

*JESUS ALL IN ALL:*

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**DISCOURSES**

**DELIVERED CHIEFLY ON SACRAMENTAL  
OCCASIONS.**

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*BY ALEXANDER PROUDFIT, D. D.*  
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*And gave him to be the head over all things to the church,  
which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*  
.....EPHESIANS i. 22, 23.

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W. L. Ackersbush

To

Mrs. Potter

5<sup>th</sup> July 1810.

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# JESUS ALL IN ALL.

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## SERMON I.

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2. CORINTHIANS, V. 14.

*For the Love of Christ constraineth us.*

WE are assembled once more to commemorate the death of our Saviour, and Lord in the ordinance of the supper. This institution affords a most interesting and astonishing display of his love to our perishing world. The bread and the wine, the elements used in this ordinance, are a visible, affecting exhibition of "the Lord of glory wounded and bruised for our iniquities;" suffering, bleeding, and dying for the redemption of apostate, guilty man. The peculiar circumstances of the Son of God when he instituted the supper are eminently calculated to "commend his love to us," and to excite our gratitude to Him. He thought upon us, and ordained this feast for our entertainment not when the admiring multitude acknowledged that "man never spake like this man:" not when they led him in triumph to Jerusalem "spreading their garments in the way," and shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David." Very different were the circumstances of our Lord when he appointed this ordinance for the support and edification of his followers. It was done "the same night in which he was betrayed." The darkest scene of his humil-

iation and suffering lay open to his view : The cup of sorrow which he had often tasted, and the last dregs of which he was doomed to exhaust stood full before him. Already he was treacherously sold by one disciple ; he knew that he was soon to be disowned, and deserted by the other disciples, and that his blood must shortly flow by the hands of those whom " he came to seek and to save ; " already his " soul was troubled," and recoiling at the prospect of the horror of that wrath which was soon to overwhelm him he began to expostulate, " O my Father ! if it be possible let this cup pass from me. " But amidst these circumstances of humiliation and agony, the compassionate Jesus was not unmindful of us ; he spread a table, and covered it with the richest blessings which his bounty could afford. I could not choose a subject more appropriate to the occasion of our meeting ; more adapted to affect your hearts, and my own, or prepare us for a suitable and profitable approach to this sacred festival than the love of Jesus Christ. The great apostle tells us the effect which was produced on his own soul by contemplations on this theme, " the love of Christ constraineth us. "

The word which we translate " constrain " is often used in the New-Testament, and literally signifies *to hold, to possess, or exercise dominion over ; so completely to subdue the object upon which it fastens as to control or carry it along at pleasure.* " The love of Jesus," says Paul, " constrains me ; it has obtained,

and now possesses an unlimited dominion over my soul. While I contemplate its freedom, its riches, its sovereignty, its immensity, I am lost in amazement; I am altogether transported and scarcely know whether I am in the body or out of the body. “The Lord grant that such, through the abundant unction of the Holy One, may be the effect on our cold, lifeless hearts: while I endeavor,

I. To mention some instances of the Saviour’s love, and shew

II. To what this love will constrain us when powerfully felt.

I. The Saviour’s love is luminously manifested by what he has already done for us. But we feel utterly at a loss when we attempt to enumerate particulars, because the powers of language must fall infinitely short of the subject. To form any suitable conceptions of the love of God our Saviour it would be necessary to comprehend the number and exquisiteness of those sorrows which he endured from his cradle to his cross, the enormity of all those crimes which he expiated; the odiousness of those pollutions which he washes away; the terrors of that “second death the sting” of which he extracted; the majesty of that law the precept of which he obeyed in his life, and the penalty of which he sustained in his death; the horrors of that hell from which he effectually redeems, and the glories of that kingdom to which he has procured a full, unalienable title. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a

curse for us. That he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate." He made, in short, a real, a full, and everlasting satisfaction for the iniquities of his chosen. This truth, so expressive of the Redeemer's love, and so replete with consolation to his followers, is taught in innumerable passages, and in language easy to be understood. "He was made of a woman; made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" "he is the end of the law;" he, as the Substitute and Sponsor of his people, obeyed and suffered until there was no more demand either for obedience, or suffering; until the injuries of the law were fully repaired, and the claims of divine justice paid to the uttermost farthing. "He through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot, and by this one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified." Christian, has thy conscience been often agitated by the recollection of past offences? Hast thou been ready with the Patriarch to cry out, "the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." When, during these seasons of disquietude and dismay, thou art enabled to plead the atoning blood of Jesus, his covenant righteousness and to behold the Father as fully pacified through him, art thou not constrained to adore his love? Dost thou not consider it as presenting "a breadth, and length,

and depth and height" which surpass all comprehension?

But when in connection with the blessings which the Redeemer procured we consider the expence by which they were obtained our admiration of his love necessarily encreases. Had he purchased our pardon by a price easily furnished, or removed every obstacle in our way to glory without incurring much labor, or overcoming strong opposition; had he expiated our guilt by the blood of lambs, or he-goats; had he washed off the stain of our iniquities by the application of rivers of oil, or opened a way to the holiest of all by a single effort of his arm, his love must have appeared great, but it appeared infinitely greater, infinitely more disinterested when we reflect that our salvation was procured at the expence of so much toil, and shame, and suffering to himself. Indeed, we can conceive no species of degradation to which the Saviour did not stoop nor any suffering which he did not endure in obtaining the redemption of sinners. That we might enjoy "riches, durable and unsearchable riches," "he became poor" in the extreme; he passed like a stranger, and sojourner on his own earth and "he had not where to lay his head:" he did not possess the least portion of this world as his own, although he was really its Creator and Lord. "That he might redeem us from the curse of the law" he endured that curse in his own body and soul because in the estimation of law and justice, of earth and heaven "cursed is every one that

hangeth on a tree." That he might bring us near to the Father, and provide for us fulness of joy in his presence he must be shut out for a season from the fellowship of the Father, and be refused a solitary ray of his countenance to support or revive; he must be treated as an alien, and outcast. Believer, hast thou any assurance of Jehovah's love, and any enlivening prospect of his communion forever, remember that to obtain this a "horror of great darkness" overspread the soul of the Surety, and extorted from his lips that melancholy exclamation, "my God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" It is this circumstance which ought to enhance the blessings of salvation in thine esteem, and excite the most elevated conceptions of the Redemer's love that the purchase of these blessings cost him a life of exquisite, unparalleled sorrow, and "brought him at last to the dust of death." This was a consideration which the apostle often mentioned for influencing his own heart, and the hearts of his hearers, and readers. "He loved me and gave himself for me. He was made sin, a sin-offering for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This consideration will command the admiration of the redeemed, and swell the arches of heaven with shouts of adoration, and thanksgiving through eternity. They now sing, and will be ever singing, "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen." Again, they turn their faces towards the throne, and say with loud voices, "thou art worthy—for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." What mingled emotions of wonder, and gratitude, and joy must they ever feel when they behold in the midst of the throne "a lamb as it had been slain," and then reflect that *their joys had been procured by his sorrows; their glories by his reproach; their life by his death; their crowns by his cross; their elevation to thrones by his degradation to the manger.*

2. "The love of Jesus" is manifested by what he is now doing as our advocate in heaven. After he had by his vicarious obedience and sacrifice laid down the full price of our redemption constrained by the same love he ascended to the higher court to see that every blessing should be applied: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us;" and the same love to his people, the same concern for their salvation which he felt and manifested on earth, he now feels, and manifests amidst all the splendors of the throne. Our Lord, before his departure from his apostles, fully assured them of his gracious design in going to heaven, and of the benefits which he should procure by residing there in our nature, and name. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient

for you that I go away." It was expedient for us that he should continue on earth until our redemption was finished, and sin put away by the sacrifice of himself, and afterwards it was no less expedient that he should "enter the most holy place, and there appear as our forerunner and advocate." "If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you." He sends down the Holy Ghost in his varied influences to seal, to console, to sanctify, and prepare them for the possession of that kingdom which he procured on his cross. "He possesses all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and from this fullness he imparts to his favored members more life, more light, more love, more joy, until they receive the end of their faith even their full and final salvation. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them." This passage is peculiarly instructive, and affords a display of the Redeemer's concern for our interests altogether incredible, had not Jehovah revealed it. It appears to intimate that the great design of his life in heaven is to intercede for his church upon earth, to manage all her concerns, and perfect her salvation. Although he is there "exalted far above all heavens, angels and principalities and powers being made subject unto him," yet his eyes are constantly fastened upon his living members: "In all their afflictions he is afflicted:" Every reproach that is cast at them he feels as cast at himself: Every



tear he notices as it starts in the eye, and tenderly wipes away : Every arrow that is shot at them by the archers of hell he wards off, unless necessary for the more perfect trial of their faith and patience. This "Keeper of Israel neither slumbers, nor sleeps." "Having loved his own which were in the world, and given himself an offering without spot for their reconciliation he loved them unto the end." He never ceases to watch over them ; to guide and guard, and sympathise, and support while they are exposed to the sorrows or toils or perils of this wilderness.

But the Saviour's love to his people, his solicitude for their welfare is not confined to the present world.

3. It will be illustriously displayed in supporting them during their last conflict, and giving them a safe, triumphant entrance to the possession of all that glory which is reserved for them. "I go to prepare a place for you : And if I go, and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also." Next to the glory of his Father, their felicity and glory in his presence were the great purposes which he contemplated in his undertaking from eternity ; in all the sufferings which as their Surety he endured on earth, and in every plea which he offers up as their Advocate in heaven, and he will never rest until these purposes are fully accomplished. While he intercedes, "holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me : sanctify them

through thy truth ; thy word is truth," he adds with equal affection for them, and zeal for their welfare, " I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me ; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Such is his prayer before the throne in their behalf, and when the moment of their translation arrives he sends forth his angels, as ministers of state, to take charge of their departing spirits, and conduct them safe to his communion. With what expressions of love will he then receive them, and welcome them to those mansions which he had obtained at the expence of his own blood ? With what affection will he introduce them to his Father by whose hand their names had been written in the volume of life from eternity, and the pledges of whose favor they had frequently enjoyed upon earth ? With what delight ineffable will he lead them along, introducing them to the various orders of elect, unerring angels who had invisibly guarded them in this world, and ministered to their wants ? How affectionately will he then invite them to a seat with himself and all the kindred spirits before the throne, that innumerable throng of all nations, " who came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb and are therefore before the throne of God ?" " Behold what manner of love, but its displays will not terminate then. He will hereafter descend from heaven; he will raise up their bodies which had slumbered for ages inactive in the grave ; " he will fashion them like unto his own glorious bo-

dy," and render them a fit partner for the perfect spirit in the joys of the heavenly world. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" It was necessary that they should be "conformed to the Lord Jesus in the likeness of his death;" It was a part of his humiliation that he "should become obedient unto death," and it is a part of theirs in consequence of sin that the relation between soul and body must be dissolved by dying; but if they are "conformed to him in the likeness of his death they shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection." The little reproach of falling victims "to the King of terrors" will add to the triumphs of that hour when they shall rise from his dominion "more than conquerors through him that loved them:" the pain which the soul and the body experienced in being separated from each other will only tend to augment their joy in meeting never to part any more, and all the gloom of the grave will serve only to heighten the glories of the heavenly city, and enhance their gratitude to their great Deliverer.

This is a part of the Redemer's love, but how imperfectly can it be either known, or uttered, or conceived in the present life? It possesses a "height" which no intellect human, or angelic can soar to conceive, and a "depth" which after the lapse of everlasting ages cannot be fully fathomed. The infinite mind alone is capable of comprehending its vast dimensions. The chief that we are now capable of knowing is that it is not to be known, and

the chief that we can speak or write of it is that it is not to be described.

As the Son of God manifested his love, a love the most pure, unmerited, disinterested in engaging from eternity to become the Surety of his chosen, in emptying himself of his glory, in appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh and making his soul an offering for their sins he will display it through eternity to come in imparting to them all the blessings of his purchase, and inconceivably more than can now be imagined. "He will lead them into living fountains of water;" He will unfold to their expanded, ever expanding capacities all the mysteries both of his providence and grace: He will shew them that as wisdom and love reigned in the counsel of peace when the scheme of their recovery was devised, these attributes of Jehovah no less reigned in every dispensation towards them from their first existence until their entrance into heaven: He will shew to them that those trials at which their faith staggered, and their corruptions murmured were probably among the most wise and gracious parts of his procedure; that only "when need was they had been in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of their faith being much more precious than gold which perisheth might be found unto praise, and honor and glory" at last.

From these reflections on the love of Christ, we are led,

II. To consider its effect on the hearts of his children. "We love him because he first

loved us." "The love of Christ constraineth us."

1st. The love of Christ shed abroad through the heart will constrain us supremely to delight and rejoice in him. To the carnal eye there is no excellence in the Saviour of the world. "He appears without form, or comeliness, or any beauty that they should desire him." There is nothing to charm *the mighty* or *noble* in one who was known, or owned by "none of the Princes of this world;" who "as concerning the flesh" descended from an obscure virgin, and after associating with illiterate, despised fishermen died upon a *cross*. There is nothing to attract the attention of the gay and merriness in one who was a stranger to all the pleasures of life; who was distinguished "as a man of sorrows; who was acquainted with grief and hid not his face from shame and spitting." To persons of this character the Saviour appeared while he dwelt on earth, and to such he still appears although raised to the throne "as a tender plant, as a root springing out of a dry ground, despised and rejected." But when in the light of celestial truth shining upon his heart the sinner beholds the Saviour in his mediatorial excellencies, and fulness; when he discerns him in his true character as "a propitiation for our sins," as "coming to seek and save them that are lost;" when he apprehends him by the eye of faith as a Saviour suited to his own circumstances and wants; when he beholds him as not only "mighty to save," but willing "to save to the utter-

most all that come to him," how does his soul kindle with admiration at his love? How does it expand with gratitude, and joy? How eagerly does he embrace this friend of sinners as his *righteousness*, his *shield*, his *glory*, and the *lifter up of his head*? How cordially does he render love for love? Every created object then loses its charms when contrasted with precious Christ, as the taper is obscured when the candle is lighted up, or as the stars disappear at the rising of the sun the Prince of day. The soul, having tasted that the Lord Jesus is gracious, would not part with any office, or relation, or promise belonging to him for the acquisition of a world, and there is nothing in the world with which he would not willingly part at the call of Christ. "Lo, we have left all, and followed thee." "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord." "Whom having not seen ye love, and in whom although ye see him not yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Jesus as stooping to assume our nature, and "redeem us to God by his own blood;" as carrying this nature and his own blood "into the most holy place there to appear in the presence of God" is chief in the thoughts and desires of his people: He appears *fairer than the children of men*: Yea he is in their estimation *altogether lovely*. And permit me to remark that there cannot possibly be an excess of love towards him, because the object loved possesses infinite excellencies. We may admire

and esteem a created object too much, because its nature is limited, and we give that affection to a creature to which the Creator is exclusively entitled. But when Jesus, who is Jehovah, is the object of our affection, we cannot be extravagant: We cannot go to an extreme in admiring, and esteeming, and loving him. There are no bounds to his goodness and glory, and therefore there need be none to our desires after him, and our delight in him. In proportion as our knowledge of Christ and him crucified improves, the more intense and disinterested our love to him necessarily becomes. "Whom have I in heaven," blessed Jesus, "but thee," will be the language of all who have seen his glory, or tasted his grace. They delight to *think* of him; to *read* of him; to *hear* of him; to *speak* of him, and to him, and for him; to *wait* on him in the sanctuary; to *receive* him as exhibited in the holy supper under the symbols of bread and wine; to *serve* him in every act of new obedience; to *follow* him through glory and reproach; to *take* up the cross in compliance with his call and as a pledge of receiving a crown hereafter: It is their chiefest grief, their deepest humiliation that they cannot love him more ardently, and serve him more perfectly. Their most refreshing joyous seasons are those when "his love is shed abroad through their hearts," and their most melancholy, disconsolate hours are those when "he withdraws himself and is gone:" In the lively exercise of faith they occasionally exult in the prospect of spending

an eternity near to him, basking under the light of his countenance, and receiving the full communications of his love.

2. The love of Jesus when savingly felt will constrain us openly to profess and follow him. "As with the heart man believeth unto righteousness with the mouth confession will be made unto salvation." This is a consideration to which I would most earnestly solicit your attention. There are many in the visible church who appear afraid to be considered *altogether* christians. They endeavor to play a species of loose game between Christ, and the world, or to reconcile what is absolutely irreconcilable "the friendship of this world and the friendship of God." Conscience will not permit them to deny the gospel, turn their back upon ordinances, and altogether renounce the christian character, and hopes, yet the fear of reproach, and derision, or reluctance to deny themselves some fashionable amusements prevent them from avowing openly their attachment to the Saviour's cross. Their profession is of a general nature. They attend upon those ordinances where mankind promiscuously attend, but keep back from those peculiar, distinguishing institutions of religion, those institutions by which the christian character is discriminated, and by the observance of which we are obliged to come out of the world as followers of the Lamb. But this spirit betrays a cowardice unworthy of the christain name, and the claims of such to the christian charac-



ter will not be acknowledged by the great Author of our salvation. None who are ashamed to own the Saviour *now*, shall be owned by him before his Father, and the angels *hereafter*. He is exhibited in the capacity of a *Captain*, and every true soldier must rally openly beneath his standard : He is a *Prince*, and will be obeyed in all his commands by all his subjects. " Whosoever shall confess me before men ;" whosoever actuated by a principle of love to me his Saviour, and of submission to my authority as his Lord makes a generous, open acknowledgement of me by obeying my commandments, and walking in mine ordinances, " him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." " But whosoever," be his occupation or rank what they may, " shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, before this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." He does not more affectionately invite, " Look unto me and be ye saved," than he imperiously commands, " take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." He is not only a *Priest*, but a *Prince* upon his throne, and as he offers a righteousness with which his followers must be adorned he also reaches forth a sceptre to which they must bow. " Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour," and all who cordially rejoice in the righteousness of the *Saviour* will cordially revere the majesty of the *Prince*, and obey e-

very law of his house. When the Eunuch was converted to the christian faith he immediately asked water that he might be baptised; he improved the first opportunity of expressing his love to the Saviour by attending to this institution of his worship. When Saul of Tarsus was brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus "he arose, and was baptised;" the early converts to the christian church "continued stedfast in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer."

