man is a slave to his own lusts: Titus 3:3, 'Serving divers lusts and pleasures.' Man in his natural state is a slave to his own affections. For the explaining of which let me tell you, while man was in his original state and condition, his actions were to be thus governed; the understanding and conscience were to prescribe to the will, and the will according to right reason, and conscience was to stir up the affections, and the affections according to the counsel and command of the will were to move the spirits and the members of the body. This was the order settled in man's nature before the fall. But now by corruption there is a woful change and disorder, and the head is where the feet should be. The bodily spirits move the affections, the law in the members prescribes many times to the law of the mind, carnal pleasures move the affections, and the affections carry away the will by violence, and the corrupt bent of the will blinds the understanding, and so man is led headlong to his own destruction; and therefore the apostle saith that carnal men are sold under sin: Rom. 7:14, 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' As captives in war were sold to be drudges to those that bought them, so man by nature is to be a drudge to his own lusts, and to be at the beck of every carnal and unclean suggestion. Here is the captivity of man by nature, there is the judge, and that is God, to whose wrath we are subject; there is the prison, that is hell; there is the keeper of the prison, that is Satan; and there are the ropes and chains by which we are bound, and they are partly our sins: Prov. 5:22, 'His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.' And partly the terrors of conscience, for the devils are said 'to be reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day,' Jude 6, which signifies the horror that is upon the damned spirits, expecting

more judgment from the wrath of the Lord, and at the judgment of the great day. The devils, that are most sensible of their estate, as being actually in torment, are said to be held in those chains of darkness; and we as their fellow-prisoners are held in the same chains, though in the time of God's patience we do not feel it.

Secondly, Let us come to the way of redeeming these captives. Among the nations there is a fourfold way of redeeming captives—either gratuita manumissione, by free deliverance, or else permutatione, by way of exchange, or else violenta ablatiōe, by way of force and arms, or else soluto lutro, by paying the price or ransom. The two last are most proper to this case, taking away by force or paying a ransom, though to me the former also have their place.

1. By free dismissal on God's part, that holdeth in the present case; we are freely dismissed, namely, as there is nothing done on the captive's part to free himself. It is said, Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' Mark there is a redemption in Christ, a price paid, but no human satisfaction made. Free grace found out the remedy not excited by any works of ours.

2. For deliverance by way of exchange, that seems to have some place here, for Christ was substituted into our room and place so far as would stand with the dignity of his person, and he was made a captive that we might go free from the wrath of God, though he was never in bondage to sin; so it is said, 2 Cor. 5:21, 'He was made sin for us,' that is, a sin-offering; and he was made a curse for us: Gal. 3:13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' He was substituted into our room and place. Saith Austin, *Suscepit sine malis meritis pœnam, ut nos sine bonis consequeremur gratiam*—He did not deserve the punishment, as we

do not deserve the glory; only he took our chains and our bonds upon himself. In ecclesiastical story mention is made of one Pambo, a monk, a charitable man, after he had given all his goods for the redemption of captives, and had nothing left but his bible; Nay, says he, I will give this away also that hath taught me to give other things; and when that was gone, Socrates reports of him that he gave himself, he went in their stead to stay as a pledge for them. This I have brought as a shadow, and some kind of weak adumbration of Christ's love to men; he himself would become the ransom, and be put in our place and room, that we might go free.

3. Another way of deliverance is by force and powerful rescue, and thus Christ hath redeemed us, as we were under Satan's power and held under sin. As Abraham rescued Lot when he was taken captive, Gen. 14, so did Christ make a rescue of us when we were led captive by our own lusts, or rather (for this was the type of it) as God by a mighty hand recovered Israel out of Egypt. Egypt signified the kingdom and power of darkness; so we are said to be snatched and recovered out of the kingdom of darkness: Col. 1:13, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.' By a powerful rescue hath God snatched and taken us out of our spiritual Egypt, out of our natural bondage. The blood of the passover was sprinkled on the door-posts, as the blood of Christ on our hearts, which is a mark of preservation. On the devil's part our captivity was a mere tyranny and oppression; for when God was once satisfied, Satan had no more power by right over us; and therefore Christ redeems us from the devil by force and violence, he needs not make satisfaction to him. Therefore it is notable that in the sufferings of Christ there was not only the Lord's own hand and counsel, but also the powers of darkness had a hand in them; therefore it is said, Luke 22:53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness.' Though the devil did not immediately afflict Christ, as some divines hold, though I dare not

positively assert it, yet by his instruments, the Jews, he crucified him, and therefore justly for this injury done to Christ was his power made void. When Christ did something to God, he was doing something to the devil; he triumphed over principalities and powers by his cross: Col. 2:15, 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' Thus the elect, the prisoners of hope, are called out and set free.

4. Another way is by paying a price and ransom: 1 Tim. 2:6, 'Who gave himself a ransom for us;' Eph. 1:7, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood.' His blood was the price paid to God. Though Satan held us captive, yet the satisfaction must be made to God, because man had not sinned against the devil, but against God; and therefore to him it belonged either to condemn or absolve us, and let us go free; therefore Christ gives satisfaction to God, and by that means he dissolves the power of Satan; for God being satisfied. Satan hath no power over us. Thus you see we are several ways redeemed, freely as to ourselves, by way of price and satisfaction as to God, Christ being substituted in our room and place, but by way of power and force as to Satan. Thus I have discovered our redemption by Christ with allusion to the figures of the law and custom of nations.

II. I shall more particularly show you how we are redeemed from iniquity. We were under a double bondage of sin—the guilt of sin and the power of sin, both which made our condition slavish. The latter is chiefly understood, yet I shall speak a little of both. We are redeemed from the guilt of sin by Christ's satisfaction, from the power of sin by his Spirit.

First, From the guilt of sin. Redemption is made mainly to consist in remission of sins: Col. 1:14, 'In whom we have redemption through

his blood, even the forgiveness of sin. So Eph. 1:7. The apostle in both places explaineth wherein it mainly consists. Now concerning this part I note—

1. That it is the ground and pledge of all the rest. Sin being pardoned, the power of the devil is abolished, the wrath of God removed, the guilt of eternal death is taken away: Acts 5:31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sin;' so Luke 24:47, 'And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.' Repentance is the beginning of all new obedience, and remission of sins is the seed of eternal life; all duties are included in repentance, and all blessings in pardon. The gospel is nothing else but a doctrine of repentance and remission, so that the devil cannot hold us as his captives, nor sin rule in us as in slaves. This is the ground and pledge of the rest.

2. Sin being pardoned, we are freed from the penalties of sin, viz., the evils after sin. Sin hath a long train of judgments, all which are done away when sin is pardoned. It will not stand with the honour of his mercy to forgive the debt and yet to require payment; it is a mocking to say, I forgive the whole debt, and yet to expect part of payment. Certainly God forgiveth us our debts, as we are bound to forgive others; so we are bid to pray, Mat. 6:12, 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.' Now we are bound to forgive them wholly, and not in part. It would not stand with God's justice to exact the debt twice—of us and of our surety: Isa. 53:4, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.'

Object. But we are still subject to corruption and misery, the miseries of the present life, and death hereafter.

Ans. 1. As to miseries. The afflictions of God's people seem to be punishments, but are not, and differ as much as a punishment and a medicine. God acts the part of physician, not of a judge; he burneth us, cutteth us, puts us to pain, but not to do us hurt; not to satisfy vengeance, but to better our hearts. Hic ure, hic seca, Domine! modo parcus in eternum. Our afflictions are troublesome to the flesh, as punishments are; we cannot expect full security or total exemption from them. Again, they come not by chance. Affliction doth not spring out of the dust, but they come by special dispensation. As punishments also they do not come by chance; sin is for the most part the occasion of them. God chasteneth them because they have sinned, as we quench a brand plucked out of the burning; or he warneth them that they may not sin again. The chastisements of the godly serve for examples, as well as the punishments of the wicked. But they are not properly judicial acts to satisfy the law; as a judge taketh no notice of the repentance of the delinquent, but of his fault. They are acts of love, and a part of God's family discipline. Brambles are not pruned, but vines: Heb. 12:6, 'For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' Bastards are left to live more at large. Again, they are for the exercise of grace, not for the destruction of our persons. A judge doth not punish offenders because he loveth them, but because the law requireth it. If corrections were punishments, wicked men should have the greatest share: Heb. 12:10, 'He chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.' A judge looketh to the good of the commonwealth, to keep authority, and the majesty of government, not the benefit of the malefactor: 1 Cor. 11:32, 'When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.' The godly are punished here, that they may not be condemned hereafter. The scripture everywhere maketh it a part of our blessedness: James 1:12, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation;' Phil. 1:29, 'Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ,

not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake,'  
ἐχαρίσθη. They are dispensations of love.

Ans. 2. For death. This was the primary effect of sin, yet it remaineth: Gen. 2:17, 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' But the curse of the law is become a blessing of the gospel; death is ours: 1 Cor. 3:22, 'Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, &c, all are yours.' Adam might have lived here happily for ever, but Christ hath provided a better place for us; there is a deep gulf, which cannot be passed but by death; our present earthly nature is not fit for that happy state: 1 Cor. 15:50, 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.' If Christ could have contented himself with giving us an earthly paradise, death had not been necessary. That state in the garden was an innocent and happy, but an earthly state; these bodies of ours, that need meat and sleep, would have sufficed for the earthly garden; but we expect a greater benefit, and therefore we must be contented with the way and passage. Sense and reason telleth us that these bodies which we now carry up and down are not fit for that state; we must lay what we received from Adam in the grave, that when it is purged and renewed, we may be like to Christ. The grain liveth not except it die; the shed and old house is pulled down that God may raise a more glorious structure. If all believers should be rapt up into heaven and changed, miracles would be multiplied without need. It is no punishment to lose our corruption and mortality.

3. The next proposition is this, that the fairest part of this redemption is hereafter, then our happiness in Christ is perfect. Luke 21:28, 'When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh;' Eph. 4:30, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the



day of redemption.' Then we are past gunshot, and out of harm's way. We are fully redeemed from the guilt of sin when there is no monument of God's displeasure left. We must be like our head in all conditions. We are not fully freed from the relics of sin till the resurrection, that we may have new matter to glorify God when we come to heaven. Old Adam is not quite abolished till God be all in all.

Secondly, He hath delivered us from the power of sin. He paid the price on the cross; therefore it is said, Rom. 6:6, 'Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' When Christ lay a-dying, sin lay a-dying, and bled with him on the cross; then was grace purchased; and therefore faith should look upon sin as dead and actually crucified; it is done in the mystery. And then he ascended, and poured out the Spirit now to accomplish this work. God is satisfied, and Christ's work lieth now with Satan and our own hearts.

1. For Satan. He is dispossessed and cast out at conversion: Luke 11:21, 22, 'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in safety; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.' Then Christ taketh away the prey. The devil may trouble us, but he is but a tyrant cast out, he can no more reign. And by preserving grace he keepeth possession. Christ will not lose ground when once he hath got footing: Rom. 16:20, 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;' as Joshua called unto his companions, chap. 10:24, 'Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings.'

2. As for our own hearts. He breaketh the yoke and sets the will at liberty, and maketh us free for God: Rom. 6:17, 'But God be thanked, ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that

form of doctrine which was delivered to you.' It was a willing bondage, but now we are made a willing people; then our consent was voluntary, now our resignation is so too. There are indeed some relics of corruption and opposition left; there are inward monuments of the fall as well as outward, as there are some grudgings of a disease after a cure; but in heaven all is perfect, and even now there is not a willing subjection, but a resistance made to sin.

Use 1. To exhort us to thankfulness to our Redeemer. Remember your former bondage; it is a woful captivity to be under sin. Those that are under sin are under the curse of the law and the tyranny of the devil; we could have no boldness with God as a father, nor look him in the face; the law is against us, God is the judge, Satan the jailer, our own consciences an underkeeper. Our fears of death, judgment, and hell are a part of our bondage; but now what cause have we to bless God! Rom. 8:1, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' Then to be under the power of sin is a woful bondage, to be at the beck of every lust and carnal suggestion. Men rejoice in their bondage; they think there is no such life as to live at large and to do as we list; but the more liberty we take in sin, the greater slavery: the work is drudgery, and the reward is death: 'Sin hath reigned unto death,' Rom. 5:21; 2 Peter. 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.' It is the saddest judgment to be given up to our own will, to be given up to Satan, to be given up to self. What a slavery is this, when we see mischief and know not how to avoid it! Conscience is held a prisoner; we cannot see a vanity, but the heart lingereth after it, and groweth sick, as Ahab for Naboth's vineyard. Duties of godliness are esteemed an heavy task; the law of God is impelling to duty, and the law of sin impelling to evil. What thanks is due to God for delivering us from so great a bondage!

Use 2. To press us to avoid sin. Mortify the lust and prevent the action; let it not reign in the heart, nor be discovered in the life and conversation. Christ died 'that the body of sin might be destroyed,' Rom. 6:6; and he died 'to redeem us from our vain conversation,' 1 Peter 1:18. Consider, when sin remains in its power, and while you serve sin, what dishonour you do to God, and what disadvantage it is to yourselves.

1. The dishonour you do to God, to all the persons in the Godhead. To the Father, by making void the whole plot of redemption. This was the eternal project and design, as it were, of God the Father, the wise counsel his wisdom found out to remedy the fall of man. Jesus Christ was ordained before all worlds to redeem us from our vain conversation: 1 Peter 1:20, 'Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world.' The Lord projected this way of restitution from all eternity, that this course should be taken to destroy sin. Now will you go about to make all this void? Then you wrong God the Son, and that many ways. You disparage the worth of his price, as if it was not sufficient to purchase grace, and so seek to put your Redeemer to shame. Nay, you disparage the purity of his person, for you were redeemed with the blood of Christ as a lamb without spot and blemish. Nay, you disparage the greatness and extremity of his sufferings. It cost him dear to purchase grace and deliverance from sin, and you slight it, and make nothing of it. Then you rob him of the greatness of his purchase; he bought us with this great price that we might not be our own and live to our lusts. Such as are bought with money are theirs who bought them: 1 Cor. 6:20, 'For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are his.' Did Christ pay our debts, and shall we, like desperate prodigals, do nothing but increase them by our sin? Then you disparage the Holy Ghost, the Spirit whom Christ doth shed abroad to accomplish his work: 2 Cor. 3:17, 'Where the Spirit of the

Lord is, there is liberty.' The great work of the Holy Ghost is to free us from the bondage of sin. Have you the assistance of such a Spirit, and can you not resist carnal motions? and are you taken with every vain delight, a fashion, a sensual bait? Thus consider what a dishonour it is to God to let sin live if Christ died to redeem us. You do as much as in you lieth to defeat the project of God the Father, the purchase of the Son, and the work of the Spirit.

2. It is a disadvantage to yourselves. You cut off your own claim, and declare you have no interest and share in Christ if sin live, for he came to redeem us from iniquity. We cannot have an interest in any part of Christ's redemption till this be, for all these go together. God's anger is not appeased, the devil's power is not restrained; the law's curse is still in force as long as sin lives. You can have no comfort if you be not freed from sin; the wrath of God is against you, and hell is your portion; nay, if you are not redeemed from all sin, for he redeems us from all iniquity. A bird that is tied by the leg may make a show of escape, but it is fast enough; so though many may abstain from gross sins (for they that commit such show plainly they are acted by the spirit of the devil), yet if one sin remains unmortified, it enthralleth as well as many; but if it reigns in the soul, you have no interest in Christ.

Object. You will say, Why should we mortify? why should we trouble ourselves about this? Christ hath done all this.

Ans. No; Christ hath redeemed us from all iniquity, but his redemption doth not make void, but oblige our endeavours; for he undertook as God's surety that sin should be destroyed, and as our surety that we should not serve sin: Rom. 6:6, 'Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' There is a work on God's part;

he undertook for the pouring out of grace; and on our part, that we should be watchful, and strive against sin, and watch against all occasions of it; and he hath given us encouragement so to do. *Non pugna sublata est, sed victoria*—It is not the conflict against sin that is taken away by Christ, but the victory of sin. Look, as when the Israelites had a promise that God would give their enemies into their hands, the meaning was not that they should not strike a stroke, but they were to fight the battles of the Lord; so when Christ hath redeemed us from iniquity, yet we are to use all spiritual means of mortification, to subdue the lusts, and to prevent the act of sin. It will be our great condemnation, when we have so much help, that still sin should remain. Certainly he is very lazy that will not ply the oar that hath both wind and tide on his side; and when the Lord Christ hath purchased grace and the Spirit, yet we will not endeavour against sin: 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage,' Gal. 5:1.

Use 3. Direction. Whenever you are troubled with your sins, and lusts, are too hard for you, go to Christ. It is his office to redeem you from your iniquity and the tyranny of sin; therefore when you feel any corruption stir, go and complain to him, as Paul did, 'I cannot do the things I would,' Gal. 5:17. Go to Christ for help; he was sent for this purpose to redeem you from iniquity and dissolve the devil's work: 1 John 3:8, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' It is his office to purge the church, to set us at liberty, to destroy Satan's power, to free us from our passions and corruptions; therefore go, complain to him of the strength of your sins, for he will help you.

Use 4. Comfort in our conflicts. You are sure of a final victory before you enter into the combat: ere long we shall be out of the reach of temptation, and the Spirit shall be all in all.

## Use 5. Examination.

1. Art thou sensible of thy natural bondage so as to grieve under it? As the apostle, Rom. 7:23, 24, 'I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' If it be not thus with thee, redemption by Christ will never be precious. There is sighing and weariness, they lay their sad estate to heart, as the church hung their harps upon the willows; it is the grief of their souls that their lusts held them in captivity. The children of God complain more of the relics of sin than wicked men do of the full power of it.

2. Hast thou any freedom? Sense of bondage is a good preparative, but it is not enough. All Christ's subjects are kings; they rule over their own lusts; though not freed from them altogether, they strive against them, and keep them under. And there is not only a freedom from ill, but a freedom to good: Ps. 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' They do not serve God by constraint, but are free to good, and serve God with as great cheerfulness as before they served their lusts: Rom. 7:22, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man.' They consult with the word of God, which was before their bondage and terror; they have an ability and strength to do that which is good; there is a new life in them, yet so as they are still excited by the Spirit.

Use 6. It informeth us what is true liberty, not to live at large: John 8:36, 'If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.' Not to have power and sovereignty over others, not to exercise command and authority over others, but to subdue our lusts; not to be left to ourselves to do what we please, that is the greatest bondage: Rom. 6:20, 'When ye were the servants of sin, ye

were free from righteousness;' but to do the will of God: 1 John 3:5, 'And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.' He died to take away sin, and to make us like himself, that the world might know that he was a pure and holy Saviour.

## SERMON XXI

And purify unto himself a peculiar people, &c.—TITUS. 2:14.

IN this latter branch I observed Christ's act and then his aim. His act, 'He gave himself.' His aim and intention; and here is the privative part of deliverance, 'To redeem us from all iniquity.' This I have finished.

I come to the positive part, 'And purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' He never communicates his blessings where he doth not bestow his grace. He did not only free us from hell, but from sin. It is well for the godly that Christ came to take away the proud and carnal heart, to take away corruption and iniquity, which is their greatest eyesore. But this is not all; there is a positive blessing. Christ did not only come to deliver us from sin, but communicate grace, 'That he might purify to himself a peculiar people.'

Two points I shall open to you—

1. That whomsoever Christ maketh his people, he first purifieth them, or by purifying them maketh them his people.
2. Those that are purified are reckoned his treasure or peculiar people.

Doct. 1. That whomsoever Christ maketh his people, he first purifieth them, or by purifying maketh them his people.

Here I shall show you—(1.) The necessity; (2.) The manner of it.

First, The necessity of this purification.

1. In regard of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Every person in the Godhead, in the dispensation of grace, hath a distinct personal operation. Election is ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and effectual application to the Holy Ghost. Now every one of these operations respects holiness. Election: Eph. 1:4, 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy, and without blame before him in love.' Redemption: Eph. 5:25, 26, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' Sanctification: 2 Thes. 2:13, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' It is for the honour of every person that their intention may not be frustrate; and chiefly upon this ground, because by this means they would justify and honour their personal operation to the world. Those that are chosen by the Father must be of a choice spirit. Christ will not be the head of an ulcerous body; he will not be like Nebuchadnezzar's image, 'whose head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay,' Dan. 2:32, 33. A beautiful head upon a negro's body is monstrous. We are vessels formed and set apart for the master's use. Those that are under his forming come new out of the forge. Unclean vessels can never be used to any good purpose unless they be washed and sweetened. They are to be looked upon as God's choice, Christ's purchase, and the Spirit's charge. Or if you will have it in other relations, they are



God's children, Christ's members, and the Spirit's temples. God's children must resemble their Father; Christ's members must be like their head; and the Holy Ghost will not dwell in a defiled temple.

2. With respect to themselves, and their relation to one another, they must be purified: 1 Peter 1:22, 'Seeing that ye have purified yourselves in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.' The purification of our own souls maketh us to love purity in others, for similitude is the ground of delight and complacency. No man can delight in the purity of others unless he be in some measure purified himself. Holy men are only fit for this communion and society; others 'go in the way of Cain,' Jude 11, 'Who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous,' 1 John 3:12. Carnal professors, that creep into the church unawares, are full of envy, strife, and wrath. How can we edify one another in the holy faith unless we be first holy? A man would think they should be purified to the love of God; nay, but they must be purified to the love of the brethren.

3. With respect to the world. A distinct body should have a distinct excellency. They are a people distinct from the world, they are set apart for God: Ps. 4:3, 'Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.' They are a chosen generation. Many other societies excel the church for strength, policy, and worldly pomp; but holiness and purity is the church's badge: Ps. 93:5, 'Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever.' God's peculiar people must have a peculiar excellency upon a double ground—

[1.] Because of likeness to God: Exod. 15:11, 'Who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness.' It is God's

glory, and therefore the church's. God is rich in mercy, but glorious in holiness: his treasure is his goodness, but his honour is his holiness and immaculate purity; as among men, their wealth is distinguished from their honour.

[2.] Because all the ordinances hold it forth, especially the ordinance of initiation. So that it is the greatest hypocrisy in the world to pretend to be God's people and not to be holy, because they wear the badges of holiness; they all come in by the washing of water. Men forget their baptism: 2 Peter 1:9, 'He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' Men that are only whited over with the name of christians, and sin is still new and fresh, as an old thing they forget the effect of their baptism; that a washed man should be so foul and noisome still, sure they forget, or do not know what it is to be baptized into Christ.

Secondly, The manner how he purifieth them. There is on Christ's part the Spirit and ordinances, and his merit reacheth to both; and on our part faith.

#### 1. On Christ's part.

[1.] The Spirit is necessary: Titus 3:5, 'He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The Holy Ghost applieth all the grace which the Father intendeth and Christ hath purchased. We are usually said to be saved by the blood of Christ; that was the merit and price. There was a grant on God the Father's part: Rev. 19:8, 'To her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen clean and white.' An authentic act passeth in the court of heaven that we shall have fine linen, as Esther had garments out of the king's wardrobe. But this is founded on Christ's merits. The stream in which we are washed flowed out of Christ's heart: 1 John 1:7, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' But then the

Holy Ghost, as the executor of Christ's will and testament, worketh and applieth all. The merit of the creature is excluded by Christ's merit and the Father's grant; the power of the creature is excluded by the work of the Spirit; he worketh with a respect to Christ's blood. As in the cleansing of the leper, the bird was to be killed over running water, Lev. 14:5, so in the cleansing of the sinner there is the merit of Christ and the work of the Spirit: 1 Cor. 6:11, 'But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' If we come to the Father, the Father sends us to the Son, otherwise he could not look upon us; the Son sends us to the Spirit; the Spirit sends us to Moses and the prophets.