3. The love of Jesus savingly shed abroad through the heart will constrain us to make any sacrifice that is requisite for holding fast our profession. It is a maxim laid down by eternal truth that "we cannot serve God and mammon," we cannot approve ourselves the faithful followers of Christ, and conform to the false opinions, or sinful practices of the world. The war between "the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent" began in Paradise, and will continue until the consummation of all things, and therefore opposition may be expected; it must be encountered by all "who live Godly in Christ Jesus." They who are enmity against God cannot be the real friends of any who bear his image, or appear openly for his cause. They will deride all religion as imposture or enthusiasm: they will vilify its professors as either deceiving, or deceived, and its ministers as preaching to others doctrines not believed by themselves. But they who are sanctified by divine grace will

“follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,” and at all hazards : They will accompany him to the *cross*, if he is calling them to it, no less than to the *crown* ; “in evil report no less than in good report :” They will adhere to their profession of him, and aim at walking worthy of their profession at the hazard of feeling, or property, or reputation, or life. It is an antient and just remark that “all christians are martyrs in resolution ;” they feel obligated to part with any thing rather than part with Christ ; they love their character, their estates, their relations, their friends, but their love to a compassionate bleeding Saviour is incomparably more ardent, and inviolable, and rather will they resign all the former than renounce him, or be eternal outcasts from his presence. Our Lord and Master has not deceived us in this respect, and as we value our souls let us not deceive ourselves. “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me cannot be my disciple ;” he ought not to be reckoned among my followers now for he shall have “neither part nor lot” in their glory hereafter. Again, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, yea, and his own life also he cannot be my disciple ;” that is, if his love to them be not less than his love to me : if he is not ready to resist their entreaties, and commands when they come in competition with my authority or are hostile to my interests “he cannot be my disciple.” But every obstacle of this nature the constraining influence of Jeho-

va's grace will enable us easily to surmount. The christian with the love of Jesus glowing in his heart, and heaven with its glories opening to his eye will reason in the following manner, "the Saviour did not recoil at opposition or hardship when substituted in my room and accomplishing my redemption: For my sake he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," he hid not his face from shame, and spitting;" he was vilified as an *enemy* to Cesar, as a *deceiver*, a *babbler*, a *blasphemer*, nay, "he became obedient unto death even the death of the cross" for me, and shall I recoil at the prospect of a little reproach for him, and in promoting the interests of his kingdom? For my sake his soul was *troubled* through a sense of the displeasure of his Father; he bear the vengeance of Almighty God, that vengeance which like an overflowing torrent must have overwhelmed my soul forever, and shall not I in return meet the derision, or rage of feeble, mortal man; man whose breath is in his nostrils; whose friendship cannot materially profit, and whose reproach, or wrath cannot materially injure me." This ardent, inextinguishable love to the Saviour; this dignified, unshaken adherence to their profession in defiance of opposition eminently appeared in the early ages of the church, and adorned the first converts to the christian faith. "They received joyfully the spoiling of their goods;" when they were obliged either to sacrifice them, or their allegiance to the Captain of their salva-

tion: "They loved not their lives unto the death," but *rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer not only shame, but even death for his name.*

4. The love of Jesus powerfully felt in the heart will constrain us disinterestedly to aim at the advancement of his glory in the earth. The christian, contemplating the condescension and grace of his Lord, will readily acknowledge, "it is little that I can do in return to him who has done so much, and suffered so much for me; who has redeemed me from *an exceeding, eternal weight of wrath,* and purchased for me *an exceeding, eternal weight of glory*; yet as ability is given I desire to *spend and be spent* in his service, and for his honor: I cannot express my gratitude for his love, nor my obligation to live *to him,* and *for him*: I acknowledge that after all I do, or can do, were my talents much more numerous than they are, and these all exclusively devoted to his service, I must remain an infinite, eternal debtor to his grace: I am admonished this day that I am not my own, but bought with a price all price beyond: I behold in the bread and wine, these symbols of the body and blood of my dear Redeemer, the amazing expence at which my pardon and peace were procured: Here I behold in the most impressive, interesting light, the grace of the Lord Jesus, and his compassion to insignificant, wretched, hell-deserving sinners: I behold in this ordinance a representation of the Father's EQUAL and FELLOW beco-

ming a man of sorrows ; him who originally was *fairer than the children of men*, with his visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men ; the Prince of life made of no reputation, put to grief, and dying the death of the cross : I will therefore glorify him in my body and soul which are his." Is the christian possessed of wealth, he will cheerfully part with a portion of this for supplying the poor of Jesus or spreading abroad *the savour of his name*, as providence may require : That same principle of love which constrained the primitive believers to resign houses or lands, will constrain believers now to give up a share of their worldly substance when the honor or interest of their Lord may require it.

Beloved brethren, need I mention that, although this is a reasonable, it is a mournfully neglected service. Many professors are seemingly willing to do any thing for Jesus Christ, except sparing their property. They will talk eloquently, and, to human appearance, feelingly of his condescension, and for his cause.— They will pray with seeming fervor, " that his poor may be supplied, that his kingdom may come, that his gospel may be diffused, and his glory promoted ;" but ask them for the means of *supplying his poor*, or *diffusing his gospel*, or *promoting his glory*, and they instantly startle and call it a *hard saying*. How inconsistent is such conduct ? How unworthy the followers of him who " although he was rich yet for our sakes became poor ?" Can we, if our

Hearts are warm with his love, refuse a share of our earthly goods at his call ; goods which his free, unmerited bounty has given us ; which his blessing alone can sanctify or render comfortable, and which he may recall at his pleasure ? Besides, a disposition " ready to distribute, willing to communicate," may be pronounced the most honorable because it is the most disinterested expression of our gratitude to the Redeemer's love. There is something dignified in taking our seats in his sanctuary ; in mingling our voices in his praise ; in listening with solemnity to his message ; and bearing our public testimony for his cause. There is something dignified in rising from our seats on this sacramental occasion, in approaching his table, and, over the symbols of his body and blood, affectionately avouching him to be our Redeemer and Lord : There is something dignified in speaking boldly for Jesus, when his essential glory, as God, is denied, or any part of his truth ignorantly or wilfully perverted : But there is something more dignified, because more disinterested in consecrating to him a portion of our property, the worldling's idol, when we expect nothing.

Permit me to apply this doctrine by urging you all to entertain elevated views of the love of " the great God our Saviour." Imperfect, contracted thoughts of his grace may be considered as the chief source of unbelief in sinners, and the radical cause of all that indifference in his service, that distrust and discon-

tent under the dispensations of his providence which appear among the saints. When the sinner is brought to serious reflection ; when he has obtained some deep discovery of his guilt, and deformity, and danger, he is prone to stand aloof from the Saviour ; he is afraid to look towards him, or trust his soul on his mercy for salvation ; he considers himself infinitely unworthy the attention of a Being so glorious ; too vile, too contemptible to be noticed by Him who is greater than the kings of the earth, or to receive a blessing so precious as eternal life through his name ; he concludes that the Redeemer must be unwilling to extend mercy to such a wretch as he is. All these reasonings of unbelief arise from want of suitable conceptions of the love of Jesus. What moved him from everlasting to offer himself as a surety for fallen man, and actually undertake in our room ? It was LOVE. What moved him to appear in the fulness of time, to veil his glory in human flesh, and stoop even to the humble condition of a servant ? It was *love*. What moved him to submit voluntarily to poverty, and reproach, and sorrows, and sufferings which remain without a parallel, without even a comparison in the annals of the world ? It was *love*. Why need he be “ an hungred, when the earth was his and the fulness thereof ;” without a place to lay his head, when “ he was the heir of all things, and upheld them by the word of his power ; or bear to be mocked as a *blasphemer* when *zeal* for his Father’s glory was *con-*



suming him? It was *love*. Why did he suffer himself tamely to be betrayed into the hands of sinners, when legions of angels were ready to *avenge his quarrel*, or he could, with his own uncreated, omnipotent arm, have ground to powder the hosts of his opposers? It was *love*. Why need he *stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem*, when he knew the ignominious, painful decease which he had there to accomplish, and at last bear, without "opening his mouth" by way of murmur, that shock of heaven's wrath which would have crushed a world to hell? It was *love*. Anxious, trembling sinners, has the Saviour done and endured all these things in love to your souls, and to work out your salvation, and can you now question his good will to you, or doubt his readiness to receive. Did he with his own "blood redeem you from the wrath to come," and will he doom you to sink beneath the weight of this wrath with desires after mercy in your hearts, and cries for mercy in your lips? Has he wrought out on his cross, does he bring near in his gospel "a garment of salvation," and will he refuse it to those who are willing to put it on? After he has tendered to his Father's justice the full price of your emancipation, and is now "proclaiming liberty to the captives," will he leave you to languish in everlasting chains when supplicating for help? Has he "opened a new and living way to the holiest of all," by suffering "the vail of his flesh to be rent in twain," and will he shut out any who are anxious to

enter in? Surely a part thus inconsistent, would not be acted by any prudent, reflecting man. Would a Prince, after he has prepared a banquet for his subjects, and under his own hand and seal issued his proclamation, inviting all to partake of it, exclude any that approached? Or would a physician, moved by pure pity, enter the very room where a patient lay tortured with some malignant disease, and yet refuse the healing balm, knowing that he could easily effect a cure? And will the Son of God, who came to *save sinners*, refuse salvation to any sinner who earnestly seeks it? Will he reject them because their sins *are great*, when the more numerous and aggravated our offences are the greater opportunity he has of displaying his grace in forgiving them? The more foul and desperate our diseases are the more illustriously can this physician manifest both his skill and compassion, in perfecting our cure. Aim therefore, O brethren, at cherishing a suitable persuasion of his love. Believe that "he waits to be gracious;" that he stands with out-stretched arms to receive any who apply; that "his blood cleanses from all sin," and that he is willing, infinitely willing that it be applied for cleansing you. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." How cordially does he entreat, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." How impressively does he this day proclaim his love not merely by the promises of his gospel; but by placing before you,

in the ordinance of the supper, his very body "crucified for you?" Every *print* of the nails in his hands; every *mark* of the thorns on his head; every *drop* of that purple laver which flowed from his pierced side, is a voice speaking loudly and movingly of his love. And while your eyes see, and your ears hear, may your hearts melt with penitential sorrow, and your lips be ready to cry out, *the love of Christ constraineth us.*

The want of suitable conceptions of the Saviour's love is also the source of all that distrust in difficulty, and that discontent amidst the afflictions of life, which frequently appear among even his true followers. Those who are in poverty of outward condition, who have numerous families, and small means of supporting them, are often distracted with anxious fears. When this or the other stream, from which they have been supplied, seems to dry up, they are instantly alarmed, and ready to conclude that they, or their children, must unavoidably come to want. But contemplations on the grace, and all-sufficiency of Jesus, would relieve from all these anxious thoughts. Has he in infinite love furnished a robe for our souls, a robe which will shine *unfading* forever, and will he refuse a little raiment for our perishing bodies? Or, "does he clothe the lilly of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven," and shall those who were ransomed with his blood, and renewed after his image, be doomed to nakedness? Does he give us *his flesh to eat*;

even that living bread which came down from heaven, and from all the stores of his bounty will he not supply our bodily wants during the few days, or weeks, or months that we continue upon earth? Or does he "feed the young ravens that cry to him," and will he suffer the children of his own family to languish with hunger? Is he gone to "prepare a place for us" in his Father's presence, *an house eternal in the heavens*, and will he not afford a suitable habitation in this world? "O, ye of little faith," contemplate the love of Jesus, and no longer *doubt*. The earth is his, and the fulness thereof, and as the treasure is inexhaustible, his heart is infinitely ready to bestow. "He will give grace, and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Again, when we are shaken from our confidence, and discouraged by the trials of our christian warfare, let us reflect on what the Saviour suffered for us. While we consider him who "endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," cannot we bear a little reproach, or persecution, for *righteousness sake*? Or can we feel discontented without earthly riches, when we behold him "for our sakes becoming poor?" The Lord Jesus has consecrated the humble cottage by choosing a *manger* for his residence, and has conferred glory on *obscurity* by living unknown to the noble of this world. Can we repine at any neglect with which, on his account, we may be treated by our former friends, or acquaint-

tances, when we remember that "he came to his own and they received him not;" and that when his conflict was the most arduous, he was forsaken and denied by his own apostles? We may learn submission to the various trials of our life, not merely by contemplating the more exquisite, complicated sufferings of our Lord, but the patience and fortitude with which he sustained them. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again: He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

Enlarged views of the Redeemer's love will not only tend to reconcile to all the difficulties of life, but must necessarily enflame our zeal, and excite to a holy diligence, and disinterestedness in his service. Can we cherish a selfish, contracted, interested disposition, a disposition which "seeks only its own" when we behold him leaving the bosom of his Father, "emptying himself of his glory, enduring the cross, and despising the shame for us?" Can we feel reluctant in ministering to the necessities of others, particularly of his saints, when we consider that he became the author of eternal salvation to us? Which of us could refuse a little raiment to a needy disciple of Jesus, when we recollect that he has furnished a robe of righteousness for us, or could we deny a lodging to one of his destitute followers, when we reflect that he himself is preparing a *mansion of glory* for us! Who would not love a Saviour who thus ar-

dently and disinterestedly loved us? Who would not serve him? Who would not speak *of* him, and *for* him? Who would, who could spare their silver, or gold as a thank-offering to him who spared not himself in our room, and for our profit? Constrained by love to us he thought nothing too dear to resign for promoting our interests and constrained by the same principle we shall cheerfully part with all for promoting his. This holy flame kindling, and glowing in the soul will reconcile us to endure any difficulty, to encounter any danger, to discharge every duty, to glory in any reproach, to make any sacrifice of ease, or interest at his command. The more frequently we contemplate, and the more fully we comprehend the love of a dying Saviour the more "patient we will become in tribulation;" the more "fervent in prayer;" the more pure and ardent in every expression of gratitude; the more cheerful, and disinterested in every act of obedience; the more regardless we must feel of the empty honors, and pleasures of earth, and the more desirous to participate the unmingled joys, and the full-orbed glories of the heavenly world.

With suitable conceptions of his love, how joyfully would we this day behold this entertainment which his bounty has provided? How eagerly would we press forward to receive these memorials of his death, and pledges of his future appearing? Owing to the contraction of our hearts we often measure "his ways by our own ways," and "his thoughts by

our own thoughts," and therefore view this ordinance with a degree of anxiety and dread; we approach it rather with the terror of slaves, than with the confidence and affection of sons. But did we reflect that the Lord Jesus is both the author, and substance of this banquet; that it is *a feast of love*; that he here unlocks for our enjoyment the treasures which he purchased as our Surety, and which are now deposited with him as the trustee of the covenant; that he has not only covered this table with the richest blessings of salvation, but has provided every thing that is necessary for our comfortable approach to it; that he presents his own righteousness to adorn, and recommend us to the acceptance of the Father; that he promises his Spirit to enlighten, and enliven, and awake to suitable exercises all the graces which he has implanted; that he sends forth his ministers as stewards in his family to declare "that all things are ready;" that he is really, although invisibly, present at his own table to see that every arrangement is made for their accommodation, did we realise these things how cheerfully would we go forward to take our seats; how freely would we partake of *that feast of fat things*, those *wines on the lees* which his bounty has furnished? When the table is removed at the conclusion of one entertainment, how would we long until it was spread on another occasion? Sisters and brethren, improve these truths for your greater liberty this day in approaching the table of your Lord. Every step

to it is paved with love; The arms of his mercy are over you and underneath you; on your right hand and on your left. No language can express the ardor of his *love* to you, and that delight with which he dispenses every necessary blessing: And remember, the greater the expense at which the purchase was made, the more pleased he is in seeing them received for your establishment and consolation — When your faith is strengthened; when your peace is promoted; when your love rises up into a purer flame; when your hopes are brightened; when your enemies are defeated, and driven before you; when your vows are renewed, and your souls animated to greater vigor in *the work of the Lord*, then his design in dying for you; his design in spreading and furnishing this table for you is answered: He recollects with new pleasure all that he underwent from the cradle to the cross for your salvation. May the celestial fire come down on the heart of every intended communicant, obliging us to exclaim, *the love of Christ constraineth us.* AMEN.



## SERMON II.

ISAIAH, liii. 5.

*But he was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

THE redemption of man, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, is the chiefest of the ways of God: We may trace the origin of this scheme back to the depths of eternity past ; we behold the great out-lines drawn by the Co-Equal Three, when sitting "in the counsel of peace," and deliberating on the recovery of our ruined world ; we see it occupying the attention of holy men, inspired by the Holy Ghost in all the ages of time, and its effects both on the damned and the redeemed, will be great beyond conception throughout eternity to come. Abel the second child that was born in our world, offered up a sacrifice to typify Jesus Jehovah our propitiation : "Enoch, the seventh from Adam," prophesied of his coming. Abraham, the father of the faithful, saw in prophetic vision his day afar off : Prophets, who arose in succession, during a period of nearly four thousand years, foretold his sufferings and glory : Still as the fulness of the time drew near, their anxiety was more awakened, and they pointed out more minutely the time, and place, and circumstances of his coming. Rays of light

reflected from "the Sun of righteousness" ages before he arose, enabled them to discern more clearly the mystery of his birth, and sufferings, and salvation. But perhaps no part of ancient prophesy exhibits more explicitly these interesting events than the chapter from which our text is chosen. Alluding to the meanness of his birth, this inspired harbinger asserts, "he shall be like a root out of a dry ground, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him," no external charms to captivate the carnal eye.— Referring to that neglect, and those sufferings which the Saviour of the world so singularly experienced, he adds, "he is despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:" But in the verse which we have chosen as the subject of our present consideration, the prophet becomes still more pointed in his meaning, and declares, "he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

The sufferings of the Son of God, the procuring cause of these sufferings, and their happy issue, are truths obviously contained in the text, and to these, in their order, your attention shall be directed.

1. The sufferings of the Son of God. These are expressed by the prophet under a variety of language. He represents the Lord of glory as "wounded, and bruised," as bearing "chastisement, and stripes." These may be

considered as comprehending all the miseries which he endured from the manger to the cross, from Bethlehem to Calvary. His whole life was a scene of humiliation, and suffering, and sorrow. In his birth he was denied a residence in the abodes of men, but was laid in a manger: Bethlehem the place of his nativity was an obscure village, and as a prophet expresses it "was small among the thousands of Judah:" He was early persecuted, and banished from his kindred, and native country through the influence of an envious capricious Prince: Although constantly employed in offices of kindness to man, "he was despised and rejected;" and a stranger to those enjoyments which are requisite for the comfortable support of human nature: Although he was the Father's servant, appointed to "destroy the works of the devil," and erect a kingdom of righteousness in the world, and although he was ardently engaged in accomplishing this work, yet he was vilified as a "Blasphemer" and as "casting out devils by Belzebub the prince of devils:" In short he is distinguished in scripture as "a man of sorrow," intimating that all the sorrows of all other men were not to be compared to his, and "acquainted with grief," as if he was really a stranger to every thing else. But the language used by the prophet is too strong to be applied to any part of the Redemer's sufferings yet mentioned: It was in the concluding scene of his humiliation that they were realized in all their emphasis, and may be considered as in-

cluding all that he then endured from earth, and hell, and heaven.

The Saviour suffered much in his last hours from the men of earth. A full and very affecting history of this is given by those who were eye witnesses of the facts, and were inspired by the Holy-Ghost to record them. Judas Iscariot introduced the tragical scene by shamefully betraying, and selling his Lord. "Lo! Judas, one of the twelve came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, and they laid hold on Jesus, and took him." This deed was rendered inconceivably more afflicting to our Lord from the very circumstance of the person by whom it was perpetrated. The betrayer was not a stranger; he was not a professed enemy, but his familiar friend, and avowed disciple; the companion of his life; a witness of that celestial truth which flowed from his mouth, and the many miracles of mercy which were wrought by his hands, one who ought therefore to have sympathized, and soothed the anguish of his soul in the hour of his calamity. This treachery of Judas was succeeded by every species of contempt, and insult, and violence on the part of the multitude into whose hands he delivered him. "Then did they spit in his face, and buffet him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee. Then the soldiers took Jesus into the common hall, and stripped him, and put on him a purple robe, and when they had platted

a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, hail king of the Jews." All that their individual and united malignity could devise was done to deepen his humiliation and add to the poignancy of his sufferings. Not satisfied with spitting upon him, and smiting him, "they put upon his head a crown of thorns," a mock emblem of royalty, and "a reed in his hand" the representation of affected, but empty power, and then insolently cry out, "hail, king of the Jews." To a feeling generous mind such mockery gives a deeper gash, and occasions more exquisite pain than all the punishment which can be inflicted on the body. But the rage of the persecutors of our Lord did not terminate here. When his thirst became ardent through pain of body, and the vehemence of divine wrath which was consuming his soul they "gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall." What deep humiliation is here? He who had formed the fountains which rise in ten thousand hills and filled up the larger caverns of ocean is denied a drop of water to quench his thirst, or cool the fervor of that indignation of the Almighty which was drinking up his spirit. His enemies inflicted the last degree of either ignominy, or torture which their malice could invent by nailing him on the cross. There they suspended him between heaven, and earth, a public spectacle of scorn, and execration, "for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a

tree " It ought to be remarked that this was a mode of dying peculiar to slaves, and never inflicted on a free citizen of Rome. To add even to the infamy and bitterness of the cross they " placed him between two thieves, one on the right hand, and the other on the left." " And they that passed by rail- ed at him, wagging their heads, and saying, ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and build- est it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." Little did they reflect that soon he will come, and " every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him "

Earth, however, was not alone in aggravat- ing the sufferings of the Son of God. The powers of hell combined with the men of this world in adding to the sorrows of his dying hour. Those fiends of darkness which are so malignant against the members were much more malignant against Jesus the Head: While they are throwing their fiery darts at the spi- ritual soldier, they levelled their heaviest ar- tillery against him, the " Captain of our salva- tion : " They knew well that if he was van- quished, his followers must speedily be put to flight. But at this hour the powers of dark- ness were inspired with the highest possible rage against the Son of God. They probably knew that now the decisive battle was to be fought ; that the contest, whether heaven or hell should triumph, was coming to an issue, and that the victory on their part must now be secured, or they and their compeers driven from the field, and exposed to perpetual shame.

With an obstinacy, and a fury unexampled before “ the dragon and his angels now fought.” In the prospect of this assault, the Redeemer informs his disciples, “ the Prince of this world cometh ;” collects all his forces ; he rouses them to the highest possible rage to aim at defeating me, and destroying my kingdom on earth : Again, when accused by the “ chief priests, and captains of the temple,” he declares, “ this is your hour, and the power of darkness :” This is your hour ; the time has now arrived that I must “ be made perfect through sufferings ;” and you will be permitted to execute your hostile designs against me ; and “ the power of darkness,” hell is now combined with earth in opposition to me, and my mediatorial kingdom. The peculiar temptations with which the great adversary assailed our Lord, in his last conflict, are not recorded in scripture, yet no doubt they were varied, repeated, and unusually virulent, and blasphemous in their nature ; all to add to the bitterness of his sufferings, and brighten the splendors of that triumph which he was shortly to obtain. We find that in the wilderness, when one temptation was resisted, the devil immediately made trial of another, and we cannot but remark that they were all artful in their nature, and calculated to succeed. Our Lord having fasted forty days “ afterward hungered,” the seducer then suggests to him to command the stones to be made bread, ; he tempts him not to wait for a supply in the ordinary course, but work a

miracle, and thus dishonor his Father by manifesting a distrust of his providence : When our Saviour was in the wilderness alone, remote from the observation of men, the arch deceiver offers him “ the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, if he would fall down and worship him,” insinuating, although with an insolence of impiety which could originate only in hell, that our Lord might easily promote his own interests, and the act by which it was done should be unnoticed and unknown. Thus, although scripture is silent, we may readily conjecture that temptation after temptation was suggested by the infernal spirits, to seduce the Son of God in his last struggle, and if possible defeat his mediatorial work : dart after dart was thrown hot from hell to vanquish the Captain of our salvation, and demolish that kingdom which he came to establish. The arch-fiend would probably insinuate to the suffering Saviour that the Father was unkind to him ; that it was injustice in the extreme to punish with such severity the innocent in place of the guilty ; that if he was pleased to pardon the sin of man, he might do it without such expense to his own, and only Son : he probably aimed at discouraging him in his undertaking, by suggesting that the mercies of Jehovah were clean gone for ever ; that the cloud which blackened over his head was never to be dispelled, nor softened by one cheering ray ; that the cup of trembling which he was appointed to drink, would never be exhausted, but his sufferings must be as endless.



as they were exquisite ; he thus endeavored to seduce the Surety to turn away his lips from that cup, or shrink back from that Jordan of wrath which would infallibly overflow and overwhelm him : he no doubt painted to his view, with every circumstance of aggravation, the horrors of that cross on which his body was to be stretched, and his course on earth to be finished ; that it was a mode of dying painful to the flesh, reproachful in the extreme, fit for the off-scouring of society, and inflicted only on slaves : The deceiver would represent to our Lord that the offence of the cross could never be removed : that it must entail perpetual infamy on his own character, and remain an insurmountable barrier to the progress of his gospel among the nations ; that the very consideration of a Chief expiring ignominiously upon a tree must be disgusting to all who heard it, and discourage them from enlisting under his standard, and therefore that he was “ laboring in vain ;” that he must remain a Captain without soldiers, or a Prince without subjects. Sin to a pure Being is always more offensive than suffering, and without doubt these foul, blasphemous suggestions added inconceivably to the anguish of the Son of God ; they were more painful to his immaculate soul, a thousand fold, than either the nails or the thorns which tortured his body. It was to prepare him for this conflict, and animate him to persevere that Moses and Elias had appeared on mount Tabor, speaking of that “ decease which he should accomplish at

Jerusalem ;” representing to our Saviour that however painful his sufferings, and degrading the manner of his death, the issue would be everlastingly glorious : “ An angel also appeared strengthening him in the garden,” and legions of angels really, although invisibly, attended on that occasion ; they waited to hail with new hallelujahs every conquest which our Captain obtained over the hosts of hell.

As in the wilderness, so in the garden our adorable Lord instantly repelled each temptation of the arch-apostate : he would reply that all this humiliation was agreeable to his own voluntary undertaking from eternity ; that as he had substituted himself in the room of a chosen world, it was proper he should bear that wrath to which they were obnoxious ; that it “ became Jehovah, of whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make him the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings :” “ True it is,” the Surety probably replied, “ my blood must flow, but in flowing it quenches the flames of hell, which were kindled by the crimes of my children, and must have consumed them for ever ; I must die, but in dying I will be a conqueror, and establish a kingdom to comprehend all nations, and last for ever : My body must be stretched on the cross, and it is written cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, but the offence of the cross must cease ; it ceases to me, it must cease to my followers, when we reflect on the infinitely important consequences : thereby

the law is magnified, the injuries of the divine government are repaired, and millions of the human family redeemed." "With the sword of the spirit," as thus it is written, "he repelled these principalities and powers;" he drove them back to their native hell; bound them in heavier chains, and locked upon them the gates of the bottomless pit. "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them upon his cross." "Now," the captain of our salvation victorious over the hosts of darkness exclaims in holy exultation, "now is the judgment of this world; now is the Prince of this world cast out: I beheld satan as lightning falling from heaven."

But all the sufferings which the Saviour underwent from earth and hell, were not to be compared to the infinitely greater wrath of his righteous Father." "It pleased Jehovah to bruise him: He hath put him to grief;" he not only took off the restraint from Judas permitting him to betray him, and from Pilate permitting him to pass sentence against him, and from the multitude, permitting them to crucify him: He not only lengthened the chain of the great dragon, permitting him to assail and exhaust all his rage upon him, but with his own hand actually "oppressed and afflicted the Son of his love." With his own breath he kindled up that flame which would have melted the rocks, consumed the mountains, and dried up the waters of ocean: With his own arm he inflicted that stroke which

would have ground to powder the creation of God. It is therefore worthy of notice, that it was the displeasure of his Father which our Saviour chiefly deprecated, and of this he peculiarly complained in the hour of his agony : He says nothing of those nails which tortured his hands ; of the sword which pierced his side, or of the thorns with which his head was mangled : He says nothing of the infamy of that cross on which his body hung, or of the fury of all the hosts of hell which he was called to encounter. So far “ he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth” by way of complaint. But when Jehovah came forth to execute upon him the fierceness of his anger, he then “ became sorrowful, and sore amazed.” His sufferings in his soul, under the infinite pressure of divine wrath, were the very soul of his sufferings. These extorted from his lips groan after groan. “ My soul is troubled, and what shall I say ? I have not language to express that horror of great darkness which has collected, and now envelopes me ; All my bones are out of joint ; my heart within me is melted like wax, consumed by the fervor of thy wrath : My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ; why hast thou cast me off, and art thou so far from the words of my roaring ?” Again, “ being in an agony, he prayed more fervently, if it be possible let this cup pass from me.” But the cup of vengeance was filled up for Jesus as the substitute of his chosen, and must be emptied to its dregs : The sword of justice was alrea-

dy roused from its slumbers, and must perform its office, in being bathed in his blood. "Without the shedding of his blood, there could be no remission of sins. He must be made perfect through sufferings, before he could become the author of eternal salvation."

The peculiar nature of that wrath which the Son of God endured in the garden, and upon the cross, we cannot comprehend in its full extent: As he appeared in the capacity of a Surety, sustaining our nature, substituted in our covenant-room, and bearing our iniquities, the vengeance which he suffered must have been the same in substance which was denounced against sin, and will be inflicted upon the damned for ever: Nay, it was greater inconceivably than will be executed at once upon any of the reprobate in hell, either man or angel, because he was infinite in his nature, and thus capable of sustaining an infinite shock. The fire of divine wrath came down, and consumed the human nature as the sacrifice, and brought him to the dust of death.

But why did he thus suffer? Why was the cup of sorrow filled up for the man Jesus beyond a parallel, without even a comparison? Why did it please earth, and hell, and heaven to unite "in putting him to grief;" in aggravating the anguish both of his body and soul? This question is fully answered in our text, and constitutes the second part of our discourse. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities;" The crimes of his chosen were exclusively

the procuring cause of his humiliation and agonies. All the sufferings which he endured were vicarious in their nature; they were inflicted upon him considered as the Substitute of his people; as their Representative by an explicit, eternal contract. There was virtually an interchange of condition between him, and his ransomed: Their crimes were really transferred to him, charged to his account by the adorable Father, so that in the estimation of law and justice, he was answerable for them; and upon him in his mediatorial capacity that wrath was executed in all its horrors to which they were exposed. This is a doctrine to which I would earnestly invite your attention, and in which I desire particularly to establish you. It is this consideration which renders our reconciliation by the Saviour's cross a scheme worthy of God, and rich with consolation to his children. To suppose that iniquity is pardoned without a real, full satisfaction, either from the sinner or Surety, is an impeachment of Jehovah's wisdom, which declares, "the soul that sinneth it shall die: Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them:" It is an impeachment of his government, as being neither "holy, nor just, nor good:" It exhibits the Ruler of the universe as either unwise in forming the sanctions of his law, or afraid, or unable to execute these sanctions upon the offender: But the doctrine of Messiah's substitution in the room of his people; of the transfer of our trans-



gressions to his account ; of his vicarious sufferings, and satisfaction is not more important in itself, than obvious from scripture. It is the doctrine of the law, and the prophets, and the apostles. It was taught in figure by every sacrifice that bled during the former dispensation. The High Priest took a lamb for a sin-offering, acknowledged over it his own crimes, and the crimes of the people, and then slew it before the Lord. Surely the blood of a lamb, or he-goat could not avail in themselves for expiating the guilt of man, or repairing the injuries done by his disobedience : The blood of a man could not atone for the guilt of an angel, and much less could the sacrifice of a mere animal satisfy for the transgressions of man. The virtue of these sacrifices, if they had any virtue at all, was merely typical ; they pointed immediately, and exclusively to the lamb of God, the true propitiation of human guilt. When the High Priest raises his hand, confesses over the head of the victim his own sins, and those of his nation, we behold, in emblem, Jehovah the Father laying on Jesus our Sponsor the iniquities of us all ; when we see the sacrifice, whether lamb or he-goat, really offered up, its blood flowing, its life destroyed, we see in type Jesus " made sin, a sin-offering for us ; suffering the just for, in the room of, the unjust, and giving his life a ransom for many." This same doctrine is taught in that ordinance of the supper which it is our great business this day to celebrate. What is the import of

that bread which is presented on the sacramental table, but to symbolize, to hold forth to view the body of the Divine Redeemer, "bruised and broken for us;" bearing our sins, and crucified on their account? "This is my body broken for you." Now, can we conceive one suffering for another, unless he is either voluntarily or involuntarily substituted in the room of the other? In common life do we ever consider one man as liable for the debts of another man, unless he interposed and became surety for him? Again, "this cup is the New-Testament in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins;" flowing by that very sword of divine justice which was unsheathed against them, and must have been bathed in their blood for ever — Indeed it is impossible to conceive any meaning in the ordinance of the supper, any propriety in its original institution, or any profit in the observation of it from age to age, unless it be considered as a memorial of Jesus Christ actually crucified for us; "making his soul an offering for our sins." This same doctrine which appears obvious from the worship of the Old Testament and the New, is taught in the utmost perspicuity of language, both by prophets and apostles; in language which none seemingly could misunderstand, unless they had resolved either to misrepresent or misunderstand. "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself;" and surely if not for himself, it must be for some other, and it cannot be for another without a substitution in his



room. Eternal justice would not scourge a man for the crimes of an angel, much less would it scourge the only "beloved, begotten Son of God" for the iniquities of man, unless he had stepped forth as our Sponsor. Another prophet becomes explicit, and asserts, "for the transgression of my people was he stricken: Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." This truth which had been preached so frequently, and with such evidence by prophets before the coming of Messiah, was afterwards taught by apostles who were "eye witnesses of his sufferings and glory;" who had often and intimately conversed with him before his death, and after his resurrection; who had been present on the holy mount with Moses and Elias, these representatives of the church in heaven, and heard them "speak of that decess which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," probably explaining with celestial eloquence its nature, its necessity, its glorious issue. With all these advantages for knowing the truth, and inspired by the infallible spirit what do apostles testify? One of them asserts, "For Christ hath once suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Another apostle declares, "I delivered unto you first of all;" I considered it first in importance, and therefore gave it the most prominent place in all my discourses, "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:" Again, "he hath made him to be sin

for us who knew no sin." Paul exhibits the Lord Jesus in his original character; abstracted from any relation to his people, "he knew no sin," knew it not experimentally; he never felt its power, he was never stained with its pollution; he was not chargeable with its guilt; he was, in the highest sense of the word, "a lamb without blemish or spot; the holy one of God, harmless, undefiled;" yet however innocent, or holy in himself, "he was made sin for us;" he was constituted such by the imputation of our guilt, and as he assumed the debt he was answerable for the payment. "I am the good Shepherd," the faithful and true witness testifies concerning himself, "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep: Their lives were forfeited to my Father's justice, but I offer my life as a substitute for theirs, and my blood as the price of their redemption: I voluntarily die that they may live."

But it may be enquired by some, what is the consequence of this humiliation and death? Is there any benefit resulting to us from all this degradation, and suffering of another in our room? These advantages are expressed by the prophet, and are now to be illustrated. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed."

Among the blessings which result to man through the mediation of the Eternal Son, none is more frequently noticed than that of *peace*. The angels who announced his appearance in the world rapturously sing, "glo-

ry to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." As the Saviour rode in triumph to Jerusalem, the multitude cried out in transports of gratitude and joy, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." The sin of man kindled up the flame of war between heaven and earth. The Creator then became an enemy to man who was formerly the favorite part of his creation. As the moral Governor of the world, HE was obliged, for evincing the rectitude of his government, and maintaining order in his dominions, to manifest his displeasure against disobedience, and against man on account of it — Thus we behold the Lord God coming forth immediately after the apostacy of our parents, and challenging with a holy jealousy, "hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" He then put on the garments of vengeance, unsheathed his glittering sword, and "drove out the man : " He turned Adam out of Paradise, as a proof that he had forfeited his confidence, and was no longer worthy of his communion. But Jehovah the Son seasonably interposed ; assumed the nature which had sinned ; undertook to suffer all that we were liable to suffer, and negotiated a *peace*. "He hath made *peace* by the blood of his cross : He is our *peace* who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition." And as the creditor is satisfied with the debtor, when the demand is fully paid ; or as the

Prince is reconciled to the rebel when the punishment threatened against his crime is really executed, and the majesty of the law maintained, so the Father is reconciled to us through the obedience, and blood of his co-equal Son. "Who shall now lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again—who also maketh intercession for us. We now joy in God through our Lord Jesus, by whom also we have received the reconciliation. The gospel which discloses this scheme of pardon is called *the gospel of peace*: The covenant which was ratified by the blood of the infinite Surety, is called *the covenant of peace*: The Eternal Jesus who repaired the breach by finishing transgression, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, is called *the Prince of peace*: God the Father who has received from the substitute that satisfaction which he might have exacted from the sinner, is called *the God of peace*; and as a proof of this, "he raised from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ," just as the creditor orders the debtor to be released when the debt is discharged, and the bond is cancelled: "Mercy and truth, righteousness and peace," these seemingly opposite attributes of Deity, now *meet together*; they cordially embrace each other; harmonizing, concurring, co-operating in the salvation of man through the finished righteousness of Jehovah our Sponsor: Mercy is indulged in her most tender compassions towards the sin-

ner, and truth is vindicated in the execution of all her threatenings against sin ; peace walks abroad with the olive branch in her hand, and righteousness delivers up the indictment against us, having seized another in our room. “ There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus : The work of this righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of this righteousness shall be quietness, and assurance forever.”