[2.] The ordinances: Eph. 5:26, 'That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' These are the ordinances that are specially consecrated, and to which Christ's merit reacheth; he hath not only procured the gift of the Spirit, but a blessing on the means, that we may use them with confidence. The word helpeth us by way of declaration and offer, and baptism concurrerth sacramentally by way of signing and sealing, and so it is a means to confirm and provoke the faith of a receiver to lay hold on this grace. The ordinances are an help to call to mind baptism. It is not good to balk the known and ordinary means of grace. Christ hath purchased a treasure that cannot be wasted: John 17:19, 'And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.' When you come to hear, you come to receive the fruits of Christ's purchase.

2. On our part there is required faith, which also purifieth: Acts 15:9, 'Purifying their hearts by faith.' Christ's blood cleanseth, the gospel cleanseth, baptism cleanseth, the Spirit cleanseth, faith cleanseth; all these are not contrary, but subordinate. Neither Christ nor the word nor the Spirit worketh without an act on our parts; as under the law

the priest was not only to wash and cleanse the leper, who herein represented God, but also after the sprinkling of the priest he was to wash himself: Lev. 14:8, 'And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean;' to show that some work is required on our part. The work of faith is to apply, to wait, to work by reflection, and to stir up love.

[1.] To apply the promises of God, the offers of grace in the word, and the blood of Christ, and all these to purge out corruption. It applieth the blood of Christ, urgeth the soul with it; he died to purchase that grace which thou wantest. The water and soap cleanseth, but the hand of the laundress must apply it, and rub the clothes that are washed. This is called sprinkling the conscience with the blood of Christ: Heb. 10:22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.' We should thus argue with ourselves: Surely Christ died to sanctify sinners; his death cannot be in vain. Grace is bought at a dear rate; in the offers of the word, God maketh a tender; why should I not accept of it? Heb. 4:2, 'For unto us was the word preached as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' But we do not say, What shall we say to these things? By faith the plaster is laid on the sore.

[2.] In the use of means it waiteth for the sanctifying virtue of the blood of Christ, and looketh upon them as ordinances under a blessing: Isa. 45:24, 'Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.' It casts out the net at Christ's commandment: Micah 7:19, 'He will turn again, he will have compassion on us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast

all their sins into the depth of the sea.' They see an all-sufficient mercy and power, and they wait till God manifests himself.

[3.] It worketh by reflection, and so stirs up love: Gal. 5:6, 'Faith worketh by love.' It sets love on work, and by little and little drieth up the fountain of sin. Shall I love that which God hateth? Jer. 44:4, 'Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early, and sending them, saying, O do not this abominable thing that I hate.' Faith representeth God pleading with us, and beseeching us by all his bowels in Christ. Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Do I thus requite the Lord for all his kindness to me? There is an exasperation against lusts; the soul saith, Get ye hence: Hosea 14:8, 'Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?' The soul hath its expulsive faculty, it is at the beck of love, and love is stirred up by faith; and when it cannot expel sin, it mourneth and groaneth under it as its burden.

Use 1. Are you thus purified? Have you passed this laver? The priests under the law, before they went to the altar, they first washed in the great laver. You are not his people till you are sanctified. Esther was purified before she was brought to Ahasuerus, Esther 2. Christ telleth Peter, John 13:8, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me.' Though he took human nature, yet he owneth no relation to any but the sanctified: Heb. 2:11, 'For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' The devils cannot say, He is bone of our bone. But what though he took your natures? This is not enough; he will disclaim you if you be not sanctified. I took flesh, but not for you; I died, but not for you. There is a double notion of purification in this place; it noteth cleansing and dedication. There is a difference between them and others, and between them and themselves. Whereas I was blind, now I see. I could before discourse and hear

sermons for notions, but now my conscience is more serious, I am more freed from bondage, I have a more distinct hope towards God in Christ; my will is not obstinate and unpliant to the counsels and motions of the Holy Ghost; my affections are reduced to a better temper as to earthly things. Thus examine yourself. Is anything washed off?

Use 2. Information. It informeth us that we are all polluted by nature, for we need to be purified ere we are Christ's people. Nay, it sticketh to us; we change our skin, our outward conversation, but no other laver will wash our hearts but Christ's blood. If we had eyes to see our natural filth, we should loathe ourselves more than we do. We are all infected with self-love and fleshly natures: Titus 3:3, 'For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.' But we are partial to ourselves, we have no spiritual eyesight. Sin is of a defiling nature. You abhor dirty nasty creatures; all of us are polluted with sin. God that is a Spirit hath other affections; he doth not abhor a creature because of his sores, but because of his sins. We judge by the senses: Ps. 14:3, 'They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no not one.' So we are in the eyes of God, who is a pure Spirit. Sin maketh us odious and loathsome to him; but we that have bodies abominate things that are sensibly unclean.

Use 3. Let it stir us up to purify ourselves yet more and more.

1. See yourselves in the glass of the word. They that have most light do most complain of the filthiness and impurity of their hearts; not because there is more defilement, but more light. Sluttish corners are not seen in the dark. Carnal men are loath to see their own faces, they will not come to the light. We love a flattering glass, but a

searching ministry is hated. You have not looked in the glass enough till it hath stirred up shame, sorrow, and self-abhorrence. Raging against conviction argueth the heart is bad. When men cannot endure to see themselves, but think all is clean and well, it is a sign of a secure careless spirit. If we keep ourselves from foul sins, we do not think of our odious natures.

2. Desire cleansing; as Peter, John 13:9, 'Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head;' or David, Ps. 51:2, 'Wash me throughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.' Sin is a deep stain, hardly got out; let it keep us humble. God carrieth on his work by degrees.

3. Use God's means: Zech. 13:1, 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness;' Rev. 7:14, 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, which have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' The church knoweth no other laver, and the effect of it you receive in the ordinances.

4. Keep yourselves clean by a constant watchfulness: James 1:27, 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourselves unspotted from the world.' The world is a dirty place; you will soil your garments; therefore you must avoid all appearance of evil. Hate the garment spotted with the flesh. We cannot keep at too great a distance from sin; a bold use of our liberty showeth the heart hankereth after sin, as a raven hovereth within the scent of the carrion.

Doct. 2. Those that are purified are reckoned to be God's treasure and peculiar people.

The word in the original which we translate peculiar people, is λαὸς περιούσιος, the Vulgate renders it *populus acceptabilis*, an acceptable people, but not emphatical enough. Περιούσια signifies wealth, plenty, treasure, that which we have above our necessary substance; yea, not only treasure, but the principal part of it, that which is locked up in the cabinet, and takes up but a little room, as jewels. The expression is taken out of the Septuagint, and alludes to those places in the Old Testament where God calls his people his jewels or special treasure: Exod. 19:5, 'Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people;' which is rendered by the Septuagint, λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ παντῶν ἔθνων. And you have another expression, 1 Peter 2:9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar (or purchased) people:' λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, *populus acquisitionis*, or *possessionis*; a people of possession, such as God counts his heritage, his jewels: Mal. 3:17, 'They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.' The word imports any choice and precious thing; that God loves those that are purified as a covetous man loves his treasure or a proud man his jewels and honours.

Give me leave to illustrate it by a few scriptures, where the world and the saints are compared. The world are said to be 'not a people,' 1 Peter 2:10. How so? Not for want of prowess, or policy, or pomp, or worldly splendour, or civil arts or crafts; many times in these things they excel the church; but they are said to be 'not a people,' that is, in God's account and esteem they are but a confused heap of nations spilt upon the earth by a general and looser providence. In Isa. 55:5, there is another emphatical expression; 'Behold, thou shalt call nations that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God.' It is spoken to Christ; it is a strange expression. Is there any *terra incognita*, any land that is unknown to him? The meaning is, which thou hast no more taken



notice of, nor taken care of, than a man doth of those whom he never knew; a people of no esteem and respect with God, as if he had taken no notice that there were any such in the world. So Acts 17:30, 'The times of this ignorance God winked at.' In the original it is ὑπερίδων, he overlooked them. The Vulgate reads it despiciens, he did despise them; and our old translation is better than the new, 'God regarded them not.' It is usually taken to signify God's indulgence, that he did not deal so strictly with the world, because they had so little means to keep them from sin; whereas the scope carrieth it quite otherwise in another sense. God overlooked, or lightly passed over those times, not caring what became of them that then lived before they were his peculiar people; he overlooked and regarded them not, but let them go on in their sins, though not unpunished. Thus you see foreigners to the church are strangers to God, and wicked men are as if they were not; not in regard of God's general providence, so they are sustained and regarded: he preserves man and beast; not in regard of calling them to an account for their sins; they that are sometimes called 'no people,' are at other times called 'the people of his curse;' but in regard of value and esteem; as to special communion with him, they are not at all.

But now look upon the terms that are bestowed upon the church and godly. Those that are purified, James 1:18, they are called 'the first-fruits of his creatures.' Under the law the first-fruits were the Lord's portion; so all that are regenerated and called to grace are the Lord's portion. Œcumenius glosseth upon the place. The world is but κτισμα, his creature, but the church is κτήμα, his possession; the world are his goods, and they are his treasure. The vast territories of the blind world are but as a common and heath, which God doth not look after, but the church is as a garden enclosed, in regard of his love and special dispensation. Heretofore this was the privilege of Israel, to be God's portion; it was confined to them; and that is the

reason of that expression, Isa. 19:25, 'Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance,' or portion. God made all people, but he chose these for his delight and habitation. It was confined to them heretofore, but it is not confined now; the people of any nation may be preferred to this estate. Those that are purified, wherever they are, they are the Lord's treasure and people.

But why doth the Lord esteem them as his peculiar people? I shall give reasons with respect to every person of the Godhead.

1. Because of God the Father's choice; he hath picked and culled them out of the world, and therefore he esteemeth them above all others. See what the apostle saith, 1 Peter 2:9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.' Therefore a peculiar people, because a chosen generation; they are set apart, singled out of the world for himself. So Ps. 135:4, 'The Lord hath chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel to be his peculiar treasure.' He hath culled them out, and left all the world besides; God's choice puts a value upon things. Common gold and silver is not of such value as that which was consecrated and dedicated to God; nay, gold and silver was not so good as goat's-hair that was consecrated to the uses of the tabernacle. The dedication of a thing to a holy use enhanceth the price of it. Now those that are chosen are consecrated and set apart by God for himself: 'The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself,' Ps. 4:3; and therefore of greater value than all the world, because designed by God to be his portion.

2. Because of Christ's purchase; they are bought at a dear price: 1 Peter 2:9, 'A purchased people;' that is the marginal reading. The saints are valued, not from themselves so much as in Christ; he hath put honour upon us, as Adam put a disgrace upon us. Adam sold us for a trifle, but Christ did not redeem us at so cheap a rate: 'Ye are

redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, &c, but with the precious blood of Christ,' 1 Peter 1:18, 19. We prize that which cost dear. Christ was given in ransom for us, therefore doth God prize us.

3. Because they are vessels of the Spirit's forming. God delighted in all his creatures; they were all good, the product of the Spirit's incubation: Gen. 1:2, 'The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water.' But much more doth he delight in the new creature, his workmanship in Christ, Eph. 2:10; partly because there is more goes to form the new creature than the old, and partly because their being is more noble than the beings of all other creatures in this lower world.

[1.] There is more goes to form them; there is discovered more wisdom, more power, more goodness. The new creature discovers more of his power than the old. It was a wonderful thing the making of the world, and disposing of the creatures into so many several forms and ranks, a mighty effect of God's power; but as there was no help, so there was no let or hindrance; nothing to oppose God's work, as nothing to facilitate it. But when God comes to frame a new creature, there is a spirit of rebellion and opposition. Then more of his wisdom. The gospel is a better theatre whereupon to see God than the world. In the world there is much of his wisdom, but much more in the mystery of grace, and in all his transactions to bring man to a purified state; therefore here is his special delight. Then for his mercy, goodness, and love. A great deal of love God showed in making angels out of nothing, but in some sense there is more love shown in sanctifying man; for in the former there was no hindrance to his goodness, but here wronged justice interposed, and put in something by way of bar against us; yet notwithstanding the demerit of our sins, he would take us into his favour. In the creation God

showed himself to be φιλάγγελος, a lover of angels; but in redemption φιλόανθρωπος, a lover of man: Titus 3:4, 'After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared.'