*Healing* is another blessing which results to us from the sufferings of Jesus the Surety.— “ By his stripes we are healed.” This is another and glorious effect frequently ascribed to the virtue of the Saviour’s cross. The prophet therefore asks, “ Is there no balm in Gilead ? Is there no Physician there ? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people restored ?” Is not the balm which grows upon Calvary a sovereign remedy for all the maladies of sin ? Is not the Divine Saviour a Physician infallible in his skill, ever ready to pity those who apply, and administer to their relief ; why then do men perish in their iniquities ? Why do they wilfully languish, and die eternal victims to the disease of sin ? And the evangelist mentions, “ In the midst of the street of it, of the new Jerusalem, was there the tree of life ; and the leaves of the tree were for the *healing* of the nations. Sin has converted this world into one great hospital : It has brought diseases both upon the bodies and the souls of men ; diseases which are countless in their number, and des-

perate in their nature : Who can enumerate those frailties to which the body is liable, and those afflictions with which it is tortured in consequence of transgression ? Who can paint in all its horrors that remorse which often agitates, and harrows up the soul through a consciousness of guilt ; those lusts which lurk malignantly in the heart ; those disorders which infuriate the passions, and break forth in pride, envy, revenge, murders, adulteries, and those nameless abominations by which man becomes hateful to man ? But for all these foul, complicated distempers the laver of the cross furnishes a sovereign antidote ; from all these it effects a thorough, everlasting cure. “ The chastisement ” of the Son of God secured “ our peace,” and “ his stripes our healing.” “ He was wounded ” in the garden, and on the cross ; but from his pierced side issued forth a balm for “ the healing of the nations ; ” it *heals* the disquieted conscience by expiating that guilt which is the cause of all its disquietudes ; it *heals* the polluted heart by washing away its pollutions ; it *heals* the disorderly, tumultuous passions by subduing them to the obedience of faith, and restoring them to their primitive order ; it *heals* the very maladies of the body by procuring for it a resurrection to immortal vigor and glory. Thus all the disorders which have seized either the bodies or the souls of men in consequence of the disobedience of the first Adam are removed by the interposition, and merit of the second Adam : Every wound is carefully bound

up, infallibly and eternally *healed* through the virtue of the balm of Gilead, and the compassion and skill of the Physician there. The remedy which he administers to the diseased soul was provided at an incalculable cost, even his own most precious blood, yet the importance of the effect is fully answerable to the immensity of the expense. It secures glory in the highest to God; and imparts to every sinner who improves it a "peace which passeth all understanding."

May we not infer from this doctrine the love, the unequalled, inconceivable love of Jehovah to our perishing world? We scarcely know whether to admire most the condescension of the Father in not sparing his Son, or the condescension of the Son in not sparing himself. The grace, the good will of both are displayed in a degree without any parallel, and should excite our wonder, and gratitude, and praise. The faith of Abraham in taking Isaac his Son, and standing ready to offer him at the divine command has been admired in all ages. But the love of God the Father rises *infinitely, infinitely* higher. Abraham was directed to this deed by the command of his Creator, and in performing it was only performing a reasonable service. But the sacrifice of his own Son by God the Father was voluntary, unmerited, unasked, unexpected. The amazing thought could have originated only in the bosom of a God. Abraham in offering Isaac his Son merely gave back a child which he had received from the divine

bounty, and returned that which he was unable to retain, but in sending his Son to be the Saviour of the world, the Father was moved by no other consideration than that of love, love the most pure, ardent, disinterested. "He loved us because he loved us." Abraham in carrying his Son to the altar was delivering him to the torture of a few moments, and in performing the dreadful office could soothe the agonies of his soul by imparting words of consolation, but Jehovah delivered up Jesus to sufferings as lingering as they were painful; they commenced in his cradle and never abated until they were consummated upon his cross; *He spared him not* during all that time, but delivered him up to every species of ignominy and pain; he *delivered* him to the men of earth to be "mocked, and spit upon, and scourged;" he delivered him up to the powers of hell to be derided, and tempted, and insulted; Nay, with his own hand he "oppressed and afflicted" him. This is a circumstance displaying Jehovah's love which this prophet notices with peculiar emotions of wonder. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief." *It pleased him*; all that vengeance which he executed on the Son of his love standing in our covenant room he executed *cordially*; This act was not only conformable to his purpose from eternity, but consistent with his good pleasure; That he might *spare* us he *spared not* the "child of his love, the brightness of glory;" He was perfectly willing that he should suffer in order to secure



our escape, and die that we might live ; “ he laid upon him the iniquity of us all ;” he not only charged him with the debt, but at his hand demanded payment to the utmost farthing.

While we adore the grace of the Father in *not sparing his Son* may we not equally adore the grace of the Son in *not sparing himself*. “ He loved me, and gave himself for me.” Love greater, love equal, love to be compared to this has no example among men ; nor is recorded in the annals of the world. That man should die for man would be considered a great expression of good will ; that one man should interpose, and undertake either to pay the debt, or suffer punishment for another who was his open, unreasonably, irreconcilable enemy would be pronounced an instance of goodness still greater ; “ but God commendeth his love towards us ;” displays it in a degree which admits of no comparison. “ in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Here the Sovereign leaves the throne, and suffers that punishment to which the subject was exposed. And yet notwithstanding the character of man for whom he interposed, a transgressor of his law, a rebel against his throne, daily aggravating his guilt by the wilful repetition of his crimes, how cheerfully did the Saviour undertake ? How patiently did he persevere, until his work was accomplished ? Isaac willingly ascended the mount, but he knew not his Father’s design ; he saw the wood, and the knife, but still expected that

God “ would provide a lamb for a burnt offering. But the whole scene of the Saviour’s sufferings was open to his view ; he saw with his eyes the sword waving in the hands of justice that was shortly to be encrimsoned in his blood; and longing for the execution of its office: he beheld those lightnings blazing around which were soon to concentrate upon himself, and cleave him “ to the dust of earth :” Yet in the awful prospect, how calm, how firm, how cheerful does he remain ? “ Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire,” he addresses his righteous Father as the hour of his suffering approaches, “ Then said I, lo, I come, to do thy will,” in making my soul an offering for sin, “ O, my God, I take delight.” The heathen considered it as an unfavorable omen when the animal to be offered in sacrifice went reluctantly to the altar, but auspicious when it walked willingly forward. Jesus our sacrifice was not only willing for his work, but he longed for the moment of its consummation. “ When the time was come that he should be received up,” says the sacred historian, “ he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.” How passive when he was betrayed by Judas ? How silent when unjustly condemned by Pilot ? How resigned when railed at, and insulted, and “ spit upon” by the mob ? As he was entering the arduous conflict, he makes provision for an aged, desolate mother; when hanging upon the cross he dispenses pardon to a fellow-sufferer ; with his expiring breath he asks forgiveness for those whose

mouths were openly vilifying him, and whose hands were encrimsoned with his blood.—  
 “Behold what manner of love is this?”

2. We are instructed from this doctrine in every contemplation of the Redeemer's sufferings to consider our own sins as the procuring cause. “For the transgressions of my people was he stricken.” We often stand amazed at the treachery of Judas in betraying his Master, and his accursed avarice in selling him for a few pieces of silver. We view with horror the servility of Pilot in passing sentence against him, and the cruelty of the Jews in murdering the Prince of life: When our Saviour informed his disciples that one of them should betray him, they all appeared to startle at the horrid thought: Each asks for himself, “Lord, is it I? Am I a dog that I should be guilty of conduct so base? Rather let me never possess silver than obtain it by such unheard of perfidy as delivering up a Master so indulgent; a friend so faithful, and a benefactor so liberal. Sooner let my hand forget her cunning, and lie inactive in the grave than be stretched out to smite or crucify this Lord of glory.” But remember, and while you remember weep bitterly, that your sins brought upon the Son of God all this infamy and suffering. “He was delivered for our offences.” Our sins prepared that cross on which his body was suspended: They pointed the nails with which his hands were tortured; they formed the gall, and the wormwood of that cup which he recoiled to drink; they

collected that horror of great darkness which enveloped his holy soul, and beneath which the "Sun of righteousness" labored under an eclipse. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." We never entertained either suitable or profitable views of the Redeemer's sufferings, unless we considered them as undergone for us, and mourned and wept while we beheld. "They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for a first born." Although the scene of his anguish was remote from us; his decease was accomplished in a different country, and distant age, yet we ourselves were accessory: "The Lord laid on him," made to meet upon him as our Surety "the iniquities of us all:" All the transgressions of all the redeemed in this assembly; of the unnumbered millions of the saved in all generations of men, and all ages of time met in one moment on the head of the Son of God as our sacrifice: This was the mighty load beneath which "strong cries and tears were extorted to him that was able to save him;" beneath which the blood was pressed through all the pores of his body, and he at last bowed in agony his guiltless head. And no wonder that beneath the amazing weight his soul was troubled, and all his "bones were out of joint." The weight of a single act of rebellion sunk the "angels who excell in strength" from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell. The

consciousness of having shed the blood of his brother constrained Cain to cry out, "my punishment is greater than I can bear," how great then beyond all conception the load which pressed upon the everlasting Surety, as the representative of a chosen, yet hell-deserving world! Not the guilt of one transgression only lay upon him, but of millions: Not the guilt of millions of transgressions which are chargeable to one believer, but the guilt of millions of transgressions which were committed by all the millions of the redeemed which "come out of every nation, and people, and language under heaven." The demerit of all their vain, impure, malicious thoughts; of all their frivolous, unedifying, profane expressions, and their unjust, impious actions: The repeated murders of Manasseh; the impurities of Mary Magdalene; the frauds of the thief who expired on the cross; the deliberate denial of his Master by Peter, the injuries, and persecutions, and blasphemies of Paul: These lay at one moment on the Eternal Son having undertaken for us, and were exclusively the procuring cause of all the humiliation of his life, and all the bitterness of his death. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities — Turn aside, sisters and brethren, and behold in the ordinance of the supper the symbols of that Jesus "whom you have pierced, and mourn for him: And while holy sorrow fills our hearts at the affecting sight, let us mingle in the exultations of the celestial choir, "To

him that loved and washed us from our sins in his own blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever, amen.”

3. We learn from this doctrine the aggravated guilt of those who do not improve the redemption of Jesus Christ; a redemption which he obtained at the expense of so much reproach, so much sorrow, so much travail of soul: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” *How shall we, how can we escape?* As all the Persons in Jehovah now concur in offering pardon, and glory to the hearers of the gospel they will all concur hereafter in executing vengeance on those who will not believe and obey. We may conceive the Father as coming forth in the hour of judgment, and thus addressing the gospel despisers; those who never actually closed with Jesus, nor gave him the love of their hearts, nor the obedience of their lives. “What could I have done more for your salyation than I have done? I had ONE SON, an ONLY BEGOTTEN, an INFINITELY BELOVED, mine Equal, my Fellow, and him I delivered up at the call of your necessities, and in compassion to your miseries: I did not spare him that I might spare you: I sent him from heaven to earth, where he lived an exile from his own home, a stranger to the honors and pleasures, and even common enjoyments of life: He was doomed to hunger, and thirst, and derision, and at last died on a cross a spectacle of reproach, and execration; I made him to be sin for you that you might

Be righteous through him ; I sent an angel at his nativity to announce peace on earth, and glory in the highest through his substitution and suffering : I employed men of your own nature, and of like passions with yourselves to declare that I was pacified towards you ; that notwithstanding your repeated rebellions I was willing to receive you into favor : All this concern have I manifested for your salvation, but you would not comply ; you made light of all the threatnings denounced against the unbelieving, and all the promises offered to the penitent and holy ; you went to your farms, and merchandise, and other callings, neither moved by my love in sending my Son, nor by his love in bleeding for your salvation." We may conceive the Eternal Son as then coming forward and addressing those who misimprove his sacrifice and grace. " What higher expressions of good will to you could I have given, or what more could I have endured for your salvation ? I came down to earth, and appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, that I might satisfy in the same nature which had sinned : I was laid in a manger to shew that I was willing to stoop to any degree of humiliation for your benefit : I was denied and derided ; I was wounded and bruised ; I endured insult after insult from earth, and temptation after temptation from hell, and above all I suffered the wrath of my Father to save you from that wrath : Ask the trees of the wilderness where I was an hungered forty days ; ask the lonely mountain where I spent

night after night, offering up strong cries with tears for your future welfare; ask the garden of Gethsemane where my soul was troubled, and the sweat of my body was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground; ask the tree of Calvary where I hung a public monument of ignominy and pain; ask the angels who ministered to me in the wilderness, and aimed at strengthening me in the garden; ask either, or all these what I have suffered, or rather what I have not suffered to redeem you from the damnation of hell: But how have you requited me; I gave you my word, but so ardent were you in pursuing the pleasures or profits of the world, that you rarely read it: I offered you a robe of righteousness which might have adorned you for ever, but you neglected to put it on: I was exalted to give repentance, and remission of sin, but you scarcely offered up a cold petition either for repentance or remission: I set before you an open door, and invited you to enter, but you postponed, and postponed, and postponed, until the season of mercy was past, and the door was shut: I sent my servants, and am witness of all their prayers, their tears, their watchings, their fastings, their studious days, their restless nights through anxiety for your salvation: I beheld all their earnestness in private, and in the pulpit, beseeching you to return, and live; and not only my wounds and bruises, but their secret sighs, their groans, their emaciated bodies, their neglected estates bear testimony against you: And now, seeing



you would not hear, and obey, *depart from me, ye cursed*: CURSE them; ye ministers of the sanctuary who wept at their stupidity, who travailed as in birth for their conversion, who refused to be comforted, because they refused to be reconciled: CURSE them, ye apostles of the Lamb who were witnesses of all the groans which I uttered; of all the insult to which I submitted; of all the agonies which I endured as their Substitute and Saviour: CURSE them, ye holy martyrs who loved not your lives unto the death, but constrained by my love followed me to prisons, and flames: CURSE them, ye prophets of my God, who spake of me ages before I was born, testifying beforehand my sufferings and glory: CURSE them, ye angels of light, who sang praises at my birth, who strengthened me in the garden until my decease was accomplished, who attended and aided at my resurrection, who waited to rejoice at the repentance of these sinners: CURSE them, O righteous Father, for all their contempt of thy love in sending thy Son, and of thine authority which commanded them to receive him for salvation: Ye cherubims with your flaming swords shut against them the gates of glory, and drive them down to hell as the despised of Jehovah: Let my body which still retains the marks of its crucifixion, stand forth an eternal monument of my compassions towards them, and my justice in now executing vengeance upon them." *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine hon-*

*or be not thou united.* “Who among us shalt dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Is not the thought overwhelming that a male, or a female who now hears me should sink the prisoner of never ending despair? O brethren, “turn ye to the strong holds while you are prisoners of hope.” In virtue of the *chastisement* of Jesus, you may yet have *peace*, and through his *stripes* you may yet be *healed*.—He is once more laying his crucified body before you, and tries to stop you in your career to destruction: He continues affectionately to intreat, “hearken unto me, O ye children: Hearken unto me, ye stout hearted, that are far from righteousness: Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O foolish people, and unwise?” As an ambassador of Jesus Christ I ask you with all affection, will you halt a moment longer between two opinions? Is it prudent to hesitate about a question which concerns not your health merely, not your fortune, not your character, not your temporal ease, but your souls, your precious souls, and that for ever? Draw near, ye drunkards of Salem, ye who waste your time, and strength, and property over the intoxicating cups: Draw near, ye lovers of mammon; ye whose hearts go after your covetousness, and seek your gain from every quarter: Draw near, ye children of pleasure, who spend your evenings in mirth, sporting around in the jovial dance: Draw near, ye careless youth, ye who live without prayer, without Jesus, and without God, who

perhaps never spent an hour in self-examination, or in dedicating yourselves to Him who created you, and will soon judge you : Draw near, ye Sabbath-breakers, who waste that holy day in idleness, in amusements, or in pursuing your common employments : Draw near, all such, and survey with me for a few moments the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary : Behold the Lord of glory wounded, and bruised : See the cold sweat like great drops of blood rising upon his body, through the insupportable pressure of his Father's wrath ; Hear the piercing groans which escaped involuntarily from his lips, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? O my strength, haste thee to help me ; I am poured out like water ; all my bones are out of joint, and thou hast brought me to the dust of death ? " Contemplate these scenes, and then say, can you drink of that cup which even the Son of God recoiled to drink ? Can you sustain that shock of almighty vengeance which was too much for him to sustain ; before the fierceness of which " the vail of the temple parted in twain, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened," and before which the " elements hereafter shall melt with fervent heat, and the world and the things that are therein shall be dissolved ? " I ask you again, can you endure that wrath which the Saviour endured ? Because, as the Lord liveth, if you will not improve that sacrifice which he offered up, you yourselves must be the sacrifice : That fire of Jehovah's indignation which came down and

consumed him, must come down and consume you, and that eternally : The threatenng denounced against disobedience must be inflicted : Justice must be satisfied either by the Surety for the sinner, or by the sinner himself : If God spared not his own Son bearing our iniquities, will he spare you chargeable with all the guilt of your nature, and life ? “ For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ” AMEN.

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SERMON III.

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JOHN vi. 54.

*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,  
hath eternal life.*

THE natural world, through the condescension of God, is in general an emblem of the spiritual world. Almost every object that strikes the bodily senses, and every action in common life is employed to represent some object in grace, and some exercise in which we engage as christians. The air in which we constantly breathe ; which is the great mean of support to animal life, is an emblem of the Holy Ghost in whose influencies we “ live, and breathe, and move as christians ; by whose free, omnipotent agency our spiritual life is commenced, and carried on, and consumma-

ted. The natural sun which rises in the east ; which dissipates the shadows of the night, and enlightens and cheers the natural world, is employed as a representation of the Sun of righteousness ; of Jesus-Jehovah who is the light of the spiritual world ; who as the prophet of his church dispels the gloom of darkness which envelopes the souls of his children, and diffuses over them the light of immortal life. The rain as it drops from the clouds, and the dew as it gently distils refreshing the earth, causing the grass to bloom in the fields, and the corn to flourish in the vallies, represents to us the graces of the spirit which renew the face of the church ; under whose genial showers the hearts of his people “ revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and diffuse their scent like the trees of Lebanon.” The bread which we ordinarily eat ; which is the great mean of nourishment and support to our bodies, is made a representation of that more costly, and better provision which is prepared for our immortal souls. Thus the Redeemer declares, “ I am that bread of life ; ” again, “ I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; ” but as bread must be eat in order to nourish the body, or as wine must be drank before it either exhilarates or strengthens, so without a reception of the Son of God, without an application of him to our spiritual wants, there is no life, or consolation, or support to the soul. “ Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man ye have no life in you : But whoso

eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

On the last sacramental occasion your attention was directed to the Lamb of God as the propitiation for our sins: I aimed at stirring up your souls to a suitable frame for approaching that holy communion by exhibiting the sufferings of the Surety, the procuring cause of those sufferings, and the infinitely blessed effects. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." Through the tender mercies of God we have again assembled for the interesting design of "shewing forth our Lord's death until he comes;" *until he comes* at the consummation of all things when we shall see him without a vail, without the intervention of any ordinance. As a mean of preparing your minds for a comfortable interview with him at his table *now*, as an earnest of beholding him with joy when he shall come *hereafter* in the glory of his Father, I would invite your attention to the words which have been read. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life."

Here we have the provision furnished, "the flesh and blood" of the Son of God; the exercise required on our part, "eating and drinking, and eternal life," as the exalted privilege of all who receive it by faith. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

The provision offered for our entertainment is "the flesh and blood" of the Lord Jesus Christ. The *flesh* expresses the Son of God, as really incarnate, as actually clothed with our nature, and the *blood* expresses him as suffering and satisfying in that nature. This is that object to which the faith of the redeemed ought uniformly to be directed, and upon which it ought uniformly to fasten. It was necessary that Jesus, the Mediator, should have a body ; that as he undertook for the redemption of man, he should be clothed with the nature of man, and thus be capable of obeying, and satisfying in the very nature which had sinned. We therefore hear him in the character of surety, thus addressing his righteous Father, "a body hast thou prepared," fitted, or finished for me ; "as thou didst in thine adorable sovereignty, in thine ineffable compassions to guilty man, appoint me to this mediatorial work thou hast appointed a body for me in which I should accomplish this work ; thou didst thus qualify me for magnifying the precept of thy law, and enduring its penalty in the selfsame nature which had trampled on its authority." It was no imaginary body in which our Lord Jesus Christ was revealed ; it was not merely a human form such as that in which angels occasionally appeared, or in which the Saviour himself was manifested under the former dispensation, but it was real manhood ; human nature in the strictest sense of the word. He who was essentially the "Mighty God, the Everlasting Father,

the Prince of Peace," was pronounced a "child born," "a Son given;" he was born as others are born; he grew up as others grow, and was liable to infirmities in common with others, sin only excepted. "The word was made flesh," says the evangelist, "and dwelt among us:" he was "flesh," assuming the nature of man, and "dwelt among us," manifesting wants in common with other men, hunger and thirst. "Even as the children," those whom he appeared to redeem, "were made partakers of flesh and blood, Christ also himself likewise took part of the same." As it was requisite that the Saviour should be man, the reality of his manhood is clearly evinced both by prophets and apostles.

The Redeemer's *blood* which is particularly mentioned implies those sufferings which he endured, and that satisfaction which he effected in the human nature. His whole mediatorial work as to the purchase is very frequently expressed by the effusion of his blood — "He hath made peace by the blood of his cross:" "We are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish or spot." The just made perfect who now surround the throne above are represented, "as having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb:" While they strike their golded harps they also exclaim with rapturous hearts, and elevated voices, "to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood—to



him be glory for ever." It is not without an important design that the satisfaction offered by Jesus to his Father's justice is generally expressed by the shedding of his blood. It was not sufficient that HE, as the surety of his people, should be clothed with their nature, but he must actually suffer in that nature, and suffer *even unto death*. "He must be slain," before he could "redeem us to God:" "The vail of his flesh must be rent in twain" before the way could be opened for the introduction "of many sons to glory." It was by his actually "pouring out his soul unto death," or "coming by water and blood," that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, and the correspondence between the type and the antitype, the sacrifices of the former dispensation, and the great New Testament sacrifice was maintained. It was not enough, under the economy of Moses, that a lamb was provided "for burnt offering:" It was not enough that the iniquities of the people were acknowledged over the head of the lamb chosen for sacrifice: It was not enough that the devoted animal was laid upon the altar, and there bound: It must be *slain*; its blood must really *flow* by the hand of the High Priest who made the typical atonement. "Into the second tabernacle went the High Priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." "Almost all things," the apostle mentions in another place, "almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remis-

sion." Therefore that Jesus Jehovah, who is the substance, might answer to these shadows, or that he as the antitype might correspond with these types, he must *bleed* and *die*.

But there is another, and more important reason why it was necessary that he became "*obedient unto death.*" *Death* was the curse to which those whom he represented were doomed by transgression. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," was the divine denunciation: "The wages of sin is death." Therefore Jesus, being substituted in the room of his chosen, was liable to this *death*, and could not make a proper satisfaction, a complete reconciliation for sin without dying. "Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate:" "This is he," says the evangelist, "that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the spirit is truth." He hath thus redeemed us from the curse by literally bearing that curse; he hath abolished that *death* to which we were exposed in consequence of transgression, and hath made a real, perfect, and everlasting expiation for sin. Through the merit of the sacrifice of his cross we may behold the honors of the broken law fully vindicated, the flames of wrath which had been kindled by our crimes eternally extinguished, and that sword of divine vengeance which had been unsheathed against us laid aside forever. We may freely approach to, and "joy in God

through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation."

Such is the import of the "flesh and the blood" of the Son of God: They express him as having really assumed our nature, and suffered and satisfied in that nature. This is the affecting, interesting object uniformly presented to our view in the glass of the gospel, and which in visible symbols is shortly to be exhibited for our enjoyment in the ordinance of the supper. Here we see really accomplished what the seraphic Isaiah foresaw in prophetic vision. Jehovah the Surety not only incarnate, "but wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "The cup of blessing which we bless," in this holy institution, "is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

But how shall we become interested in a Saviour thus suffering, and satisfying for us? How may we receive nourishment to our own souls from this spiritual provision which is exhibited for our enjoyment? We must "eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or we have no life in us;" we have no interest in Him or in the blessings of his salvation.

To explain the import of this exercise, was our second proposition, and now claims our consideration.

I need not remark to you that the expressions "eating and drinking" are altogether fi-

gurative. We are chiefly conversant with material objects, and our ideas are chiefly received through the medium of the bodily senses. In accommodation, therefore, to our usual habits, and in order the more deeply to impress divine truth upon the mind the exercises of the soul in *receiving* Christ Jesus the Lord, in *resting* upon him, and *rejoicing* in him are usually expressed by the actions of the body in the common offices of life. Faith is sometimes represented as consisting in *hearing* the voice of the Son of God ; again, in *looking* to Him the author, and finisher of our salvation ; again, it is expressed by *coming* to him for life ; by *receiving* him, and *putting* him on, as we receive a present from the hand of another reaching it forth, or as we put on a garment to warm and adorn the body. In the present instance the grace of faith is expressed by *eating* his flesh and *drinking* his blood. This expression stripped of its figure, and understood in a manner agreeably to the nature and operations of the soul implies,

1. A full persuasion that the infinite Surety did suffer, and make reconciliation for iniquity. This belief necessarily precedes our *coming* to Jesus, or *receiving* his finished salvation. The soul in closing with the Eternal Son for righteousness, and sanctification, and support ; in committing to him its most important concerns, both for time and eternity, acts rationally and deliberately : It is brought to a reliance on the sacrifice, and atonement of Jesus Christ from a full, mature conviction

upon evidence both of the reality and all sufficiency of his atonement ; that he really "suffered the just for the unjust," and in thus suffering became "the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him." The believer yields the assent of his understanding to these important realities relative to the Saviour of the world upon evidence as much as he believes that any other person ever lived, or that any event ever occurred ; only in this instance he possesses evidence infinitely higher in its nature, the testimony of the Living God. Ignorance is no more the mother of faith than of devotion. We are not called to trust the Son of God with concerns infinitely and everlastingly important, without ample proof that he is both able and inclined to manage these concerns. This is the great reason why his coming in the flesh, and his dying in that flesh formed the substance of each divine revelation since the foundation of the world, and are taught by testimony plain, and repeated. His sufferings, and "the glory that should follow" were foretold by a succession of prophets during a period of four thousand years. His nativity was announced by an angel the very day that it took place, and the *glory* that should result to God, and the *peace*, the *good will* to man were celebrated in anthems of praise by "a multitude of the heavenly host." The miracles which he wrought in healing the diseased, in giving sight to the blind, and life to the dead in order to prove the truth of his mission, were attested not merely by his

followers, but by those who were the open enemies of his Person and cause. The facts of his death and resurrection were witnessed by the women who stood afar off ; by the scribes and pharisees who sealed the stone over his entombed body ; by the angel who afterwards rolled away the stone, and declared his resurrection to the disciples, and by Himself who appeared to his apostles again and again, shewing the very marks which his body had received upon the cross. The infinite, eternal sufficiency of his sacrifice for the remission of sin is taught not only by the Holy Ghost, speaking through evangelists, and apostles, but by that "perfect peace," that "strong consolation" which millions of his followers have experienced in all circumstances and ages. "These are written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and without a persuasion of the reality of these things there can be no saving acceptance of him. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is ;" and he who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life must believe that he is ; that he appeared in the character of a Saviour, and that he possesses every qualification which is requisite for the important work.

2. This exercise implies an acquiescence in the scheme of reconciliation through that sacrifice which he offered up. We may be convinced of the truth of a particular fact, and yet not impressed with its excellence, or expediency. It is possible for the sinner to enter-

tain a conviction in his own mind of all that is revealed with respect to the Son of God, and yet never consent to be saved wholly by his merits : Nay, although his understanding cannot resist the evidence by which these facts are attested, yet the pride of his heart often rises up in enmity against this scheme of salvation. He revolts at the thought of being exclusively indebted to the mercy of another for pardon and glory. He cannot consent to the self-denying doctrine of coming as a *fool* that he may be instructed ; of stripping off his own righteousness as unprofitable, not only unprofitable, but odious, that he may be adorned with a borrowed robe : He recoils at the mortifying sentiment that he must be reckoned “ poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked ” in himself ; that he can have no account made, no credit given for all his prayers and tears ; for all his alms to the poor, his hospitality to the stranger, the civility of his carriage, the equity of his dealings with others, or the services which he has rendered to society : He cannot consider it as proper that with all these recommendations he must be placed on a level with adulterers, with drunkards, with the profane, with the dishonest, and like them “ be justified freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” It is this circumstance which renders the scheme of reconciliation by the Saviour’s cross offensive and unpopular : This is an obstacle over which many stumble and fall to their eternal perdition. They choose rather to run the hazard of being damned for

ever than be indebted to free, sovereign grace for all their salvation. But the sinner in truly closing with Jesus Christ not only believes that "there is redemption in his blood," but acquiesces in the expediency of this plan of redemption: he fully consents to it not only as *sure* but as well *ordered* in all things; as admirably suited to advance the majesty of the divine government, the glory of all the divine perfections, and answerable to the circumstances of fallen man. He is willing not only to be *saved*, but to be saved precisely according to that scheme which the wisdom, and love, and sovereignty of Jehovah have prescribed. No man perhaps ranked higher in his own estimation than the apostle Paul, previous to his conversion, and probably to no man was the saviour's cross more offensive. "I was alive without the law once," he informs us: Again, "as touching the righteousness of the law, I was blameless;" and he declares on another occasion, "I thought that I must do many things against Jesus of Nazareth;" he not only disdained the doctrine of depending on another for a justifying righteousness, but openly embarked in opposition to the Saviour and his cause: Yet listen to his language when in the light of the Holy Ghost he had obtained more correct views of himself, of the law, and of Jesus, the formerly despised Nazarene. "When the commandment came;" when it was brought home to my conscience and understanding in its purity, and spirituality and rigour, "sin revived;"



crimes without number, which I had long forgotten, came fresh to my recollection, and those which were once considered trifling, excuseable levities now appeared damning in their nature ; " sin thus revived and I died ;" all expectations of pardon by my own performances instantly and utterly expired ; I was brought to the feet of sovereign mercy, and was made willing to become nothing that the Saviour might be all : " I now count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord ;" *For the excellency of this knowledge ;* that plan which once appeared uninteresting, unsuitable, and even odious, now appears transcendently excellent and glorious ; calculated to reflect honor on each divine Person, and perfection, and infinitely adapted to us. How cordially does he acquiesce in this scheme for his own salvation ? How affectionately, and earnestly does he recommend it to perishing, fellow sinners ? " It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

3. This exercise implies an appropriation of Jesus and him crucified for our salvation in particular. Although this act of the soul is nearly related to the former, yet it may be considered in some respects as distinct from it. When there is an acquiescence in the scheme of reconciliation through the Saviour's cross as excellent and eligible, there must be an acceptance of him for all our salvation ; yet the latter may be considered a higher exercise

of faith than the former : The awakened sinner in contemplating by faith *the Lamb of God* is not satisfied with knowing that he "takes away the sins of the world," but he improves him for taking away his own sins in particular : He is not contented with knowing that "there is a fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness," but he desires to bathe in that fountain, both for pardon and purification : He is not satisfied with a speculative belief that the incarnate Jehovah is a "refuge from the storm, a covert from the tempest," but he aims at entering this refuge, at hiding beneath this covert, and there taking shelter from the storm of divine wrath : It is not enough for the awakened sinner to know that the righteousness of Jesus is "an everlasting righteousness," that it is a robe which secures the acceptance of all who apply it, but he desires to be actually clothed with this robe as his own security and glory : He does rest satisfied with hearing that the Redeemer's "flesh is meat indeed, that his blood is drink indeed;" that they impart substantial nourishment and strength to the soul, but he really "eats this flesh, and drinks this blood;" he particularly appropriates the precious Saviour in his Person and relations, and righteousness, and fullness for spiritual life, and strength, and consolation : While Jesus in the depths of his condescension, and the ardor of his love is expostulating, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink : Look unto me, and be ye saved," the believing soul is disposed to

reply, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; yea, the perfection of beauty: To whom would I go, or to whom shall I go but unto thee! Thou hast the words of eternal life: Thou art all my salvation and all my desire." It is this application of the general promise, and of Jesus in the promise, which gives us an actual interest in him, and his salvation. A present although intended for me is not strictly my own while it remains in the hand of the person offering it; there is an act of receiving on my part requisite for giving me the full possession of the gift: A shelter however large, however impenetrable to every storm, or however easy of access, will not secure my body either from the scorching sun, or chilling blasts, or falling rains, unless I actually enter it: Provision although furnished in the richest abundance, although perfectly suited to my wants, and spread freely before me will neither satisfy my hunger, nor strengthen me for the duties of life, unless I particularly receive it. As these remarks are obviously true in things natural, they are no less obviously true in things spiritual. And therefore with special emphasis the Redeemer declares, "Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you;" and in language no less explicit he adds, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

"Life, eternal life" is the privilege immediately and unalienably secured by all who thus appropriate the adorable Jesus. "He that be-

lieveth on the Son hath everlasting life." To aim at illustrating this privilege was our next proposition, and remains now to be considered: Want of time prevents me from explaining at any considerable length this privilege. Nay, it cannot be either explained, or understood in the ten thousandth part of its import, while we remain upon earth: It will be the Joy of eternity to participate its blessings, and it will be the work of eternity to celebrate the praises of him who died, and made the purchase. "This everlasting life" does not imply merely an endless duration, or an immortal existence. A perpetuity of being is secured to the damned; no less than to the redeemed, and this continuation of existence will constitute their misery. "They shall go away into everlasting punishment." Eternal life implies not only a never ending duration, but comprehends all that can minister to the happiness of that existence; whatever can render life either desirable, or comfortable. This privilege may be considered,

1. As it commences in grace here. The christian receives the first fruits of "eternal life" in the remission of all his sins, in the justification of his person, and his adoption into the family of Jesus, when he is recognised as a son of God, and an heir of future glory. He occasionally receives the earnest, the precious pledge of his eternal inheritance, when he experiences the assurances of his Father's love, peace of conscience through the atoning blood of his loving Saviour, and joy in the Ho-

ly Ghost. Sometimes when the believer approaches his God in the devotions of the closet; or when he meditates on the promises as the charter of his heavenly hope, or while he contemplates his Dear Redeemer in his sacrifice, and righteousness, and salvation, or when he is receiving at his table the emblems of his body and blood, foretastes of the pleasures of Heaven are communicated to his soul; "The Spirit of God and of glory rests upon him" and seals upon him the assurance of his adoption into the family of Jesus. He is then emboldened to cry, "Abba, Father," and in the language of confidence to exclaim, "Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and my song; he also is become my salvation." They are greatly mistaken who suppose that the blessings of redemption are reserved exclusively for the heavenly world — The earnest of glory are ordinarily imparted to the souls of the ransomed before their translation from earth. "He that hath the Son hath life." The Lord Jesus not only gives them the title by imputing to them his own righteousness, but occasionally gives them in part the possession. Streams from that river of life which issues from the throne, watering the paradise above, are communicated to refresh the spiritual Israelite while he passes through the wilderness of this world. Jehovah their Substitute not only reconciles them "by the body of his flesh through death," but sanctifies them by his grace; he seals them

by his Spirit ; he “ fills them with all joy and peace in believing that they may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost.”— The Father indeed does not give to his son the full possession of the estate while he continues under age ; yet he supports him out of the estate ; he affords him every assurance of his good will, of his solicitude for his welfare, and gives occasionally animating pledges that when his minority is past he shall be placed in the actual enjoyment of the expected inheritance. Thus affectionately does the Everlasting Father deal with the objects of his adopting love : He not only brings them into his family, but he feels towards them, and deals with them as sons and daughters ; he sympathises with them in their complicated sorrows ; he supplies their wants from his covenant fullness ; he forgives their frequent and shameful imperfections towards himself and each other ; he cheers them from time to time with intimations of his love, and thus grants them the first fruits of that full salvation which is reserved for them in his presence above. “ In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.”

2. This eternal life which commences in grace will be consummated in glory. Although the heirs of promise receive in this world a part of the “ purchased inheritance,” it is no more than the *first fruits* : All the spiritual joys which we experience here may be

compared to the cluster of grapes which the spies brought from Canaan to the Israelites in the wilderness ; we are thereby experimentally assured that there is a heavenly country ; that *there* there is "fulness of joy," and we are encouraged to press forward with greater eagerness for the possession. Here "we know," yet it is "only in part ;" "we see," yet it is "through a glass darkly ;" but hereafter "we shall see face to face, and know even as also we are known." The most bright, reviving smile of their Father's countenance which the redeemed enjoy on earth is only a ray from that sun which shall beam upon them without a cloud in the heavenly world, and the largest draught of consolation which they here experience is but a drop from that boundless ocean where they shall drink, and be satisfied for ever. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be ;" we cannot draw aside the veil which conceals the celestial world ; we cannot describe those joys, nor paint those glories which shall there be realised ;" but when Christ shall appear we shall be like him, we shall be near him, "for we shall see him as he is." There is one circumstance which will inconceivably heighten the felicities of the heavenly world that they will admit of no interruption, or abatement, or end. We often enter the sanctuary here, but must soon leave it : we must exchange the communion of saints for the company of the world, and the exercises and joys of the temple for our earthly pursuits, and those anxieties and

perplexities which accompany them, but being once admitted within the walls of the Jerusalem above "we shall go no more out;" having once mingled "with the general assembly and church of the first born," we shall part with them no more for ever; and our eyes being once opened to the vision of the "Lamb in the midst of the throne" we shall behold him without any intervening cloud — The melancholy complaint shall never be heard among all the thousands who encircle the upper court, "I opened to my Beloved, but he had withdrawn himself and was gone; I sought him, but I found him not." Every eye shall see him, and one tide of glory from the throne shall roll in to the full felicity of every heart. Eternal life? How reviving the prospect? How short the words to convey an infinite meaning? How inconsiderable a portion of its blessings can be enjoyed on earth? And yet all, and unutterably more than can be conceived is the "gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And yet all, christian, is thine, unalienably, eternally thine; it is thine in reversion now, and soon, very soon shall be thine in full fruition.