[2.] Chiefly because of the life they live. The new creature hath a more noble being than all the creatures in the world, and lives a more noble life. Put the whole world in the balance, and it is not worthy to be compared with the new creature. Those that are purified and sanctified, the world is not worthy of them: Heb. 11:38, 'Of whom the world was not worthy.' Look, as the life of reason excels that of sense, and the life of sense that of vegetation, the life of beasts is better than the life of plants, and the life of man better than the life of beasts, so doth grace excel reason, and the life of saints is a more noble being than that of men. I confess if you go upward, we cannot say the life of glory as much excels the life of grace as the life of grace excels the life of reason; there is a greater difference between the life of reason and the life of grace than between the life of grace and the life of glory, or between a carnal man and a child of God than between the most glorified saint in heaven and the weakest believer on earth. The difference between glory and grace is gradual, but the difference between the carnal life and the spiritual life is essential. Glorified saints, and saints here living the life of grace differ only in degrees, but the life of grace and the life of nature differ in kind. There is more difference between a toad or beast and a man than between a child and a man. Grace and glory differ but as a child and a man, only in degree; but grace and sense, and grace and reason, differ as the life of a toad and the life of a beast from the life of a man.

Use 1. Information.

1. That we should not value men by their secular interests, but by their relation to God. The Lord doth not call the potentates of the earth his treasure, as he doth his holy ones: Prov. 12:26, 'The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.' Men may be mighty in the world, yet base and vile in God's esteem, Dan. 4:17. He gives kingdoms to the basest of men. It is notable, in the prophetic visions of the great monarchs of the world, they are compared to wild beasts. Alexander the mighty yet is called the goat of Græcia. Paul calls Nero a lion. They that brave it in the world as if they were gods upon earth, yet in the Lord's account they are but beasts. But now the saints are the precious 'excellent ones of the earth,' Ps. 16:3; therefore we should not value men by their outward greatness: James 2:1, 'Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.' If you have relation to Christ, he puts a glory and excellency upon you; you are his treasure. Saith Tertullian, *Non ex personis fidem, sed ex fide personas*—We must not measure the faith by the person, but the person by his faith. They are fools that despise and vilify those upon whom God sets the greatest price, and admire those that are of lowest esteem with God.

2. It informeth us that the judgment of God and the judgment of the world are very contrary. The world counts the saints the filth, the scurf, and off-scouring of all things, and God calls them jewels and treasure. Alas! with God carnal men are nothing, worse than nothing. It had been better for them, saith the Spirit of God, that they had never been born; and they are viler than the earth. The blind world knows not how to value the stamp and seal of the Spirit. When God hath impressed his own image, the world knows not how to value them; but God values them; these are coins and medals God will keep in his own treasure. Certainly they are worthless souls that despise them, that count purity a disgrace. It hath always been the world's fashion to crucify God in effigy, in his picture; to despise,

oppress, and scoff at them that bear his image and resemble him, and malign and scorn the lustre of holiness.

3. It informs us how much it concerns us to be holy and purified, for those he counts to be his treasure. God's church is his heritage, but every one that lives in the church God doth not count them to be his jewels. Many claim acquaintance of him by virtue of offices and ministration in the church, yet they are disclaimed and disowned by God: Mat. 7:22, 23, 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' The Holy Ghost brings in some that had great gifts and employments in the church; and as when a man entertaineth another with strangeness, we use to put him in mind by some tokens, so carnal professors put Christ in mind as it were by some kind of tokens. Do you not remember that we prophesied in your name, &c., and we were employed in special offices in the church? No; verily, I know you not: he disclaims and disowns them.

4. It informs us that it is dangerous to molest, oppress, and persecute the godly, those that are purified, because they are God's peculiar ones; you meddle with the apple of his eye, and to destroy them is sacrilege. Israel is a holy thing: Jer. 2:3, 'Israel is holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them saith the Lord.' Sacrilege hath been always deadly; robbing of temples among the heathen hath been always observed to be fatal to those that attempted it; the Lord by his wise providence was pleased to suffer the devil to follow them with tempests and punishments, to keep up the notion of a divine power, which is the fundamental principle and ground of all religion. So when you oppress and destroy the people of God, and malign

them, you devour that which is holy, which will prove fatal and deadly. Look, as he told the governor, Acts 22:26, 'Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman;' so God is very tender of these kind of men; they are his jewels, his treasure; take heed how you use them.

Use 2. Exhortation, and that both to carnal men and to God's people, who are his peculiar ones.

First, It exhorts carnal men to put in for a share in this great privilege, to be one of God's peculiar ones, those that he counts his treasures and his jewels. Let me first exhort, then direct.

1. I shall exhort you by these considerations, how God will own his peculiar people above all the world besides, and how he doth value them above all the world.

[1.] How he owns them; privately in their own consciences; he owns them in his ordinances; he owns them publicly in his providence; and most publicly he will own them in the day of judgment.

(1.) He owns them privately in their own consciences. God's holy ones are said to be sealed by the Spirit: Eph. 4:30, 'Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.' God sets his own seal upon them, to signify his right and property in them. As a man marks his sheep, or a merchant seals his wares to declare his right and property, so all that are God's they are sealed by his Spirit and they bear his mark. As the worshippers of the beast have the mark of the beast, so the people of God have the Lord's seal; he owns them. There is the Spirit's witness to tell them God is theirs, and there is the Spirit's work to cause to become God's. The Spirit witnesseth to them by impressions, and tells them, God is your salvation, and seals them by expressions, and makes them

choose God. There is a mutual appropriation: Cant. 6:3, 'I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.' He chooseth them for his peculiar people, and they choose him for the peculiar treasure of their souls. Whom have they in heaven but God? and who doth God regard in the world but they? They have his privy-seal in their own consciences.

(2.) He owns them in his ordinances, so as to maintain communion with them, as he doth not with others. When others pray, God takes no notice that such a prayer is made; they hear, but cannot say God owns them. But now he owns his people in their approaches: Isa. 58:9, 'Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.' God doth as it were say, It is the voice of my people; what would you have? here I am, ready to help you, and to give you grace. No king will do so much for his favourites as God will do for his people: Zeph. 3:10, he calls them 'his suppliants.' This is not a peculiar privilege for some peculiar saints that they are thus honoured of God and answered by him in prayer, but all are a peculiar people, and God hath affections and blessings enough for them all. When the wicked come and pray, God takes no notice of them, as if no such men were in the congregation: Isa. 1:15, 'When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear.' They have no visits from the Spirit, nor sensible returns of prayer. It is sad to come to ordinances, and God to take no notice of us; when the Spirit of God comes into the congregation to bless the worshippers by head and poll, and you are left out of the account, and passed over. You know what is said in the law, Exod. 29:42, 43, 'At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto you; and there I will meet with the children of Israel.' God did not only promise to meet with Moses, but with all the congregation; and certainly the services of the church now are not



less fruitful than the services of the tabernacle. When God's people come together, God meets with them, and talks with them, and sends them away with gifts of grace and spiritual increase, for they are his suppliants, and his peculiar people.

(3.) God owns them in the course of his providence sometimes with outward blessings. Thus God set up Abraham as a mark of envy to the nations about him. As Benjamin's mess was five times as much as the rest, so many times in outward blessings God owns his people. But I cannot much press this; but the aim of providence principally concerns them: Rom. 8:28, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' All things may seem to work against them, but they work for them. It is a mercy that God takes notice of them, and visits them day by day: Job 7:18, 'That thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment.' Brambles are not pruned and pared as vines are. Wicked men, they are as sheep whom no man taketh up, God doth not look after them. But God's children may take notice how the special care of providence serves their special necessities; and particularly as to their afflictions; they do not spring out of the dust, but every day God is mindful of them, and ordereth such dispensations to keep them in order; whereas wicked men are only under the general care of providence; they cannot discern such particular love and aim at their good and spiritual welfare.

(4.) He will own them before all the world at the last day, 'I will confess them,' saith Christ, 'before my Father which is in heaven,' Luke 12:8. These are the fruits of my purchase; he will present them to God: Heb. 2:13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.' But wicked men are disclaimed: then will I 'profess unto them, I never knew you,' Mat. 7:23. Oh! how will their faces gather blackness when Christ shall disclaim all acquaintance with them. I never had any real and familiar converse with you, in public or private worship.

[2.] How he values them. He doth not stand upon other nations for their safety, either to preserve them or to divert the destroyer from them; as for instance, when God, raiseth up some furious instrument, that is flagellus Dei, the scourge of God to pull down and waste; God finds work for them abroad to save his people; and therefore he saith, Isa. 43:3, 4, 'I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.' He let the sword go into other countries to save Judah, that was his heritage; if the sword must drink blood and eat flesh, let it go to Egypt, Ethiopia, Seba, into idolatrous countries. He puts other nations in their stead, and counts them as a little chaff, to save the Jews. And then the highest among the nations (which is another argument) are rebuked for their sakes. God plucked the sceptre out of the hands of kings, and the diadems off from their heads: Ps. 105:14, 15, 'He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not my anointed;' meaning those that are anointed with his grace. God will rebuke the mightiest potentates. Again, though they are never so despicable, yet countries whom God hath doomed to destruction hath he saved for their sakes. It is a notable expression of God to Lot, Gen. 19:22, 'Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither.' These are the blessings in the cluster that keeps the vine alive, which otherwise would be destroyed; the chariots and horsemen of Israel; nay, they are the pillars of the whole world; the creation would not continue a jot longer if God had not a peculiar people. As the ship tarries till all the passengers be entered, then they hoist up sails, God's providence only tarries till all the elect be gathered and his jewels shall be made up, then the world shall be no more. There are some few hidden ones that keep up the world, and preserve the course and frame of nature. Now, will you not put in for

this privilege to be of that number? You must pass the great river and be washed before you can come to serve and minister in holy things to God.

## 2. For direction.

[1.] You must earnestly desire this privilege: Ps. 106:4, 5, 'Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest to thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.' This should be the greatest ambition of your souls, that you might be one of God peculiar ones; as Theodosius counted it a greater honour to be a member of the church than to be emperor of the world; and Moses, Heb. 11:24, 25, 'when he came to years,' μέλας γενόμενος, when he was grown great, that is, when he had ability to judge, 'he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.' The honour of Pharaoh's court was nothing so lovely to him as to be a member of God's people, and to enjoy communion with the saints, though with great affliction and reproach.

[2.] Whenever you are brought in to be one of that number, you must take an oath of allegiance to God, for so do all his people; they take hold of the covenant of God. See Deut. 26:17, 18, 'Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments.' God will bind you fast when you come to partake of this privilege; it must be by solemn consecration, and by covenant to walk in all his ways and in all his

statutes. So Deut. 29:12, 13, 'That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' There is a covenant by which God and the church do own one another. If you expect protection and provision for this life and for a better, give God the hand and take hold of his covenant. Jesus Christ hath all manner of relations to the church. All titles you know to a crown are either by purchase, conquest, or by covenant, or consent of nations, thus Christ will be king of the church by covenant and by consent; you must take an oath to him of allegiance to him, to be faithful to him, to observe all his ways and statutes, that so you may become his people.

Secondly, The other branch of exhortation is to God's people, to walk as his peculiar ones, and to carry yourselves as becometh the people of God.

1. Praise him for enrolling you in this company: Ps. 135:3, 4, 'Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant: for he hath chosen Jacob to himself, and Israel to be his peculiar treasure.' To quicken you, consider what you were; you were not a people, God raised you up from the very dunghill to this preferment; remember your past estate. Look, as old Jacob considered what he had been when God preferred him, Gen. 32:10, 'With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands;' so do you say, I am a worthless creature, it is God that hath taken me into grace, praised be the Lord that hath chosen me. Then consider how many are left to perish in the wide world. Some live out of the church's pale that never heard of Christ, and many others have only a loose general form of Christianity. Oh! blessed be God that

hath chosen me to be of the number of his peculiar people. It is said, Zech. 13:8, 'And it shall come to pass in all the land, saith the Lord, that two parts shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein.' We pass through many bolters before we come to be God's peculiar people, as the corn is ground, bolted, searched before it comes to be fine flour. There are many nations have not the knowledge of God, and others live in the church but are carnal; and I to be one of his peculiar people, an invisible member of Christ's mystical body, oh! what a privilege is this! And then what moved him to all this? Nothing but his own free grace. Thus Moses debates the case with Israel: Deut. 7:6–8, 'For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord hath not set his love upon you, or chose you, because ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the fewest of all people); but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.' Therefore praise the Lord.

2. Improve it for confidence: Zech. 13:9, 'And I will bring a third part of them through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.' In time of great affliction, then it is time to plead our peculiar interest in God, as the church doth, Isa. 64:9, 'Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.' It is a ground of audience and confidence. Interest is the sweetest argument that we can use in prayer: Ps. 119:94, 'I am thine, save me.' He is worse than an infidel that doth not provide for his own family. Now what ground of

confidence is this, Lord, we are thine; therefore cast yourselves upon God.

### 3. Carry yourselves as a peculiar people to him. Wherein?

[1.] You must not be contented with common mercies. Every distinct society hath distinct privileges. Now the elect are a peculiar people, and therefore should look after peculiar privileges. A man may have outward things; and here is nothing peculiar, no argument of God's special love. Castaways may have these things: Ps. 119:132, 'Look then upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto them that love thy name.' Look not upon me as thou usest to do on the world in general, but as thou dost on thy own people. You must have renewing mercies, and sanctifying mercies, a holy heart, be kept from sin, and conformed to God. Other mercies a man may have and go to hell; therefore be not satisfied with them. Luther protested to God he would not be put off with estate and the favour of the world, and with increase of honour and esteem. Alas! the multitude may have these things, it is their happiness: Ps. 4:6, 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.'

[2.] Be not contented with common graces. Thus far a man may go, and not be saved. As, for instance, there are moral inclinations in heathens, and they make conscience of gross sins. It is not enough to keep from theft, drunkenness, adultery; a heathen would discover those sins by the light of nature, and by such arguments and reasons as nature suggests would avoid them. And then hypocrites may have flashes of comfort, glances, wishes, and good moods; though they have no constant delight in communion with God, yet they have superficial hopes, and are much taken with evangelical strains and tenders of the gospel; they have a desire to keep their consciences

quiet and peaceable; but you should labour for uprightness and special graces. Carnal men desire to be secure rather than sincere, that they may have some delectations and superficial tastes; but you are to look after 'things that accompany salvation,' Heb. 6:9. In the original it is τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, things that have salvation in them; you should be contented with no grace but that which is an undoubted pledge and evidence of heaven, not a loose hope of the gospel.

[3.] Be not satisfied with a common conversation. How is that? Partly thus: You must not live according to ordinary privileges and ordinary hopes: you must discover self-denial, as one trained up in the school of Christ. It is an accusation the apostle brings against the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 3:3, 'Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?' When men pretend to be God's peculiar people, and have nothing singular, but are given to worldly cares, vile passions, and corrupt affections, as other men are, this hardens carnal men. A christian should live like a wonder in his place, by discovering much self-denial and mortification in his conversation: Mat. 5:46, 'For if ye love them which love you, what reward have you? do not the publicans the same?' It is the greatest hypocrisy that can be in the world to profess to be a peculiar people, and to deny yourselves in nothing, but do as others do; we should live at another rate, and be more holy, more charitable, more heavenly.

[4.] Do not live according to ordinary examples. We may not frame and fashion ourselves to the guise of the world, because we are the Lord's peculiar people: Deut. 14:1, 2, 'Ye are the children of the Lord your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead; for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.' Dead

fishes swim with the stream; a christian should live in a counter motion to the world. You cannot do as others do, for you profess yourselves to be distinct. Especially we should consider this in times of general defection, not to run away from God: Micah 4:5, 'For all people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.' When every man sets up a distinct religion (that is the meaning of it), then the peculiar people of God should hold together, and show forth special zeal, and special strictness in the ways of God, in times of coldness, indifferency, and neutrality in religion: Josh. 24:15, 'And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.'

## **SERMON XXII**

Zealous of good works.—TITUS 2:14.

I COME to the last circumstance, the outward manifestation of Christ's purifying, that he might make us 'Zealous of good works.'

I shall consider it partly as the note of evidence of God's peculiar people, and partly as it falls under the aim of Christ's death.

Doct. Zeal for or in good works is a note of God's people and a fruit of Christ's purchase.

Here I shall inquire—(1.) What good works are; (2.) What it is to be zealous of good works; (3.) In what respect and place we are to put this zeal, or how it stands in order to the death of Christ.



I. What good works are. I shall show the kinds of them, and the requisites to them.

First, The kinds of good works. Good works, for the matter of them, may be distributed into four sorts or ranks—*opera cultus*, acts of worship; *opera vocationis*, works of our own particular function and calling; *opera justitiæ*, works of righteousness; *opera charitatis*, works of mercy.

1. *Opera cultus*, acts of worship, both internal and external; external, to pray, hear, read, meditate, to be much in communion with God. So for internal acts, as faith, and repentance, and love. All these are good works, and fitly placed in the first rank; of these we must be chiefly zealous, because our happiness lies in communion with God. It is notable Daniel would not omit prayer for one day, though he was forbidden by the king, and in danger of death: Dan. 6:10, 'Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went to his house; and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.' Certainly they have little zeal in them that care not to be frequent in communion with God, and call not upon his name. These are the chiefest parts of those good works we must press and exhort you to, where we are to be the more punctual, because the offence is immediately done to God. If we do not works of mercy and justice, there the offence is done to men; but neglecting the works of piety and godliness, the offence is done immediately to God, who is very jealous of being defrauded of his worship; and a failing in the least circumstance is a sin of a high nature; witness Uzzah slain for touching of the ark, and the fifty thousand slain at Bethshemesh for looking into the ark. And there is a notable instance of Daniel, as he would not omit prayer, so neither the opening of his casement. A man would have thought, being in

imminent danger of his life, he might have dispensed with that circumstance. Why would he open his casement? I answer—Because Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, required this ceremony as an act of faith; they were to pray towards the place where the house of God was, which was a type of Christ, to show their eye and heart should be to Christ whenever they call on God; therefore would he not dispense with opening his casement. Danger of life should not diminish our zeal here. These good works must be done with all exactness and care; God very precisely requires them. It is notable that will-worship is only in the duties of the first table; in love to our neighbours there is no place for superstition and will-worship. That may be done at one time that is not to be done at another. But in the expressions of our love to God, there precepts are immutable, we are to be exact. God here would not leave us at liberty, and be at the creature's finding; he knows his own institutions are the best means to keep up and preserve a respect and honour to himself, therefore here we must be punctual.

2. There are opera vocationis, the works of our calling. Every man should labour in that work to which he is called. Though such works be for our own support, yet God is pleased to interpret it as an act of obedience, by which he is glorified. Thus christians may honour God in the meanest calling. Servants in their relation are said to make the doctrine of God comely: Titus 2:10, 'That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.' Though they be in the condition of slaves, as then they were, bought and sold like beasts in the market, yet the apostle speaks to them, You may adorn the gospel of God. It is good to be profitable to human society in your way and place; for that is the account Paul gives of Onesimus, speaking of his former and present estate: Philem. 11, 'Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and me.' It is a great honour to God when we are faithful in the work of our relations. God

tries us by the duties of our personal calling, what honour we will bring to him there. Public acts of worship may be counterfeit, as prayer, hearing, receiving; but here is a constant and daily trial, whether we have grace or no, whether we have only our good moods, or a constant spring of grace in our hearts; and therefore he that is not good in his relation and calling is nowhere good, for that is the sphere of his activity; there he is to glorify God, and to discover the power of godliness. It is notable, when John had preached a sermon of repentance, his hearers came to him, and said, 'What shall we do?' Luke 3:10; as possibly you may say, What are these good works? And he presseth them to duties proper to their relations. To the publicans: 'Exact no more than that which is appointed you,' ver. 14. To the soldiers: 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages,' ver. 15.

3. There are opera justitiæ, works of righteousness; as to give every man his due, to hurt none, to live without wrong to any, or wreck of or breach upon our own consciences: Acts 24:16, 'Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.' These are good and profitable to human society, and the credit of religion is much concerned in them; hypocrites, that abound in worship, and are zealous for the institutions of Christ, most commonly are here defective; they are not just, righteous, and conscionable in their dealings; therefore they are strictly required: Micah 6:8, 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy?' God requires it of all, but especially of men professing piety, because making conscience of justice and equity in their dealing is both an argument of their sincerity and an ornament of their profession. God will have the world know that religion is a friend to human society. Indeed there are some that would be accounted religious persons, yet live as if the whole second table

were to be blotted out, and so they prove a stain and blot to their religion. Men judge by what is visible, and therefore, when you break all restraints of honesty and conscience, you disparage your profession: Neh. 5:9, 'Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?' Our adversaries are watchful, therefore keep up the credit and renown of religion, do justice, deal righteously, for that is the case in hand. Austin asserts, and so do the fathers generally, the primitive glory of the christian religion, that none were so just, so good in their relations, so true and faithful to their trust, as the christians were. Dent exercitum talem, tales imperatores, &c.—Let them show such magistrates, such people, such merchants, such soldiers, as the christian religion affords.

4. There are *opera charitatis et misericordiæ*, works of charity and mercy; as to relieve the poor, to do good to all, to help others by their purse, estate, counsel, admonition but especially to do good to them that are good: Gal. 6:10, 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.' These are usually, and by a proper term, called 'good works.' Therefore Dorcas is said to be 'full of good works and alms-deeds,' Acts 9:36; and 1 Tim. 6:16, 'Charge them that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.' It is not a thing left arbitrary to you, but laid upon you as a part of your charge and duty. It is a due debt you owe to God, if not to the poor; and we are thieves, not only in robbing and taking from others, but in not giving to others; and therefore the Holy Ghost useth that expression, Prov. 3:27, 'Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.' It is due by the law of God to those that are in distress. When God casts us upon objects of pity and christian commiseration, there is something due. By virtue of God's command the poor are a kind of owners, and

charity is a part of righteousness. Christians, you are stewards, and to dispense the estate you have according to the master's command. An unfaithful steward, that keeps all to himself, is a thief. A nobleman hath need of money, and sendeth to his steward; Go to my steward, and demand such a sum: will he deny him his own when his lord hath need of it? God hath commanded to give when he sendeth to you. How doth God send to us but in the course of his providence? We are one day to give an account, and what a sorry account shall we make! So much for pomp, so much for pleasure, so much for gorgeous apparel, so much for riot and luxury, and so little for the master's use. If a man to whom the care of children is committed should feed dogs and whelps, and neglect the children, what a sorry account would he give of his trust! God hath demanded his right by our poor brethren; he hath made them his proxies. Our bounty reacheth not to God himself, therefore he offereth them to our pity; what we do for them he accounteth as done to himself. Acts of mercy are required, that we may acknowledge God's property; it is our rent to the great landlord of the world. It is an honour put upon you; you are as gods to them to relieve them and comfort them. He could give without thee, but he trieth thee, and will have thee interested in the act. It is a great honour to religion; the world is taken with bounty: Rom. 5:7, 'Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die;' Titus 3:14, 'And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.' Let not others, that have not such high motives, or such glorious advantages, be more forward than ours.

Secondly, There are the requisites to a good work; there is the state of the person, and the uprightness of our principle, and the end and rule of our actions.