How has the Son of God manifested his condescension in stooping to assume a body; "in becoming a little lower than the angels" by veiling the glories of his Godhead in the frailties of the manhood? "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father." What oppo-



sites are here united? Natures essentially and infinitely different are intimately and inseparably joined in the same Person. In Immanuel, God with us, we behold the Creator, and yet a creature; the Mighty God, and yet a man "without comeliness," subject to meanness, and every sinless infirmity of human nature, "bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows." Contracted, benighted must be that understanding which discovers nothing interesting, nothing astonishing here. More impenetrable than the flinty rock must be that heart which is not melted, nor moved by such a display of condescension and love. Obdurate indeed must be that spirit which is not softened into contrition; which is not constrained to holy obedience while it contemplates Jehovah's "Equal" emptied of his glory, and appearing "without beauty or form." "Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifested in the flesh."

But our wonder rises when we reflect that the Son of God, thus clothed with our nature, should suffer and die. He not only appeared "in the likeness of sinful flesh," but had his "visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." This is another interesting mystery presented to our contemplation in the text. While "the flesh of Jesus is meat indeed, his blood is represented as drink indeed." He is not only revealed as a "Lamb without spot," but this lamb "must be slain" in order to redeem us to God. "Him hath the Father set forth as a

propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins." How precious must be that soul for which a price so great has been laid down? How amazing must be the evil of sin which nothing but the sacrifice of a God could expiate? How awfully stern and inexorable must be that justice which "spared not the Son of the Highest" when substituted in the room of sinners? How great, how perfect that salvation which has an "Author, and Finisher" so illustrious as Jesus Jehovali, the brightness of the divine glory? Surely then while we adore that mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh," we ought to adore the more affecting, incomprehensible mystery God suffering for us, and "purchasing the church with his own blood." The more these doctrines are admired, the more admirable and inconceivable they must appear and be acknowledged. To overlook them argues carelessness; to contemplate them with indifference manifests stupidity; to misimprove them is folly; to deride them argues a hardihood of impiety surpassing that of "devils who believe, and tremble;" but by devoutly prying into them, and admiring them we become assimilated to angels who "stoop down to search them," and then wonder and adore. "These things the angels desire to look into." But our obligation to enquire into them is much greater than theirs, because our interest in them is much deeper. Angels look into them merely as spectators, but we are a party concerned. We see the "Eternal.

Son" assuming not the "nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham; as really our "kinsman, our brother, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh:" We see him giving his "flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood" flowing at the hand of justice as the price of our reconciliation, and peace. Turn aside then, and behold *this great sight* the Prince of life manifested in the flesh, and "brought to the dust of death as a propitiation for our sins:" And while you behold in this glass the glory of the Lord, may you be changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord."

2. We learn from this doctrine what is a suitable exercise for communicants when surrounding the table of their Lord, it is "to eat his flesh, and drink his blood" as there exhibited under the emblems of bread, and wine. Useless will be the reception of the sign, without a reception of the things signified. A little bread seen, handled, tasted, or a little wine received can be of no avail for diffusing peace over the conscience, or ministering consolation to the heart. They have no more efficacy in themselves for promoting the faith, or love, or hopes, or joys of the receiver, than the waters of Abana, or Pharpar for washing off the leprosy of Naaman, or the blood of a lamb for expiating the guilt of an offender: We must look through the sign, if we expect the ordinance of the supper to be "a feast of fat things" to our souls. We should perform this service in remembrance of the suffering

Jesus ; we should aim at entertaining an affectionate, tender recollection that he had a body ; that “ this body was really broken,” and that it was broken for our sins as the procuring cause, and that thus suffering he obtained eternal redemption for us. “ They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him.” In receiving the bread, and wine the believing communicant may be secretly saying, “ These symbols which I now handle and taste are representations of that Dear Lord who loved me, and gave himself for me, and with these outward signs I cordially accept a bleeding Saviour as the Father’s gift, and freely and fully offering himself: I embrace him this moment as my own Redeemer, and Portion: I accept of him for wisdom, for righteousness, for sanctification, for redemption ; for atoning all my transgressions with his precious blood ; for healing all my diseases with the balm of his cross ; for supplying all my wants from the infinite treasures of his grace ; for covering all my nakedness, all my deformity with the spotless, everlasting robe of his own righteousness : I rejoice in him as my portion not only this day, but forever ; as mine through all the years of my continuance on earth, and through the ever-revolving ages of eternity ; I would depend on him from this moment to enlighten me in darkness ; to shield me in danger ; to cheer, and support me in distress ; to strengthen me in weakness ; to be my glory in reproach and my life and confidence in death. This Savi-

our, in all that he is, and all that he promises to bestow both in grace and glory, is my Beloved and my Friend." A crucified Jesus is really the provision presented on a sacramental table; this is "the feast of fat things, of wines on the lees" there exhibited, and the great business of faith is freely to receive these blessings which are so freely tendered. And justly we may ask in holy amazement, will *this man give us his flesh to eat?* Will he replenish a table at an expence so great as the offering of his own body and blood? It was mentioned as the privilege and glory of Israel in their journeyings through the wilderness "that they did eat angel's food," but a more costly feast is furnished for us, and as the entertainment is more costly than theirs, it is better; they eat manna in the wilderness and are dead," but Jesus declares, "I am the bread of life; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood shall live forever."

3. Since God has promised us "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," let us rely on his wisdom, and mercy, for all that concerns us, until we are brought to the possession of that life. Christians often appear to act as if they thought that there was merit in doubting and fearing. If the Spirit departs from them for a season, and they lose that assurance and enlargement which they once enjoyed; or if their heavenly Father frowns upon them in his providence, bereaving them of property, or friends, they are overwhelmed with perplexity and sorrow; they feel no confidence in look-

ing to God for support in their adversity, or for the renewed manifestations of his love; they hang their harps upon the willow; their lips are sealed up in silence no longer uttering praises to God, and they are ready to conclude that "his mercies have failed for evermore." This distrust, and these disquietudes which are the consequence of such distrust, are equally displeasing, and dishonoring to God; they call in question not only his word, but his oath which he has given "for our strong consolation that he will not turn away from us to do us good;" that he will *never*, in no emergence, upon no occasion, "leave us, nor forsake us." There is not indeed any assurance that he will not chastise, but there is an assurance that every chastisement is inflicted in love, and shall issue in our profit: There is not any promise to his children of constant prosperity in the world, this would no more suit us in this state of imperfection than perpetual sunshine or summer would suit the natural world; but there is a promise that he will not "contend for ever, neither be always wroth:" There is no security for the constant, unclouded light of our Father's countenance in this militant state; Abraham did not experience it; Job did not experience it; David did not experience it; Paul did not experience it; his own Son did not experience it, but there is ample security that all these shadows shall recede, that every cloud shall be scattered in the hour of death, when the "day-star" of glory shall rise upon us never to be obscured.

more. Learn then, believers in Jesus Christ, to entertain becoming views of the dispensation of mercy, and walk towards God, towards the world, towards yourselves, in a manner worthy of your privileges and prospects.— “This is the promise that Jehovah hath promised us eternal life,” and he who promised it has given us the pledge, and he who has given the pledge will give you in due season the full possession; and remember that he will give you whatever is requisite until you are brought to the actual enjoyment of this inheritance. I would repeat the remark that the children of the kingdom often dishonor God, and imbitter their own comfort by distrusting his promises and providences respecting them while they are to continue in this world.— They can rely on his mercy for all blessedness and glory hereafter, but they are anxious about his dealings to them here: Through this want of faith on the faithfulness and all-sufficiency of God, they who are poor in this world are anxious about themselves and their families; and the rich “do not communicate” for purposes of piety and charity, but eagerly treasure up for their children after them. The conduct of both classes is in this respect highly inconsistent and dishonorable. As gratitude to a Benefactor so liberal should excite the rich to nobler conduct, a reliance on the bounty and loving kindness of their Father might relieve the poor from those anxious, disquieting fears. “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 ;” how shall he not protect, and feed, and clothe, and comfort ; how shall he not justify us *freely*, sanctify us fully, and save us eternally ? “ Rejoice therefore, in the Lord, ye righteous ;” Trust him for every temporal, no less than every spiritual blessing, until ye “ receive the end of your faith, eternal life.” Will a prudent, affectionate father, after providing a large estate for his son, suffer him to perish through want before he brings him to the enjoyment, or will Jehovah after laying up for you a crown, a kingdom, an inheritance, refuse whatever is best for you until you are brought to possess them ? “ Be not henceforth faithless, but believing.” The more unshaken your reliance is on his promise and covenant ; the more frequently that you come to him for the supply of each want, for redressing every grievance, for wiping away every tear He will be the more glorified, and your peace the more promoted.

4. We are taught from this doctrine who they are who may rationally expect *eternal life* they, and they only who believe in Jesus Christ ; or, as it is expressed in our text, “ who eat his flesh and drink his blood.” There is no salvation in any other, and there is no other mean of making this salvation our own, but coming to Jesus Christ, actually receiving him in his covenant fulness, and all-perfect righteousness. “ He that hath the Son hath life.” As I desire to be found faithful in the ministry which is committed to my trust :



As I wish to give in my account at last with joy, and not with grief I now declare, it is not every one that crieth, Lord ; Lord ; It is not every baptized person ; not every one who frequents the sanctuary : who yields a general assent to the doctrines delivered : who is "almost persuaded to be a christian," or puts on the mask of a profession, that shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he in whom Jesus is formed "the hope of glory." Separated from him, you can no more bring forth the fruits of repentance, of love, of joy, of hope, without which no man shall see the Lord, than a branch can blossom without union to the vine, or a stream can flow with living water unconnected with any fountain. "To as many as received him, to them and to no others gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Would the ark, however ingeniously planned, or carefully executed have saved from the devouring flood Noah and his family, without entering it? No. Would the city of refuge, altho' devised by infinite wisdom as a mean of safety for the nation of Israel, have saved a single Israelite from the avenger of blood, unless he had fled within its walls? No. Will bread nourish ; will water purify ; will medicine heal ; will a robe warm, unless they are applied? No. Neither will Jesus the Saviour profit for the salvation of any but those who particularly receive him. He is "the ark of the covenant" appointed for the protection of sinners, but the flood of wrath will overtake,

and overflow the man who does not actually enter it. He is a "city of refuge" devised by infinite wisdom, and mercy for the security of perishing men, but the sword of the destroyer will be bathed, and that forever in the blood of him who does not hasten to this city and really enter within its walls: Jesus is the bread of life," but he is nourishment to those only who eat or receive him by faith: His cross yields a sovereign balm for the disease of sin, but it gives health only to such as apply it to their diseases. "Examine yourselves, therefore, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobate. Thou "Spirit of God, and of glory" pour light upon every heart, enabling us to know in our day the things that belong to our peace: glorify the Saviour by receiving of his, and shewing them savingly unto us, "that being justified by his grace we may become heirs according to the hopes of ETERNAL LIFE;" and to Thee, with the Co-Equal Son, and Ever-Blessed Father, Jehovah in covenant, be ascribed dominion and thanksgiving world without end—AMEN.

## SERMON IV.

ACTS III, 21.

*Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.*

THERE were various degrees in the humiliation of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. It began in his incarnation, it continued throughout the whole course of his life, and was consummated upon his cross. "That decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem" was the last, and lowest step of his degradation, and in that he "finished," as to its purchase, "the work that was given him to do." "He became obedient unto death," and in dying "made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness," for the justification of his chosen. By one step of his humiliation, the Mediator, as man, was fitted for another, and lower step of humiliation. "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." As in the humiliation of the Son of God *formerly*, so in his exaltation *afterwards* there was a variety of steps, and by the reception of one degree of mediatorial glory he was prepared for the reception of another and higher degree. His exaltation as Mediator properly commenced in his resurrection from the dead, by which "he was manifested to be the Son of God," and to

have accomplished our redemption : it was promoted by his ascension on high in the very nature which had suffered, and amidst a retinue of angels who came down to hail their ascending Lord, and to add to the grandeur of the scene : His exaltation was farther advanced by his promotion to the right hand of the Father, and will be consummated in his coming at last to judge the world. The various grades of the exaltation of our Lord are either expressed or implied in the verse to which your attention is now invited.

It is a profitable exercise occasionally to contemplate the Saviour in his humbled, sorrowful state ; we have thereby affecting views of the evil of sin which brought upon " the holy one of God " sufferings thus continued and complicated ; of the Father's justice which would not " spare iniquity even in his own Son " when substituted in our room, and we are taught our infinite obligation to love him who so amazingly " loved us, and gave himself an offering for us." It is equally pleasing and profitable to trace the Saviour through all the steps of his exaltation ; to see him rising from the tomb as the Conqueror of death, as the Prince of life, as the immediate pattern, and infallible pledge of our own resurrection ; to follow him by the eye of faith as he ascends on high perfectly, and everlastingly relieved from all the reproach, and sorrow, and toil of his humbled state, going to his Father to receive a full reward for his former degradation, and to realize in his ascension a security for

our own ascension. We shall not always be imprisoned in this world which has become dreary, and loathsome by transgression, but shall in our own order "be caught up to meet the Lord in the air," and enter that kingdom which he has entered in our name. It is animating to our faith, and hopes occasionally to contemplate the Co-equal Son and Surety introduced to the right hand of the Father, to plead our cause, and prepare mansions for us. In this event we have the highest conceivable evidence that his vicarious sacrifice was received as a full discharge for our debt; that the "hand writing which stood against us" at the upper court is cancelled and destroyed, and that therefore there is no condemnation to any who are in Christ Jesus.

As the resurrection and ascension of our Lord are events deeply interesting to our faith they are established by evidence various, and satisfactory. The former was attested by Mary who saw, and conversed with Him; by the eleven who met with him on different occasions, and on whom he perceptibly breathed, communicating the Holy Ghost; by Thomas who saw in his hand the print of the nails which he received upon the cross, and who thrust his finger into the hole which was made in his side by the soldier's spear; and in addition to all this testimony our Lord was seen at once by more than five hundred brethren. The fact of his ascension is attested by evidence no less satisfactory; by the apostles who retired with him to Bethany, and be-

held him as he rose, until the cloud received him out of their sight; by a concert of angels who spoke to them out of the cloud, and assured them that this same Jesus shall hereafter descend, in like manner as they now saw him ascending; by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and by the Martyr Stephen who saw him standing on the right hand of God. The precise manner in which the Redeemer ascended is not for us to know, because it is not revealed. This event is recorded by the Evangelists in three different places, and it is worthy of remark that three different words are used to express the same event. Sometimes he is said to *ascend* or *go up*, as if he arose by his own power; sometimes to be *carried*, or borne up, as if he was raised by the power of another, and again as *received up*, probably to express that affection with which he was received by his Father, and by angels, and all the inhabitants of heaven. As in the resurrection, so in the ascension of the Son as Mediator, there was a co-operation of each divine Person in Jehovah to shew their concurrence in the redemption of sinners, and their full satisfaction with that righteousness which the Surety had introduced. "Him the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things."

In the more full illustration of this subject we shall enquire,

I. Why it was proper or necessary that the heavens should receive the risen Saviour, and

II. In what capacity he still continues as thus received ?

1. It was proper or requisite that the heavens should receive him on account of God the Father. It was the Eternal Father who, vindicating the honors of the divine government, demanded satisfaction for sin ; who laid upon, or imputed to the Son interposing for man the iniquities of his chosen ; who inflicted upon him the unnumbered sufferings which he endured both in his life, and at his death. " It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief : He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Judas in betraying him ; Pilate in condemning him ; the multitude in crucifying him, although they indulged their own rage, were really fulfilling Jehovah's absolute, everlasting purpose. " Him being delivered by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God ye have taken," says the apostle addressing the Jews, " and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The Father in the scheme of our redemption acted the part of Creditor, and therefore exacted from his Son our substitute the payment of the debt. By him the command was uttered in all its terrors and glory, " awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and smite the man that is my fellow." When the sufferings of Jesus became most exquisite and insupportable, it was into the bosom of his Father that he poured his complaint, and from him he solicited sympathy and support. " O my God, if it is possible let this cup pass

from me : My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me : Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." As the Father had thus humbled his Son and put him to grief ; had executed upon him the penalty denounced against sin, it was proper that with his own hand he should raise and reward him ; that he should glorify the Son who had so eminently glorified him. The exaltation of Jesus to his mediatorial honors is therefore ascribed to the immediate interposition of his Father ; it is pronounced the Father's act no less than his humiliation and death. " Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour : " Again, " because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—to the glory of God the Father ;" in doing homage to the Son they do homage to the Father, by whose authority he was raised from the grave, and exalted to the highest heavens. We hear the Son in the prospect of his sufferings thus appealing to his righteous Father ; " Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell ; thou wilt not doom me forever to languish in the grave, the invisible state, in whose dreary dominions the dead cannot praise thee, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption, but when the debt is paid the prison shall be opened, and I, the Surety, discharged ; thou wilt shew me the path of life ; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."



2. It was proper, or requisite that the heavens should receive the Son of God on his own account. This world was to the Saviour a scene of the deepest degradation, and of grief almost uninterrupted, and unmingled. "He was despised," and not only despised, but "rejected of men," yea, of that very nation whose chiefest glory it was to give him birth according to the flesh. This life of neglect, and toil, and sorrow was concluded by a mode of dying unparalleled for infamy and pain.— To all this humiliation he submitted, and all these sufferings he endured with a design the most important and gracious; to repair the injuries of the divine government; to reflect glory on the divine perfections, and save sinners from the wrath to come. It was therefore proper that the Saviour should be translated from this world of trial and grief, and crowned with honor and glory; that, as he had by his obedience and blood, brought honor to his Father, and redeemed from destruction millions of men, he should be raised to the midst of the throne, and dignified with all power in heaven and earth. This reward was solemnly promised to Messiah in the contract from eternity, and we hear him explicitly demanding it shortly before he concluded his mediatorial work in this world. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self; with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He possessed an es-

sensual glory as God : This was veiled while he tabernacled on earth ; he had also a glory as Mediator, but this he was to receive upon his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to the higher sanctuary. And this honor which was solemnly asked by Messiah was immediately and fully imparted to him. " The Father loveth the Son ;" is pleased with him as the medium through which his own glory is displayed, and revolting men restored to their primitive obedience and bliss ; " he loveth the Son, and hath committed all things into his hand ;" he hath exalted him to the highest throne ; placed upon his head a crown of pure gold, given into his hand the sceptre of universal dominion, and issued forth the royal command, " that every knee should bow to him," whether of saint, or angel, or archangel. It was therefore highly proper that the heavens should receive the Saviour on his own account ; that the cross should be succeeded by the crown ; the sorrows of earth by those full joys which are at Jehovah's right hand, and the reproach of men, and the temptations of devils by the acclamation of all the celestial hosts.