1. The state of the person; the person must be in Christ. Do we gather grapes off thorns and figs off thistles? We expect good fruit from a good tree. The person must first be in Christ, as the apostle saith: Titus 3:8, 'These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.' When the foundation of faith is first laid, and that is the root, then good works flow kindly, as the fruit that grows upon this tree. So in the text, first 'a peculiar people,' and then 'zealous of good works;' the leper under the law, till he was cleansed, all that he touched and all he went about was unclean; so till you are purified and cleansed by the work of grace passing upon your hearts, all that you do is abominable and filthy in God's eye. A natural man cannot be acceptable to God, nor perform an act of pure obedience, for he is an enemy: and therefore his gifts are giftless gifts, ἔχθρων δῶρα ἄδωρα. This method the apostle lays down: Eph. 2:10, 'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.' First his workmanship created in Christ; there is the fitness and preparation for good works. Works materially good may be done by God's enemies out of the strength of an unrenewed will, for carnal ends, without any respect and love to God; therefore first we must be reconciled to God; first we stir up men to love God, and then serve him. Will you have the graft or scion bear fruit till it be set in the stock? So can we bear fruit to God until we are planted in Christ? All the issue that is born before marriage is illegitimate; the acts are but bastard acts, and our graces are but bastard graces, till we are contracted to Christ.

2. The principles of operation must be right for the constitution of good works. These principles are faith, love, and obedience. Faith receives help from Christ, love inclines the heart, and obedience sways the conscience. In every good work these are the true gospel principles. Obedience sways the conscience by virtue of God's law,

love inclines the heart out of gratitude and thankfulness to God, and faith expects help and supply from Christ. In short, every good work is an action commanded by the law, but arising from faith in the gospel; it is done out of conscience and because of God's command, but yet willingly, because God is so good in Christ, and faith gives both help and encouragement. Without faith whatever is done is but sin; without obedience, it is but customary; and without love, it is but legal, and no evangelical work.

3. As the principle and operation, so the end must be right, to glorify God in whatever we do; not to gratify interest, that is carnal; not barely to promote the welfare of nature, that is but an act of natural self-love, aiming at his own preservation; not to pacify God, that is legal, and so a renouncing of the merit of Christ. So that every act of duty must be made a branch of gospel obedience arising from gratitude, that God may be glorified.

4. Those are good works which are commanded by God and conformable to the rule laid down in scripture. As sin is ἀνομία, a transgression of the law of God, so a good work is a conformity to the law of God. That is a good work which is agreeable to that rule that is the proper measure of good and evil: Ps. 119:6, 'Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments.' A strictness beyond the word, or besides the word, is a bastard and an apocryphal holiness, and but counterfeit coin, which is not current in the kingdom of grace.

## II. What is it to be zealous of good works?

1. We should be forward and cheerful in well-doing. Zeal is ferventior amoris gradus, a higher degree of love; the more love, the more forward in acting. Certainly zeal will readily set us a-work to do all we do willingly, freely, and cheerfully, as the apostle intimates, 2 Cor.

9:2, 'For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.' It is not zeal to stand hucking and disputing every inch with the Spirit of God. You are not only called to the bare practice of good works, but you must be first and most forward, and leaders of others; watch opportunities to do good, and take hold of them when they are offered. We should be glad of an opportunity offered, wherein to discover our affection to God and our hatred to sin. This is zeal to be willing and forward.

2. To be zealous is to be self-denying and resolute notwithstanding discouragements. Zeal is a mixed affection; it consists partly of love and partly of indignation; and so when I am zealous of a thing, I love that thing, and shake off and hate all that lets and hinders it. Zeal sets us a-work, and holds us to it notwithstanding discouragements. Zeal will not stick at a little labour and charge; the more resistance, the more glory. God's children are glad that they may not serve God with that which cost them nothing; as David professeth, 2 Sam. 24:24, 'I will not offer a burnt-offering unto the Lord my God of that which did cost me nothing.' Certainly men are not zealous, and their hearts are not set upon the ways of God, when every slight excuse will serve the turn, and every little profit draws them away, and every petty business doth hinder them, and break off communion with God, and every slender temptation doth interrupt and break off all their purposes and resolutions to duty and obedience, be it prayer, charity, or acts of righteousness. We must be resolute, for Gal. 4:18, 'It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.'

3. To be zealous of good works imports diligence and earnestness to advance piety to the highest pitch when we are not contented with any low degrees of obedience, but would fain carry out a godly conversation to the uttermost, to do it with all our heart. Is he



zealous that is contented with a little charity, with a little worship only? Sloth and idleness will not stand with zeal: Rom. 12:11, 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' Thus it will be when we are seething hot in spirit, as the word τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες signifies. A large affection cannot be contented with mean things and low degrees of holiness; nor lay a dead child in the room of a living one. This the apostle calls 'being rich in good works,' 1 Tim. 6:18. One or two acts will not serve the turn. Thus Dorcas is said to be 'full of good works,' Acts 9:36. How full? It is not an allusion to the fulness of a vessel that is full of water, or a chest full of clothes, but to the fulness of a tree laden with fruit: James 3:17, 'Full of mercy and good works.' Those that are planted into this noble vine, Jesus Christ, are full of good works.

4. To be zealous of good works is to be constant to the end. The fire on the altar never went out, but it was always maintained and kept in; so we must never let the fire of zeal go out. Zeal is not like fire in straw. Alas! sudden fervours are soon spent; they are but freewill pangs, the birth of an unrenewed will; but it is like fire in wood, that casts a lasting heat: Gal. 4:18, 'It is good to be zealously affected always.' Not at first only for a fit or pang; that doth not come from sanctification; therefore you should keep up your fervour. Watch against all decays, especially in age. The motions of youth are very vehement, for youth is full of eager spirits, and seems to be all on fire; but many times these motions are not so sincere; but the actions of age are more solid, though many times they want vigour and heat. Therefore strive to keep up your zeal: Gal. 5:7, 'Ye did run well, who did hinder you?' Carnal men, when their first heats are spent, give over; they grow cold, careless, and indifferent in matters of religion. But shall all these heats and desires of reformation be in vain, and shall we give over at length? In worldly things we will not give over when we have been at great cost; but shall all that is past in religion

be in vain? Gal. 3:4, 'Have you suffered so many things in vain, if it be yet in vain?' His meaning is, It is not like to be in vain, it will but tend to your greater condemnation. An adulteress is punished more than an harlot. It is more dishonour and ingratitude to God to tire at length.

III. The respect and place of zeal in good works; it is a note of God's people, and a fruit of Christ's death.

1. It is a note of God's people. *Unumquodque operatur secundum suam formam*. There is in the new creature a propensity and inclination to good works. As all creatures are created with an inclination to their proper operations, such a willing tendency is there in the new creature to those actions which are heavenly. As sparks fly upward and a stone moves downward, so the new creature is carried to obedience and holiness from a free principle within. The nature of everything is the principle of its motion. Faith will discover itself; therefore we read of 'God's fulfilling the work of faith with power,' 2 Thes. 1:11. Hope is called lively, from the effect: 1 Peter 1:3, 'He hath begotten us to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' Love constraineth: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' Good works are a note of the new creature: 'We are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,' Eph. 2:10. As an artificer sets a mark upon his workmanship that he might know it, so God sets a visible mark upon his servants; he doth not make a new creature for old works. Good works are christians *fidei quasi testes*, witnesses that you can bring to evidence the truth and power of grace. Luther saith, Good works are faith incarnate; that is, faith is manifested by them, as the Son of God was manifested in the flesh. They are witnesses to the world, to yourselves, and unto God that you are his. They are signs and witnesses to the world. This is the badge by which God would have

his peculiar children known; not by pomp and worldly splendour, not by any outward excellency, riches, greatness, and estate, but by zeal to good works. There are no barren trees in Christ's garden; it is not for the honour of God, for our heavenly Father would be glorified in his servants' bringing forth much fruit: John 15:8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.' God standeth much upon his honour. Now it is for the honour of God that all which are planted and grafted into Christ should be full of good works. And they are testimonies to ourselves: 2 Peter 1:10, 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' Some copies add  $\delta\iota\grave{\alpha}$  τῶν ἐργῶν, make your calling and election sure by good works; certainly it may be collected from the context. He bids them, ver. 5, 'add to their faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge,' &c., and so they might come to make their calling and election sure. Graces are not discerned by their habits, but by their acts and exercise. Look, as in a tree, the sap and life is hid, but the fruit and apples do appear, so zeal of good works is that which appears, and so it manifests and clears up your condition. This is the great note of difference between us and the profane; they are zealous for the devil's kingdom, factors for hell: John 8:44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do.' They are known by their works; they are earnest for Satan, zealous for the devil, follow sin with earnestness, 'and do evil with both hands earnestly,' Micah 7:3. It is the difference between us and civil men, but unregenerate; they are like cypress trees, fair and tall, but fruitless, of a comely life, but none of these good works are to be found in them. It is the difference between us and hypocrites; a hypocrite, like a carbuncle, seems to be all on a fire, but when you touch it, it is quite cold; so they pretend to religion, talk much, but have no true regular zeal, no spiritual warmth. It is notable our Lord himself proves his divine original by his works: John 10:38, 'Though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.' So is

this the sensible evidence you are in Christ and Christ in you. Graces are not always evident in feeling, but in fruit; the effects cannot be hid. Then they are signs and evidences to God himself; the Lord will look upon them as marks and evidences of his people. Look, as the destroying angel was to be guided by a sign, Exod. 12:12, 13, by the sprinkling of the door-posts, not that he needed it, but because God would have it to be so, so the Lord suits his dispensations, and guides them by a sign. It is true God in his gifts is arbitrary, but in his judgments he proceeds by rule, according to our works. At the last day God will judge you not by your profession, but by your practice, what you have done; he will not say, You have prophesied in my name, you have eaten and drunk in my presence; but, You have fed me, clothed me, visited me. That the faith of the elect might be found to praise and honour, he will have works produced. Not that God wants evidences of our sincerity, but he will have all the world know we have not been unfruitful. A man that expecteth to be posed is preparing to answer, and would give something to know the questions beforehand. Christ hath told us what are the questions upon which we shall be examined and taxed at the day of judgment; he will say, Have you fed and clothed my people? have you ministered to their necessities? have you relieved them with spiritual counsel and admonition? have you been good, holy, and just? Therefore let us provide to give an answer, that we might not be ashamed at the last day. Thus this zeal for good works hath the place and room of a witness; to God, as the rule and measure of his process; to ourselves, as the ground of our assurance; and to the world, as the great vindication of the honour of our profession.

2. It is a fruit of Christ's death; partly by way of obligation, for certainly God hath not been at all this cost and labour for nothing; he did not project the sending of Christ, and Jesus Christ did not so give up himself in the work of redemption for nothing, but to inflame us

to a great height of piety. They that live at a low rate of holiness cross and disgrace the whole design of the gospel; they are not apprehensive of the love of God in giving Christ, nor the love of Christ in giving himself. Our redemption was carried on in such a way, not only that the comfort, but also the duty of the creature might be raised to the highest. Partly, again, as Christ hath purchased the gift of the Spirit to fit us for good works, yea, to make us zealous in them: Titus 3:5, 6, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' Now the Spirit dwelleth in our hearts to set our graces a working: John 4:14, 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' So John 7:38, 39, 'He that believeth on me, as the scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him shall receive.' The Spirit, is not a fountain sealed up, but flowing forth. The Spirit of God is a mighty Spirit, and comes in upon the soul not only as a gentle blast, but as a mighty rushing wind; he comes not only in the appearance of a dove, but of eleven tongues of fire, Acts 2. He comes as a Spirit of power to quicken and awaken the soul to great heights and fervours in obedience. Look, as men acted by Satan, the unclean spirit, are restless in evil, and carried headlong as the herd of swine into the sea, so those that are acted by the Spirit of God are much more carried on with great earnestness in the ways of God. The devil hath not such advantages to work upon his instruments as the Spirit of God hath upon us. The devil works and operates in all the children of disobedience: Eph. 2:3, 'The Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' But the devil cannot work but by man's consent, neither can he work immediately upon the soul, but only by the senses and by the fancy, but the Spirit of God can work immediately upon them in whom he acts. Therefore being acted by him, they must needs be zealous and

earnest; for the Spirit of God nescit tarda molimina, knows no slow motions. The soul in itself is dead and slothful, and apt to yield to laziness and delays; but when we are acted and quickened by the mighty Spirit, then 'draw us, and we will run after thee,' Cant. 1:4. When the Spirit puts forth its force upon the soul, such as are drawn by the Holy Ghost, they are not in jest, as carnal men are, but in earnest; they do not dally with religion, but make it their great business to surprise heaven, and carry on constant communion with God: Mat. 11:12, 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.'

Use 1. Information.

1. That grace is no enemy to good works. Libertinism is ancient and natural. Christ died to improve piety, not to lessen it, but to raise it to the highest, to make us zealous of good works, that we might be carried on to heaven with full sails; therefore he that grows looser, less watchful against sin, less diligent in the exercise of holiness, less frequent in communion with God, less humble and penitent after committing of sin, offers the greatest abuse to grace that may be, and perverts its natural use. There is no freezing by the fire; we may freeze indeed by painted fire, that may make us contract chilliness and drowsiness, but true grace is a fire that warms and inflames our affections. Christ came to make us more cheerful and lively, but not slack, careless, and cold.

2. It informs us what little reason the world hath to cry out upon zealots, for Christ died to make us ζηλωτὰς, 'zealous of good works.' Men that are only contented with a brain religion, speculative notions, they cannot endure heats and fervours; they would have a religion to talk of, but not to live by; therefore they are cold and indifferent; and when the children of God offer a holy violence to the

kingdom of heaven, they become a matter of scorn and opposition to them. And besides, formal men cannot endure to be outstripped, and therefore malign what they will not imitate; as those that are at the bottom of the hill fret at those that are at the top; and men of a lazy and slow pace envy them that are more zealous, strict, and holy: but they have little cause to envy them, for Christ died to make us zealous of good works.

3. It informs us, if we would expect any benefit by Christ's death, we must be zealous of good works, and more warm in the service of God. A cold christian will have but cold comfort. For whom did Christ die? For those that are zealous of good works: Mat. 11:12, 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' It is an allusion to Exod. 19:23, 24, where there was a rail about the mount of God, that the people might not break through; but when John the Baptist began to discover the grace of God, and pointed to the Lamb of God, then the kingdom of God suffered violence, men began to break through and press upon God; there is a free access to God, and men are earnest and will not be denied entrance: Mat. 5:20, 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.' It is not cold prayers, and yawning devotions, and drowsy wishes, when men are half asleep, that will serve in this case; heaven is gotten by force, and surprised by onset and storm; it signifies breaking through the rail, and all restraints that are set to keep us off from God.

Use 2. To stir us up to this zeal of good works. In a dead and drowsy age we need an alarum. Knowledge hath now devoured practice in these decaying times. Seneca complains men are altogether studious for filling their brains, not warming their hearts; and when once men became more learned, they were less good. The world is altogether for storing the head with notions, empty and airy strains; so that if

Christ should come amongst us, he would find few zealous, but a company of lazy christians that live at a low cheap rate of christianity. High-flown we are indeed in our fancies, in notions and pretences, but low and flat in practice and conversation. Usually thus it is in the time of the church's prosperity; like a river, it loseth in depth what it gains in breadth. Then it hath many friends, but their love is not so strong nor so hot as at other times. Salvian complains, *Multiplicatis fidei populis, fides diminuta est; et crescentibus filiis, mater ægrotat, &c.*—When professors were multiplied, their faith was lessened; and as a mother grows the weaker the more children she bears, so doth religion grow weaker and weaker; when every one takes up a cold profession, they learn formality one of another. And he goes on, *Quantum copiæ accessit, tantum disciplinæ recessit;* as a large body is less active. *In audito genere processus et recessus, crescens simul et decrescens*—When the church increaseth in multitude, and decreaseth in vigour and strength, it loseth in spirit what it enjoyeth in temporal felicity. Thus it often falls out with the church of God that, when religion is fair, many take up the profession; but alas! it is but weak and spiritless, without any life and vigour. Therefore, in such a drowsy age and dead times, we need alarums and quickening excitations to awaken our zeal again for solid piety, for those good works that are commended to us in the scripture. Therefore let us inquire what kind of enforcements and considerations are likely to be most operative to press us to this zeal and care of good works.

1. Consider how violent and earnest carnal men are in the ways of sin, and shall they serve Satan better than you serve God? Oh! consider, you have a better master, better work, and better wages; their master is the devil, their work is the basest drudgery, being slaves to their own lusts; and their wages are suitable, their reward is everlasting damnation, and a separation from the presence of the



Lord. How active are wicked men for the kingdom of darkness! how zealous and earnest to ruin themselves, as if they could not be damned soon enough! Isa. 5:19, 'They draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope.' The meaning is, they would sin though it cost them a great deal of pains and sorrow, and though they could not sin at a cheap rate. The prophet doth not say they were drawn into sin as into a gin and snare, but they themselves did draw on sin; it is horrid work, yet they delight in it, toiling and tiring themselves as beasts at a plough; they were sinful, though it cost them sorrow and pain. There is no corruption but it puts you to some self-denial. Luxury is costly, and he that loves wine and oil, saith Solomon, will be poor. Pride, we say, will endure the cold, and vainglory will expose a man to danger and ruin. Worldliness encroacheth upon pleasantness and the comforts of life; a worldling will 'rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrows,' Ps. 127:2. With what earnestness and unwearied diligence do carnal men pursue after a few trifles! How do they lay out all their wisdom and all their sagacity about worldly things: Luke 16:8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.' As children are busy about toys and puppets, so they cumber themselves about much serving, and all their life is but care and disquiet, and a constant self-denial: Ps. 39:6, 'Surely every man walketh in a vain show, surely they disquiet themselves in vain.' They make a great deal of stir and bustle, and many times, when all is got, what is it? A sorry comfort, and that which must be left on this side the grave. Thus wicked men are active and restless in their way. So for idolatry; with what cost and diligence do men promote false worship, and compass sea and land to make a proselyte; they will give rivers of oil and thousands of rams; they do not stand at pains and cost. God bids the prophet look upon this sight (as indeed it is worthy of a christian consideration): Jer. 7:17, 18, 'Seest thou what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood,

and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods.' What a busy diligence is here to promote their false worship! Fathers, children, husbands, wives, they all put their helping hands to the work, and find some employment or other. Where will you have a family so earnest and zealous to set up the work of God? Oh! how can you look upon such a spectacle as this without shame, that a lust should have more power with them than the love of God with you? Is it not a shame that Amnon can be sick for Tamar, and yet you cannot be sick for Christ, as the spouse was for her beloved? You have high motives, nobler employment; your work is the perfection of the creature; the noblest faculties are exercised in the noblest way of operation; your rewards are more excellent, and you have greater advantages and helps. Shall they take more pains to undo their souls than you do to save your souls? We read in ecclesiastical story, when Pambus saw a harlot curiously dressed, he wept, partly to see one take so much pains for her own eternal ruin, and partly because he had not been so careful to please Christ, and to dress up his soul for Christ, as she was to please her wanton lover. Christians, whenever you are cast upon such a sight or spectacle, when you come by a shop, and see men labour and toiling out their hearts, and all this for temporal gain, doth it not make you blush and be ashamed that you are so negligent and careless in the work of God?

2. Consider you yourselves have been violent and earnest in the ways of sin, and will you not do as much for God? How may every one say, When I was a wicked and carnal man, I followed it with all my heart, and shall I do less now in a state of grace? The apostle hath a notable expression, Rom. 6:19, 'I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh; for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now

yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.' Mark how the apostle brings it in with a preface, ἀνθρώπινον λέγω, 'I speak after the manner of men;' that is, men in common sense and reason judge it equal that they should be as diligent to come up to the height of sanctification, and as zealous of good works, as ever you were to come up to the height of sin and were zealous for hell. Should you not have as much care to save yourselves as to ruin and damn yourselves? You made haste to do evil, as if you could not be damned soon enough; now in reason you should be as zealous for God as for Satan. Heretofore we could riot away the day, and card away the night; and shall not some days be spent in fasting and prayer? Shall every hour be begrudged that is bestowed upon God? You will say, It is good reason God should be served as well as the devil; but the flesh is weak, and how shall we be able to serve God? But, says the apostle, 'I speak according to the weakness of your flesh.' It is an equitable, modest, and just proposal that I make, and with condescension to your infirmities, that you should be as earnest and zealous for God, and to grow in grace, as ever you were zealous to increase your guilt and sin. Formerly I never ceased till I got to the top, till I was so wicked that I could hardly be more wicked; why should I not now labour to grow in grace? Can conversion be right when sin had more of our thoughts than ever God had? The apostle's rule holds thus, so much time, so much cost and care, so much love and delight as hath been spent in sin, so much must be spent in the service of God. Oh! say then, Why should I not be as earnest to grow in grace, to be as zealous and holy as I can? It is observed of Paul that in his natural condition he was mad against Christ: Acts 26:11, 'I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.' Look upon him converted, and see, is he not as earnest and mad for Christ as ever he was against him? 2 Cor. 5:13, 'For whether we be beside ourselves, it is for God.' Do but look back and see what

a drudge you have been to sin! with what zeal and self-denial you hazarded your souls! Oh! your pace was swift and furious, like Jehu's march, and will you be cold and slow in the work of God? Nay, it may be this is your case to this very day, you are very busy and painful to undo your souls. Oh! this active industry that is misplaced and misemployed, if the object were but changed, would do well for heaven. Who would pay as dear for hell as for heaven? Who would pay as dear for glass as for jewels? What a stir is there to serve a lust? Half of this, through the blessing of God, might have conduced to save a soul.

3. It may be you have set out late, and then it is but reason you should mend your pace, and be earnest and zealous for God: 1 Peter 4:3, 'The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, whilst you lived in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.' Oh! it is enough, enough! Travellers that tarry long in their inn ride faster in an hour when they set forth than in two before. You have tarried long, therefore put forward. We see that slow plants bring forth the most fruit, as if nature would recompense the slowness with the plenty; so you that were long ere you were called to God, what reason have you to be diligent and earnest, and zealous in the work of the Lord? You will think this concerns some that are called in the dotting time of their age, but all men set forth too late. If we consider God's eternal love, we should be ashamed that we began no sooner. God loved us before we were: 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him,' Ps. 103:17; from one eternity to another, God loved us before we had a being, before we were lovely; and when we had a being, he loved us when we knew not that he loved us. We were transgressors from the womb, defiled and polluted creatures in our birth and original; and afterwards we knew how to offend and grieve him before we knew how to serve and love him. If

we have any gratitude to God, we should be ashamed that we began so late. God began early with us; from all eternity he was our God; as long as God is God, he is our God; therefore now we should mend our pace, and double our diligence, and be more earnest and zealous in the ways of God.

4. Consider what Christ hath done in purchasing our salvation. It was no play and sport to redeem the world. Christ was not in jest when he yielded up himself to be tempted, to be persecuted, to be crucified, to be exercised with bitter agonies; and is all this expense and cost for nothing? The temptations of Christ and the sorrows of his cross they all show that it is no easy matter to bring a soul to heaven; and therefore shall not we be zealous? Carnal and careless christians do lessen Christ's sufferings interpretatively, as if they were not so great; they trifle and dally, and compliment in religion, and so do not make it so weighty a matter to save their souls: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?' and ver. 46, 'Thus it behoved Christ to suffer.' As matters were laid in God's decree, nothing else would serve the turn; Christ ought to suffer, it was fore-ordained.

But you will say, How do you force this zealousness and earnestness for good works out of what Christ hath done; for if he hath done so much, what need we do any more!

I answer—He is gone to heaven as the captain of our salvation, and we must follow him in the same way; he is gone to seize upon heaven in our right, but we must force our way thither. Canaan was given to Israel, but they were to take possession by the sword; or as Caleb was to drive out the giants out of Hebron, though it was given him. So though heaven be given, and Christ hath seized upon it in our right, yet we have our conflicts. Indeed the power of Satan is broken, his

head bruised, yet there are some relics of the battle left for our exercise; and therefore be earnest, be zealous.

5. Consider, to quicken you to this zeal, the enemies of religion are violent and earnest. The devil is busy, always compassing the earth to and fro, therefore we had need stand upon our guard: 1 Peter 5:8, 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.' In your duties, in your shops, in your closets, in the congregation, the devil is still at hand. Oh! how should we bestir ourselves! The enemy watcheth, and dost thou sleep? The devil makes an advantage of our carelessness and security: 'While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares,' Mat. 13:25. While we are cold and careless the devil doth prevail over us, he doth but watch to make an advantage of our carelessness and security. Birds are seldom taken in their flight, but when they rest and pitch; so Satan hath no advantage against us when we are upon our course and wing, when we make speed to heaven, and are zealous and earnest in our flight. Satan hath busy agents in the world, that are watchful and zealous factors for hell; they ever shame the church: Luke 16:8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.' They do more against God than we do for God. Satan's cause is most befriended in the world, and it is sure to be followed diligently and earnestly, as a stone runs downhill of its own accord. The children of this world in their employments, in their sports, are wise, active, and diligent, and follow it earnestly. While the disciples were asleep, Judas and his company were watchful and plotting. Usually Satan's instruments get the start of us; we are cold and frigid in the cause of Christ; therefore shall we not be earnest and zealous for God?

6. Consider, a small measure of grace will not become you that profess Christ and Christianity, because you are to exceed others;

there must be something more than ordinary in your conversation: Mat. 5:20, 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;' and ver. 47, 'What do you more than others?' A peculiar people must live in a peculiar manner. There must be something over and above in you of what is found in others. The pharisees were very strict; the apostle calleth them ἀκριβεσάτην αἵρεσιν, 'the most straitest sect,' Acts 26:5; they did excel all others: Luke 18:11, 'The pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee I am not as other men.' There were washings, tithings, fastings, almsgiving, and corporal mortifications. Oh! how did the pharisees profess περισσένειν, to increase the law, and supererogate; they exceeded all others. Now, saith Christ, you must exceed their exceedings. It were wondrous to tell you what a painful and costly profession of holiness they made, insomuch that the Jews thought that if but two men were to be saved, one should be a scribe and the other a pharisee; such were their long devotions, their sad looks, their hard penances, their bountiful alms; they did excel in all these things. Therefore do not tell me merely of hearing much and praying much; except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, Christ will shut you out of the kingdom of heaven. Christians, it would make a man's heart to tremble to consider how far a natural man may go by the strength of an unrenewed will; how just, and patient, and temperate, and meek some of the heathens were, how much they could overcome their passions, and deny their worldly concernments; to tell you how far a hypocrite, a temporary believer, or a convinced man may go, and yet there must τὶ περισσὸν, be something over and above in you, something more than a heathen can do, or a hypocrite can do, or a temporary believer, or a convinced hypocrite can do; you need to carry piety to greater heights, and endeavour after a greater degree of

sanctification, for there must be something excellent and exceeding both in your hearts and lives.

7. Consider that all things in the christian religion are transcending and high, and call for somewhat more than ordinary. There are great obligations, holy precepts, rich advantages, glorious hopes. Great obligations: God was devising what he should give us, and in the covenant he hath given us himself, and could give us no greater thing; he gave us his Son to die for us, and his Spirit, and with Christ he hath given us all things. It should constrain and urge us more than it doth: 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.' What a poor requital is the best that we can do! We have too many mercies, as too much wood puts out the fire. God's love is gone to the uttermost, therefore we should not be cold and careless, but double our diligence in the work of God. Then we have rich advantages, the supplies of the Spirit. A poor heathen may torture and rack his brain how to find out a remedy for sin; some of them, because they could not mortify a lust, hanged themselves, and some put out their eyes, and offered violence to nature. Oh! but we have a mighty Spirit. Mark! there is not only a person of the godhead to merit our salvation, but a person of the godhead to work it out. Next to the gift of Christ, we have the gift of the Spirit. Oh! it should be a shame, that when we have such a keen sword to cut the throat of our lusts, that we act so faintly, use it so feebly, and are no more valiant. And then what pure and excellent precepts have we in the christian religion, reaching not only to the act, but the very aim, to the intents and thoughts and secret workings of the heart: Ps. 19:7, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' And not only to the sin, but to the lust: 'Thy commandment is exceeding broad,' Ps. 119:96. Then



we have glorious hopes. The scriptures, that are a perfect rule in all other cases, yet herein they profess their imperfection: 1 Cor. 13:9, 'We prophesy but in part,' words not fit and great enough to tell us of our hopes: 2 Cor. 4:17, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν. It is the highest strain and reach of fancy. In all other things the garment of fancy is too great for the body wherewith it is to be clothed. Fancy never takes a right measure of things; but the highest suppositions are too short to express the greatness of those hopes that are provided for you. And then for the dreadful punishments; we are told of a worm that never dies, of a fire that shall never be quenched, of a pit without a bottom, of torments that are without end, and without case. Our hearts are filled with horror when we do but think of these things: and shall we not burn now with zeal for God, when we are in danger of burning in hell-fire for ever hereafter? If now we are cold and slow in good works, it were the most incongruous thing in the world, where there is such a high elevation of duty and comfort. The whole scriptures are formed to elevate these things to the highest pitch, that we may not be backward and slow in the christian religion. All things are sublime, and therefore call for something more than ordinary.

8. Consider the great danger of coldness both to ourselves and others. To ourselves; where there is no zeal, there will be decay: Prov. 18:9, 'He also that is slothful in work is brother to him that is a great waster.' Not to go forward is to go backward. Standing pools corrupt; as a man that rows against the tide and stream, if he doth not ply the oar, he will lose ground, and be carried away apace; so if we be not zealous we cannot stand and keep our ground, there will be a decay. Bernard observes to this purpose, that all the angels in Jacob's ladder were either ascending or descending; there is no stay, but either going up or going down. When they lose their first love, their zeal is

gone: Rev. 2:4, 5, 'Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works.' What is the reason men grow weary of truth, weary of holiness, weary of prayer, ordinances? They do not keep up a constant diligence. First they lost their zeal, they became indifferent, cold, and careless, then off goes the service of God; first their love, and then their works. So consider the danger of it to others. Men grow formal by imitation. When christians high in profession grow formal, cold and careless, this makes their neighbours so. There is nothing hardens more than a cold professor; it makes men sit upon their lees. Mortified and strict christians upbraid others by their example. A man cannot come into the company of a mortified strict christian but his heart will upbraid and shame him. And therefore if in this general decay we have learned deadness and formality one of another, let us strive now who shall be most forward in the ways of grace: Heb. 10:24, 'Let us Consider one another, to provoke to love and good works.' You shall see, in the times when idolatry was like to go down, Isa. 41:6, 7, 'They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage; so the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil,' &c. They were strengthening one another to plead for their shrines, and to get up their pictures and idols again, that their trade might not go down. Thus idolaters hold in a string. Oh! what a religious correspondency should there be in the children of God. When the power of godliness is like to decay and go down, how should we strengthen and encourage one another and provoke one another by holy example to be more zealous, that we may not contract the guilt of their deadness and formality!

9. Consider, there is no danger in zeal; we cannot do too much in solid piety. The least is more than enough in sin, because everything is too much there; but in grace there is never enough. In external

worship indeed there may be too much, as in pomp and ceremonies; when men will be decking God's ordinances with gawdery, it is not proportionable to the end of worship, therefore there may be too much. And in particular exercises there may be too much; it is good to keep a decorum in praying and hearing. But now, in the love of God, and zeal for God, and the service of God, and solid piety, there can be no excess; you cannot be too heavenly or too holy. There is a great deal of danger of doing too little. Many 'come short of the glory of God,' Rom. 3:23. O christians! you cannot be too busy for saving your souls, nor too earnest. 2 Peter 1:11, we are pressed to labour after 'an abundant entrance.' There are some that are afar off, that do not enter at all, that neither strive nor seek to enter, that are as swine, filthy, abominable, unprofitable, good for nothing but to ruin themselves, as profane persons and heathens; and some are very nigh to the kingdom of God, as the moral man upon the brink and border, and as he that was 'almost persuaded to be a christian,' Acts 26:28. Others again make a hard shift to get to heaven; they are scarcely saved, or saved as by fire. But others are carried on with full sails, their hearts are enlarged to God. This is our duty, to labour to get this abundant entrance. Some seek to enter, and are not able; they go far, and yet perish: Luke 13:24, 'Many shall seek to enter, but shall not be able.'

10. Consider, if your hearts be dead and cold, you lose the comfort of all your christian privileges. A dead christian is as bad as none at all. You cannot take comfort in your conversion. A change without life and zeal is but a moral reformation, not a regeneration, for regeneration is a quickening, and a begetting to life: Eph. 2:5, 'Even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ.' That is true conversion, where they are not only changed, but quickened. Heathens have been changed from profaneness to a moral course. If you pretend to close with Christ,

and find no life, you can take no comfort in your faith; it is but a cloud, a fancy: John 10:10, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' So for repentance and trouble for sin; if no zeal follows it, it is naught: Rev. 3:19, 'Be zealous therefore, and repent.' So for being members of the church; you cannot take comfort of being Christ's members without zeal, for all the true members of Christ's mystical body are living stones: 1 Peter 2:5, 'Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.' It is true in the outward building there are some carved stones, so in the visible church there are many polished with gifts which may serve in their place to hold up the building; but they are not living stones, for they want life. And then for hope, it is but a fancy and dream if we be dead and sluggish. It is called 'a lively hope,' 1 Peter 1:3; and if thou art drowsy still, and neglectful of God, surely thou art but in a dream. Canst thou take comfort in this, that thou art a constant hearer of the word, if thou art as backward to holiness and good works as ever? Phil. 2:16, 'Holding forth the word of life.' The word is the word of life; it doth not leave us dull, slow, and backward. If there be not life and zeal, all is nothing.

11. Consider how odious want of zeal is to God. He will not own a cold, careless, neutral spirit: Rev. 3:16, 'So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spue thee out of my mouth.' Cold lazy professors, that have nothing but a dead form, are as lukewarm water to the stomach; and there is nothing the stomach nauseates so much as that which is lukewarm. So will God cast them out with much loathing; he will uncase and pluck off their masks, and reveal them to the congregation, and make them odious; this is worse than stark cold. It is not enough that we are not violent against the ways of God, but are you zealous for God? otherwise you are odious to God: Mat. 25:30, 'Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness;' and not only the grossly wicked, but the

unprofitable servant. Though he did not abuse his talent, nor embezzle it away, yet he hid it in a napkin. If you hide your talent, be it parts, estate, or authority, are you then zealous for God? Useless, sapless, lifeless christians incur the penalty of damnation as well as the openly wicked; they are cast into hell; therefore rest not in a dead form.

12. Consider how dishonourable it is to the living God to serve him with a dead heart and cold affections, when he hath indented with you upon such glorious and noble terms. Heathens, that worship the sun, offer to him a flying horse, because of the swiftness of his motion: 2 Kings 23:11, 'He took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun.' So our worshipping of the living God must not be dead and cold: Heb. 9:14, 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?' God, that is a living God, must have lively service; but men worship him as a dead idol. In an earthly matter we would not be so cold and careless in our treaties and transactions: Mal. 1:8, 'Offer it to thy governor; will he be pleased with you, or accept your person, saith the Lord?' What you do, it must be done with all the heart and all the might. Consider, religion is not a fancy. You do not worship the vanities of the gentiles, therefore be not dead, cold, and careless. You worship the living God, and he will be served with life, zeal, and strength of affection.

-----

MONERGISM BOOKS

Looking for that Blessed Hope, by Thomas Manton, Copyright ©  
2020

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. By payment of the required fees, you have been granted the non-exclusive, non-transferable right to access and read the text of this e-book on-screen. No part of this text may be reproduced, transmitted, downloaded, decompiled, reverse engineered, or stored in or introduced into any information storage and retrieval system, in any form or by any means, whether electronic or mechanical, now known or hereinafter invented, without the express written permission of Monergism Books.

ePub, .mobi & .pdf Editions June 2020. Requests for information should be addressed to: Monergism Books, PO Box 491, West Linn, OR 97068