3. It was proper and requisite that the heavens should receive him on account of holy angels. The Son as Mediator had been often *seen of angels* in the progress of his humiliation upon earth ; they had seen him when he lay in Bethlehem an obscure, helpless infant ; they had seen him in Egypt, banished from his kindred and country, through the persecu-

tion of an unnatural tyrant ; they had seen him in the wilderness when he was doomed to solitude, and hunger, and tempted of devils ; they had seen, and attempted to strengthen him in the garden “ when his soul was troubled, and the sweat of his body was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground ;” they had seen him mocked and mangled on mount Calvary, and at last consigned a lifeless corpse to the dominion of the dead. On all these occasions had angels seen the suffering Jesus, and marvelled, and trembled while they beheld. It was therefore proper that joy should fill their hearts, and melody return to their harps by seeing him in all the splendors of the heavenly state. How promptly therefore did angels roll away the stone from the sepulchre, and aid, so far as their aid would be accepted, at his resurrection from the dead : How patiently did they wait and announce to Peter, and Mary, and others, the joyous message, “ the Lord is risen indeed :” come see the place where our Lord and your Saviour lay : With what ecstasy ineffable did they attend at his ascension, and aim at reconciling the bereaved apostles to the painful separation ? “ And while the disciples looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men,” two angels in the fashion of men, “ stood by them in shining apparel : Which also said, ye men of Gallilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven : This Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall, in like manner, come down as

ye have seen him go into heaven." How readily did they fling open the everlasting gates and welcome the King of glory to his native heaven? With what transports of joy do they now behold him fully possessed of each mediatorial honor? With what enraptured hearts and harmonious voice do they pour forth that anthem of praise, "salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne, even unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." How ardently do they long for that hour when the heavens shall again reveal him in the character of Judge for the full redemption of his church, and the dismay and destruction of his enemies.

4. It was proper and requisite that the heavens should receive Messiah on account of the saved from among men: Millions of our family had been admitted to glory during the four thousand years which preceded the incarnation of our Lord, and all through the merit of that sacrifice which he was expected to offer up. Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Elijah, Isaiah, and many others had believed on him; had prophesied of his coming; had presented sacrifices to typify his great atoning sacrifice, and these anxiously waited to see him clothed with their own nature; they longed to see in the heavenly world that very Jesus who had suffered and died for them, and procured for them a weight of glory exceeding and eternal; they longed for that hour when he who had been crucified for them should be glorified with them, and they might see for themselves the Lamb who was slain, and had re-

deemed them to God by his own blood. Saints under the former dispensation waited with anxious expectation for his manifestation in the flesh : they frequently and fervently prayed, " O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion," and when Messiah did appear " many were looking for redemption in Israel." And if the church militant longed for his manifestation on earth, much more would the church triumphant long for his manifestation in heaven, because they had known better by experience the preciousness of his salvation ; their powers were more enlarged to comprehend the depth of his condescension in stooping to be veiled with our nature, and make his soul an offering for our sins ; they were thus capable of realising more fully their obligations to redeeming love : To shew that interest which the spirits before the throne felt in the transactions of the Son of God, Moses and Elias came down before hand, and " spake of that decease which should be accomplished at Jerusalem ;" and many of the saints arose at his resurrection ; the glorified spirits probably descended and occupied their bodies that they might see with their own eyes as the heavens received him ; And no doubt all " the spirits of the just made perfect" dropped their crowns, started from their thrones, and welcomed their Saviour and King as he entered the gates of glory.

It is impossible to conceive that increase of light which bursted forth upon the heavenly world, or those transports of joy which were

felt by its blessed inhabitants on that occasion. "The light of the sun then became seven-fold, as the light of seven days." More enlarged, elevating views of all the prophecies and promises which had been uttered from the foundation of the world were instantly acquired, and loftier ascriptions of praise were poured forth to Him who had inspired them. When their Redeemer and Prince *first* appeared to his disciples after his resurrection from the dead, it is recorded, "then were they glad." Their faith was confirmed, their love was inflamed, and their hopes brightened when they saw his risen, and glorified body; when they heard from his mouth words of consolation, and felt with their hands the mark of the spear and the nails; What extacy of joy then must have transported the redeemed above when the Saviour, covered with still greater glory, stood in the midst of them; when they saw in Person that Lamb whom they had formerly seen in type; by whose blood they had been ransomed from the pit of hell, by whose righteousness, as their title, they were admitted to heaven, and from whose mediation they looked forward for an eternity of glory and joy?

It was also proper that the heavens should receive the Son as Mediator for the enlargement of his church, and the edification of his children upon earth. It was the absolute arrangement of Jehovah "that the spirit should not be given;" that he should not be communicated in great abundance until "Jesus

was glorified," and therefore although it was painful to the disciples that their master who had been endeared by long and familiar intercourse, by the miracles which he wrought, by the doctrines which he preached, by the many offices of love which he had shewn them, by the spotless example which he had exhibited, should altogether depart, yet it was intended that this very departure should eminently issue in their profit. The loss which they should sustain by the want of his bodily presence, by not seeing him, and conversing with him as formerly should be more than compensated by that increase of light and joy which they should experience by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in consequence of his ascension. "Nevertheless," he assures them in the prospect of his removal, "nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart I will send him unto you. When he the Spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth; He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." How literally was this promise accomplished by our Lord after he ascended to the upper court, and how obviously did its accomplishment issue in the establishment and glory of his church? "The joy of Jehovah was their strength. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with new tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance; praising God, and having favor with all the people." How ra-

pidly were the limits of the true Zion enlarged and the number of her spiritual worshippers increased? "The word of the Lord grew and multiplied." The wall of partition which had long stood between the Jew and the Gentile tottered, and fell: The truth which had been imprisoned for ages in the region of Palestine bursted forth, and shed its radiance to the east, and to the west, to the north and to the south. The Saviour being *lifted up*, being extended *first* on the cross, and exalted *afterwards* to the throne, *drew all men unto him*, some of all nations to the knowledge of his truth. On one occasion three thousand, and on another occasion five thousand were *savingly called by his grace*, and "they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers."

It was proper, it was requisite that the heaven should receive Messiah the Son, for the greater mortification, and the more complete destruction of his irreconcilable enemies. *Because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him—that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, not only of things in heaven and things in earth, but of things under the earth; the damned in the regions below really, although reluctantly, bow in homage to the Son as thus ascended.* The powers of earth and hell had long insulted and afflicted this annointed of the Lord; particularly towards the conclusion of his work they combined in *mocking him, in spitting upon*



him, in nailing him to the cross, and in deriding him while he was there suspended. As the Saviour had been lately in the hands of his adversaries, vilified, tortured, condemned, crucified, it was proper that he should be received into the heavens, and there revealed in all his glory to their mortification and dismay. And no doubt "while the disciples looked stedfastly towards heaven," as their Redeemer was carried up, the fiends of darkness turned away ashamed and confounded at the sight: How must their bosoms have been transported with alternate emotions of envy and remorse, when they beheld him who was lately hanging on a tree now promoted to the throne, and wearing a crown: Him who had been lately surrounded by his enemies now encircled, admired, adored by angels, and all the hosts of heaven. Although the Son of God "spoiled principalities and powers" in his conflict upon the cross, yet the victory was not so publicly announced, nor the triumph so formally celebrated until he ascended on high. Then "the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Why do the heathen rage," Jehovah challenges in holy indignation, "and the people imagine a vain thing; He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision; then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The Re-

deemer still appears in heaven "as a lamb that had been slain," and each recollection that his adversaries have of their agency in crucifying him must add to their perplexity and horror. But how inconceivably must their amazement and confusion increase, when the heavens shall hereafter reveal this same Jesus for the judgment of the universe? When He whom they once saw in the garden suffering, and bleeding, shall then appear on his great white throne; when he whom they *innocently* condemned shall pass the sentence of *just* condemnation upon themselves; when that hand to which in derision they had offered a *reed* shall wave the sceptre of dominion over collected worlds; when He, of whom in the madness of their rage they exclaimed, "crucify him, crucify him," shall denounce the irreversible decree *depart from me, ye cursed.* "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

It therefore appears proper on many accounts that the heavens should receive our blessed Lord after the work of redemption was accomplished; that as he had been delivered, and slain to procure a kingdom he should rise as a Conqueror, and triumphantly take possession of that kingdom. "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet; Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our king, sing praises." O Brethren, he is this moment enthroned in the highest heavens let us wil-

lingly offer him the highest throne in our hearts and affections: Every knee in the church above bends before him in chearful submission, and every tongue is loud in adoration, let us cordially mingle in the general concert, and say, "salvation unto our God that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb; Let us long for nobler powers to comprehend his glory, and a nobler eloquence to speak forth his praise.

We proceed to enquire,

II. In what relation he still remains to his church, although the heavens have received him.

1. He continues the general bond of union, and the great medium of communion and enjoyment among the inhabitants of the heavenly world. In Him, as the common center, saint in the upper sanctuary is united, and endeared to saint; saints are united and endeared to the various orders of angels, and all to Jehovah who is the fountain of perfection, and glory, and bliss. It is the opinion of some distinguished divines that holy angels were established in their *first estate* by an interposition of the Son in his mediatorial capacity, and that they are called *elect*, as chosen in him and confirmed by his mediation; that altho' they were not redeemed by him yet they were established by him in holiness and happiness, and thus placed beyond the necessity of a redemption. This sentiment is rendered probable from the consideration that these exalted spirits appear so deeply concerned

for the success of his mediatorial work. They attended the Son and exulted at his birth, they waited upon him during his sufferings in the garden, at his resurrection, at his ascension, and are "all ministering spirits" to his living members upon earth. But whether "these principalities and powers in heavenly places" were confirmed by Jesus Jehovah or not, they are unquestionably subordinate to him in his mediatorial character, and under him intimately connected with the redeemed from among men. While he "is head over all things to his church, angels and authorities, and powers are made subject unto him : " They worship him as their king, and learn through his cross "the manifold wisdom of God." "In the dispensation of the fulness of time are gathered together," recapitulated, summed up into one head "all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him : " And the Apostle mentions in another epistle, that "by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers ; all things were created by him, and for him—and by him all things consist," stand together, are bound in the chains of ardent, inextinguishable, everlasting love. Saved men, and elect, confirmed angels are now "knit together," intimately connected as one great family under the infinite Jesus as their common sovereign, and head. But although Messiah is related to angels as a sovereign, and

king, he sustains a relation much more intimate and endearing to "the spirits of just men made perfect" before the throne. To them he is the great medium of fellowship, and enjoyment with the ever living, ever loving Father. The glory of God shines forth to their full felicity only in the face, through the Person of Jesus Christ. Paul therefore expressed a desire "to depart that he might be with Christ," and he represented the perfection of celestial joy to consist in seeing him "face to face." The expression "face to face" is used in condescension to our weakness, and points out nearness of access, clearness of vision, familiarity of converse, and in return every assurance of good will, and affection. While Jesus is represented as "the lamb in the *midst* of the throne," obvious to all, accessible by all the happy inhabitants, he "leads them into living fountains of water," he communicates that fulness of glory and bliss which was contemplated in the Father's purpose, and purchased by his own infinitely meritorious *decease*. "The glory," he says in his address to his God and our God, to his Father and our Father, "the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them;" He exalts them to the same throne with himself, gives them possession of the same kingdom, and will everlastingly dispense all that measure of happiness which their ever-expanding powers are capable of enjoying.

2. Jesus the Mediator, although received into heaven, still remains the fountain of all

life, and light, and consolation to his church upon earth. By his removal from this world to the upper world his administration of the concerns of Zion has not ceased, but is only changed as to its nature, and he is *there* capable of managing her interests to much greater advantage. "When he ascended upon high he received," and upon receiving immediately and liberally "gave gifts to men :"— He has been calling in every age, and is still calling and qualifying some as under pastors to dispense the word of reconciliation, and by his spirit co-operating with "the foolishness of their preaching," inclines and enables others to believe. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins." That abundant unction which was poured out upon his disciples at the inauguration of this Priest and Prince upon his throne, the apostle Peter ascribes to his immediate agency. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see, and hear." The dear Redeemer has indeed departed as to his bodily presence, yet his attention to the interests of his children still continues ; and "he ever liveth to make intercession for them : " He is gone beforehand in the character of a *Forerunner* to take possession of a kingdom in our name, and to make preparation for our entrance in due time : He is gone as the *High Priest of our profes-*

cion, carrying his own blood into the most holy place, and through the merit of this maintains a free intercourse between the Father and us: He is gone as our *Beloved* to raise up our affections thither, to make us consider heaven as our home, and render us desirous to follow him that we may behold his glory, and be filled with his love,

This doctrine, thus explained, suggests a variety of inferences both for our instruction, and consolation on the present occasion.

1. We may infer from the ascension of our Lord that his sacrifice has been received as a full satisfaction for our offences, and a complete discharge for himself, and his children. We need no other, nay, we can conceive no higher proof that the Father is well pleased with his righteousness, and perfectly pacified towards all who embrace it. When the Saviour first appeared in our world angels rapturously sing, "peace on earth, and good will towards men," but this peace, this good will was more luminously manifested when the Son was admitted into the very presence of the Father: When the Surety who had stepped forward in our room was invited to sit down with the Creditor, and received with every expression of esteem and affection.— The exclusion of the *first* Adam from Paradise, and from the divine communion was an awful proof that the Creator was displeased with him, and with the human kind whom he represented, and therefore the exaltation of the *second* Adam, the Lord Jesus, and his in-

roduction into the holiest of all is an animating display that Jehovah has accepted of his sacrifice, and is reconciled to all whom he represented. Here is the most satisfactory evidence that "as by the disobedience of the former many were made sinners, so by the obedience of the latter many are made righteous." Who will now dare to condemn, or even accuse thee, O believer, pleading the atonement of Calvary? "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." Would the Father raise him to the throne, place him at his right hand, and cover him with such glory, unless he felt the most perfect satisfaction with that sacrifice which he had offered up? An apostle thus informs us that he was "justified by the Spirit;" that is, the Holy Ghost in raising our Lord from the dead openly, and formally *justified* him; he pronounced him free from that debt which he had contracted as the Surety of his people, and proved that the bond was completely cancelled by the blood of his cross. And our Saviour himself declares, "when the Spirit of truth is come he shall convince the world of righteousness—because I go to the Father;" he shall plead my admission to the Father's presence as a sufficient proof that my righteousness is satisfactory to him; that it is acknowledged as a full reparation for all the injuries done by the transgressions of my chosen, and as forming a legal title to that inheritance of immortality which was forfeited by them. Cherish this day, intended communi-



want, the pleasing persuasion that Jesus your Substitute is received into heaven ; and that since he is discharged there can be no condemnation to thee : None in heaven will lay any thing to your charge, and none on earth, or in hell dare to do it.

2. We may infer from this doctrine that every necessary blessing may be expected from the compassionate Saviour in his exalted state. Although he has returned to his Father's house he knows "the heart of a stranger : " He has travelled through this world before us, and he still recollects the toil and difficulties which he underwent : He knows by experience the dreariness of the valley through which we are called to pass ; the thorns which will annoy us in our course ; the enemies which are " lying in wait " for us on the right hand, and on the left, and therefore he will not " leave us comfortless ; " although he be absent from us in body he is " present in spirit " to sympathise in distress, to cheer in despondency, to protect in danger, and to supply all our wants from " that fullness of the Godhead " which he possesses. " We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. " Let us therefore look to our glorified and compassionate Redeemer for those gifts which he received upon his ascension. We cannot ask too largely, because he is not enriched by withholding, neither can he be impoverished by all that he imparts. How

were the treasures of his grace opened, and poured forth for the supply of his apostles and followers immediately after *the heaven received him*. ‘ Great grace was upon them all : The Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied : Out of his fulness they all received grace for grace,’ one communication of grace after another for their abundant supply, and remember that the covenant is yet full and Jesus the Mediator is as ready to communicate. “ Hitherto,” he complains, “ hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full.” What greater assurances of *good will* to us, and of concern for our joy, and establishment could we have desired than he has already afforded? He has given us his word and promises as our charter, our written security for every blessing both temporal and spiritual : He has revealed a covenant ratified with his own blood, and annexed seals to it, thus presenting visible signs, signs which our eyes may see, our hands may handle, and our mouths may taste, of blessings spiritual and everlasting : In the baptismal water he gives a lively representation, an outward, obvious emblem of the influences of his spirit which flow freely, and refresh the soul as they descend : In the sacramental bread he exhibits an outward sign or symbol of his own body which was *broken* for us, and which, being thus *broken*, is the food, and nourishment, and support of his children ; In the wine he gives a visible representation of his

blood which flowed for our redemption, and which being applied by faith secures peace to the conscience, and a "joy unspeakable" to the heart: In addition to all these testimonies of his love he comes forth on this occasion, and at the head of his own table affectionately invites to a full participation. "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved."

3. We may infer from this doctrine that our conversation and affections ought to be in heaven. Whither our beloved is gone, and where he resides in our name, and for our profit should not our most ardent desires ascend? Ought we not fervently to follow him "unto the most holy place" with adoring thoughts of his love, and with earnest desires to be with him; to behold him, and enjoy without interruption the smiles of his countenance? Is that Jesus in heaven who has redeemed us at an infinite expence, even his own precious blood; who has brought us with an omnipotent arm into the paths of righteousness, and has hitherto kept us in these paths; who has so often proved our light in darkness; who has dispelled so many doubts; disappointed so many fears and refreshed us in the moment of dejection with the joys of his salvation, is this Jesus in heaven and shall we remain carnal and earthly? Can we feel more pleasure in the fellowship of our natural friends, than in the communion of Him, whose "favor is life and whose loving

kindness is better than life?" Can we rejoice more in our little, uncertain, unsatisfying, perishable possessions, than in that inheritance *above* which the Saviour obtained with so much travail, and which he now occupies in our name, "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled;" all-satisfying in its nature, and endless in its duration? Shall we be more eager in pursuing the duties of our temporal calling, in attending to our farms, our merchandise, or other occupations, than "in pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and preparing for an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom? How can we think so much, and talk so much, and toil so much about this passing world, and yet feel so regardless about heaven, our eternal home, where alone perfection either of holiness, or bliss is to be expected? O how happy beyond conception are they who have reached that region of glory, "whither the Forerunner is for us entered"! They are seated upon thrones; they hold palms in their hands; they wear crowns upon their heads; their natures are perfectly purified; their capacities inconceivably expanded; their eloquence most elevated; their vision unclouded; their pleasures unceasing, and all satisfying; their song uninterrupted; they see without a veil the lovely, loving Jesus "who is the brightness of the Father's glory," and with the smile of his countenance diffuses a plenitude of joy thro' all the inhabitants of the heavenly city. Are

such their attainments, and yet shall I not long to be there, to be near my best Friend, to be like him, to feel his power, and see his glory? Am I a stranger on earth, and yet not desirous to be home? Am I often enveloped "with clouds, and darkness," and yet not looking out for the dawn of unclouded, everlasting day? "The night is far spent;" come therefore, ye virgins of light, and let us "gird up the loins of our mind; let us be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The heaven has *received* our Beloved, but it is only "until the restitution of all things;" they will soon reveal him to our exceeding joy: *For as often as ye eat this bread, which is now to be consecrated as a memorial of his dying love, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come?*

4. Affection to the souls of careless hearers constrains me to apply this doctrine for few moments to them. The ascension of Son of God is a fact not more replete with triumph to his children than with terror to enemies. An enthroned Redeemer is most important friend, but beyond comparison the most awful, irresistible adversar. "The Son of man shall hereafter come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," and what will be the effect upon an ungodly, impenitent world? "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman will hide

themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and say to the mountains, and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and whoso shall be able to stand?" *The great day of his wrath is come.* As the messenger of the Lord of hosts I beseech every secure, prayerless, christless individual "that hath ears to hear, to hear this" message.

**THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH WILL COME.** His day of grace has already come: It has continued long to many of you: Its cheering light has shone clearly around you: But it will not last *always*; it may not last *long*: There is a moment coming when your day of grace must close, and then naught but night, lonely, cheerless, eternal night—The radiance of the day of grace which is now shining mildly around you will be succeeded by a fiery stream issuing from the mouth of the Judge, and the soothing voice of mercy which you have heard again, and again, shall give place to the thunder of his ire which will smite your ears, and "rend the caul of your hearts." And I warn you beforehand that there is no wrath so insupportable as the wrath of the Lamb, of a neglected, insulted, indignant Saviour. The sentence, *depart from me ye cursed*, will appear seven fold more awful when uttered by him who "came to seek and to save:" The gloom of the bottomless pit will appear seven-fold more gloomy to the wretched inhabitants from the consideration

that the door is locked upon them by the very hand which had opened a gate to glory, and been pressing them to enter in: The flames of hell will become seven-fold more intense and intollerable when blown up by One who had offered to quench them with his own blood. I have not language to express: I do believe that the angels of God have not language to express the amazement, the confusion, the horror which will cleave the damned multitude when the heavens shall reveal their judge, and "all the people shall see his glory." Ye careless hearers, for whom "I travail as it were in birth again until Christ be formed in you;" ye unconcerned young men and young women; ye thoughtless boys and girls, are these things real? Will the trump of God be blown? Will the great white throne be erected? Will the Ancient of days descend and sit upon it? "Will the books be opened" in which are written down all the years you have been spared in life; all the sabbaths you have enjoyed; all the sermons you have heard; all the instructions and admonitions, and entreaties, accompanied sometimes with tears, which you have had from me his unworthy servant? "Kiss then the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." *Blessed, thrice blessed are they that do his commandments; that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.—AMEN.*

## SERMON V.

HEBREWS VII, 25.

*He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

IN every science there are certain principles on which all the others not only intimately depend, but are immediately founded. The root supports the whole tree ; from it all the branches the least, and the most remote derive their nourishment, and verdure, and even their life. It is the foundation which gives strength and stability to the whole superstructure ; on it every material in every part of the building necessarily depends for solidity and support. In our holy religion also there is one doctrine which surpasses in importance all other doctrines ; which constitutes the foundation of this sacred superstructure ; with which all the other doctrines are intimately connected, and from which they all derive their consistence, and glory, and value. You have probably gone before me in remarking that the mediation of God the Son is this doctrine ; his substitution in the room of sinners, his satisfaction, and his constant, and prevailing intercession at the right hand of the uncreated majesty. This doctrine is interwoven with every page of the bible. This formed the substance of each communication of the divine will whether immediately from God, or by the intervention of either angels or men : whether this revelation was received before the law of Moses, or during the



reign of the law, or under the dispensation of the gospel. Do we behold "the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," and addressing our offending parents; Jesus, and his sufferings, and the glory that should follow were the subjects of his conversation. *The seed of the woman*, that is, the Son of God assuming the nature of man, *shall bruise the head* of the serpent, shall defeat the Prince of darkness, and demolish his kingdom in the world. This triumph the Saviour obtained partly in his life by casting out devils from the bodies of the possessed, and completely upon his cross when he "spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a shew of them openly." Do we see the Jewish High Priest leading the victim to the altar, and with its blood making atonement for the iniquities of Israel. In this solemn ceremony we have only a type of the more illustrious anti-type; we see Jesus as the Lamb of God bearing by imputation the sins of his chosen, actually suffering as their substitute, and Sponsor, and by "the one offering of himself perfecting forever them that are sanctified." Do we behold the high Priest, with the blood of the sacrifice, entering the holiest of all; standing at the altar of incense with a censer in his hand, and making intercession in their behalf. In this sacred observance we have another type of the infinitely more illustrious anti-type. We see Jesus as the High Priest of our profession entering, not the most holy place, but heaven itself: not with the blood of a mere animal

as the sacrifice, but with his own blood, not on a particular day merely, but *forever*; interceding not only for the little remnant of Israel, the offspring of Abraham, but for the countless millions of his redeemed. "For," as the apostle expresses it, "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Meditations on the ever-living, ever-loving Jesus, on his glory, his grace, his sacrifice, his righteousness, his intercession, are always in season with a christian, because these constitute the very essence of all his privileges, and prospects: But they are peculiarly seasonable on the morning of a communion sabbath.— Amidst the various fears and anxieties, from the recollection of past failures, and the consciousness of present unworthiness, which perplex the soul in the prospect of a near approach to Jehovah, how reviving is the thought that we have an *advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; who is the propitiation for our sins; one who knows our frames; who sympathises with us in every distress of whatever nature; who possesses infinite, everlasting merit to expiate our offences, and wisdom to manage all our concerns in the higher sanctuary; one also whose intercession in our behalf cannot possibly fail of success.* May we all this day experience the sensible accomplishment of his promise, "because I live, ye shall live also: I will pray

the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter even the Holy Ghost."

Without making any artificial division of this subject, it is designed to consider the words as they stand arranged by the inspired Preacher.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as *living* : He ever *liveth*.

1. He *liveth* as God : he possesses an essential, underived, independent, eternal existence as the Second Person in the Infinite Three. This life of the Son as God differs materially from the life of man, of angel, or any created order of being, however exalted. It was derived from no other : it depends on no other ; it knew no change, and it cannot possibly have an end. He is therefore called the King *Eternal* ; that is, without beginning, and *Immortal* ; that is, not liable to dissolution. Again, he is represented as " the same yesterday," that is, from eternity past ; and " to-day," that is, through all the revolutions of time, and " forever," amidst the ages of eternity to come. He was as really God, and considered in himself as ineffably, infinitely glorious when he lay a babe in the manger of Bethlehem, as when transfigured on mount Tabor " his countenance shone as the sun, and his rayment was white as the light : " He was as really God, and infinitely glorious, when led into the wilderness to be tempted of satan, or when strengthened in the garden by an angel, or when " reviled, spit upon," and nailed to the tree, as he now is, although ele-

vated to the throne, and crowned with all the honors of the heavenly world. Shall I illustrate this most important, precious truth by a similitude which has been used on a former occasion. The sun is the same body in a cloudy day, although veiled in a great measure from our view ; it is as large and luminous in itself as in the clear day ; or at midnight, when scarcely a solitary ray beams upon our quarter of the globe, as at midday, when he blazes forth in full-orbed majesty and glory. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ, considered in his Godhead, was *always* the same ; he was from everlasting to everlasting without any change. " He is over all, God blessed for ever ;" his blessedness had no beginning, was subject to no abatement, and it shall never have an end. Contemplating the essential glories of Jesus the royal Preacher exclaims, " Thy throne, O God, is for ever, and ever : Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands : They shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old as doeth a garment—but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Be fully persuaded, O christian, of the Deity of thy Saviour, and let thy soul exult in this persuasion. It was his Godhead supporting his manhood which gave worth to his sacrifice, and rendered it a full, and everlasting expiation for thy sins ; which gave efficacy to his obedience, and rendered it a complete, unalienable title to the inheritance of immortality ; and it is this which

renders every plea which he makes to the Father in thy name infinitely acceptable and successful. He is really and essentially Jehovah, and every part of his work, from its commencement to its consummation, is perfect as the perfections of Jehovah could render it — Resting on him by a living faith, thou standest as a rock in the midst of the ocean ; the tempest may howl around thee ; and the waves dash and threaten to overwhelm, but thou shalt remain unmoved, immoveable.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ *took* as mediator for himself. As Immanuel, God in our nature, he is now exalted to the highest possible glory with the Father, and receives a liberal reward for that work which he accomplished in our world. Even while the Saviour tabernacled on earth he enjoyed frequent assurances of his Father's complacency in him, and the fullest confidence of his own future exaltation in his presence. And his work was no sooner finished, than the reward was liberally conferred upon him. "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down for ever on the righthand of the majesty on high." There he *lives* enthroned ; he is fully possessed of "that glory which he had before the world was," and as Mediator receives the highest expressions of honor not only from the Father, but from all the hosts of heaven. — "Because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name : " His body which

during its continuance on earth was subject to hunger, and thirst, and fatigue, and even to death itself; which by exquisite, unceasing affliction was *marred*, and emaciated *more than any man*, is now raised to an immortal life; it is completely and eternally freed from all the frailty, and deformity of its humbled state, and by an intimate union to his divinity shines forth with a glory altogether inconceivable: This very body, however infirm or unsightly it appeared once, without *form, or comeliness, or beauty* now sits "on the right hand of the majesty on high," and is the medium through which the effulgence of his divine nature beams around, and irradiates the whole celestial world. This is the account given by an evangelist who received the revelation immediately from God. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof, and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it:" His human soul which was "oppressed and afflicted" on earth; which was doomed to almost perpetual grief while he witnessed the dishonors which were done to God; while he contemplated that wrath to which men were hurrying on through the power of unbelief, and was denied those manifestations of divine love which formed his chief consolation, that soul now participates the most full, elevated joy. That assurance of future blessedness which he formerly expressed by David his type, is realised to

him in a sense the most exalted. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Those intimations of his Father's love which were withheld from him occasionally on earth, and peculiarly during the time of his agony upon the cross, are now enjoyed without interruption, and without measure: It is a source of the highest consolation to him that the sacrifice which he offered, and that righteousness which he introduced with so much sorrow and toil to himself, are accepted as a full reparation for all the injuries done to the law by the transgression of man: He feels ineffable delight in seeing all the divine perfections shining with such lustre through the accomplishment of his undertaking; in seeing the joy of angels promoted by the brighter discovery of the wisdom, and grace, and sovereignty of Jehovah; and especially he feels unspeakable joy, in reflecting that through his finished salvation millions of the human family are, and millions more shall be raised from the lowest degradation in hell, to mansions of felicity and glory in heaven. We trust that the exalted Saviour is "rejoicing in spirit" this hour while he beholds the "pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hand" in this assembly; in witnessing some dear member refreshed with the assurance of their Father's love, and exulting in the hope of his glory; in hearing some precious youth asking in sincerity of heart, "what have I to do any more with idols, with those sinful lusts

by which I have been too long ensnared, or those empty, delusive pleasures to which I was formerly devoted ; I will hereafter be for the Lord, and not for another ; the love of a loving, bleeding, dying Saviour constrains me ; I am resolved from this moment thro'out eternity to be his, only his ”

Such is the nature of that *life* which Messiah now enjoys as Mediator for himself — He is exalted “ far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” He sustains the dignified title, “ Lord of hosts” or of armies, intimating that every species of being, rational or irrational, is included in his empire, and subject to his controul : He is denominated “ King of kings, and Lord of lords,” to instruct us that those who rule as kings or lords over others, are themselves subordinate to Him as their Sovereign. How changed since he appeared in the *form of a servant*, and was vilified as the *Nazarene*, a *friend of publicans and sinners* ? The man of sorrows is now full of joy, and has exchanged the loathsome manger for the right hand of the throne of God, and is there dwelling in light inaccessible : The hand which was transfixed with the nails, and fastened to the accursed tree, now holds the sceptre of universal dominion, and the head which was once mangled and tortured with the thorns, is now adorned with a crown of righteousness and glory : That face which was smitten with a



reed, and marred more than any man, shines as the sun, and cheers all heaven with its lustres : Instead of the mockery of " Herod with his men of war who set him at naught ;" and the assaults of the infuriated mob who cried out the " more vehemently, erucify him, crucify him," he now receives, and will to all eternity be receiving the acclamation of ten thousand, thousand saints, and ten thousand, thousand angels, " Blessed be he that came in the name of the Lord ; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Every crown of every worshipper around the throne is laid at his feet ; every knee voluntarily bows in submission before him ; every bosom is transported with emotions of wonder, and gratitude, and joy, and every tongue of all the heavenly choir is loud in the confession " that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Blessed Saviour, thou art worthy to receive all these ascriptions of " power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory," from them and from us, because " thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

3. The Lord Jesus Christ *liveth* in heaven as Mediator for his church, not only in the nature of his children, but in their name, and for their immediate profit. " The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." Those mediatorial honors which he received from the Father upon entering the holy place he dispensed among the celestial throng, consummating their glory, and happiness, as the sun dif-

fuses his rays enlightening and gladdening the whole system. He adorns them with white robes as an emblem of their purity ; puts palms into their hands, as a representation of their victory over all opposition "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ;" he raises them to the same throne to which he is raised, and so far as their limited capacities are enlarged to receive, he makes them partakers of the same joys with himself. Although I would not assert that the benefit of his chosen was the only object designed by our Saviour in returning to his Father, yet without doubt, it was a principal object. This truth so intimately connected with our privileges now, and our hopes for eternity, is frequently taught in the oracles of God. "Whither, says the apostle speaking of the upper sanctuary, whither the forerunner is for us entered:" Again he declares in the same epistle, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God *for us.*" Believer, however imperfect, or poor, or despised, or disconsolate thou art, Jesus has carried into the highest heavens thy very nature indissolvably united to his Deity, and thy name which is perhaps rarely mentioned by man, or mentioned only with contempt he bears upon his breast-plate as the high priest of our profession ; this he holds forth to the acceptance of the Eternal Father, and all thy concerns the most minute and the most important he

carefully manages. Jesus thy Lord ascended on high, and took his seat upon the throne not in a private, but in a public capacity; he entered the everlasting kingdom in the name and as the representative of all his followers, and his entrance was a pledge of their entrance. This most interesting truth was clearly asserted by our Redeemer to Mary immediately after his resurrection, "go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God:" He affectionately recognises them as his brethren, partakers of the same nature, and heirs of the same kingdom in common with himself; he also instructs them that he was going to take his residence with Jehovah not in the relation of a Father, and God to himself only, but also in the tender relation of a Father and God to them. "Let not your heart be troubled—In my Father's house are many mansions—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself: that where I am there ye may be also." The Son of God thus *lives* in heaven as Mediator for the advantage of his chosen: He is the Head over all things to the church which is his body; he manages all the concerns of the whole society of the redeemed, whether collectively or individually considered; and in the most happy moment will secure their introduction, that they may behold that glory which he possesses for them.

Jesus the infinite Surety is represented as *ever living*.

1. This expresses that ardent, unceasing concern which he entertains for the interests of his people. His eyes are ever open to watch them by night, and by day : his heart is most intensely engaged for promoting their welfare, and in making all occurrences “work together for their good, and yield to them the peaceable fruits of righteousness.” We may readily acknowledge that we are shamefully unmindful of him, and indifferent about the advancement of his glory in the earth : So occupied are we in the little pursuits, and so eager for the perishing honors of this world, that Jesus, and the interests of his kingdom are rarely in our thoughts : We suffer hours, and even days to pass away without an affectionate, melting contemplation of his grace, his promises, his covenant, and his great salvation : We are not zealous for the prosperity of his cause ; we do not love him ; we do not think of him ; we do not speak of him, and for him as we ought : But neither all this ingratitude on our part ; nor all this inattention to his interests, ever cools the ardor of his love to us, or relaxes for a moment his attention to our interests. Nay, so tender are the compassions of the exalted advocate to his people ; so unremitted is his attention to all their concerns that he appears both astonished and grieved when they indulge a jealous thought respecting him. “Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the

Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God. Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God; the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary! Can a woman forget her sucking child; that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb; yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee: Behold I have graven thee on the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me." "In all their afflictions he is afflicted:" Every cry for his aid which they offer up by night, or by day enters his ears, and shall be heard in due time: Every accusation that is brought against them he instantly repels by presenting that sacrifice, that divinely perfect sacrifice which he offered up in their room, and when on any occasion they are assailed either from earth or hell, he rises from his throne, and reaches forth his omnipotent arm for their defence, and support: Thus Jesus their advocate *ever* liveth in the highest heavens to make intercession for them; he never ceases to watch over them, to sympathise with them, to pray for them, to protect them in all danger, until they are brought triumphantly to those regions, where there shall be "no more curse, neither sorrow nor crying." When Peter was assailed by a peculiarly strong temptation Jesus "prayed for him that his faith might not fail:" When Stephen was called to resist even unto blood in the defence of the gospel, the heavens were opened, and the Son of man appeared standing on the right

hand of God. This exhibition of our Lord is very instructive, and expresses in a most interesting manner his compassion for his children in the hour of distress, and his solicitude for an honorable issue. He is ordinarily represented as *sitting* upon his throne, or *sitting* on the right hand of God, but in this instance he appears *standing* : His servant is now entering the fiery conflict ; he encounters the rage of men, infuriated and urged on by the powers of hell, the Redeemer is therefore anxious for the event ; he rises from his seat in glory ; he imparts a measure of strength proportioned to the trial ; he inspires his suffering servant with a confidence not to be shaken, and brings him off “ more than a conqueror.”

His *ever* living to make intercession expresses,

2. The perpetuity of his continuance in that capacity : The appearance of the Son of God as our advocate in the court of heaven is not confined to the present dispensation of his mediatorial kingdom, but will last throughout eternity to come. At the consummation of this world Messiah will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; he will present his spiritual offspring as *all righteous*, freely pardoned, and perfectly purified ; he will exhibit the mediatorial scheme as accomplished in the full salvation of all the election of grace ; and also in the utter subversion of the Prince of darkness, and his dominion ; he will disclose the intricate, misterious parts of his

procedure not merely to the satisfaction, but the admiration of every on-looker; he will shew that all occurrences which related to the church in general, and to the particular believer, however adverse they appear at present, were ordered in infinite wisdom as to the time and manner. But this surrender of the kingdom on the part of Messiah relates only to its present form that he may afterwards assume it in a manner more glorious, and unchanging. His kingdom is therefore called *an everlasting kingdom*, and heaven is particularly distinguished as *the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; a kingdom which he purchased by the sacrifice of his cross, for which he sanctifies, and prepares his subjects by the influences of his grace, and which in his capacity as Mediator he will administer forever. The peculiar manner in which he will exercise his office as advocate in the perfection of the heavenly state we cannot comprehend at present; He will no longer intercede, "Father, forgive them," for his children will then be all righteous. He will no longer supplicate, "sanctify them through thy truth," for the veil of ordinances will be then removed, and they will all appear "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." He will no longer pray, "keep them from the evil" of the world, because they will be raised eternally beyond the reach of temptation, or annoyance: He will not then demand as now, "I will that those also whom thou hast given me may be

with me where I am," for their joys will be perfect in the full vision, and fruition of God, the Father: Yet even in the heavenly state the Son as Immanuel in his official character will be *forever* demanding a continuation of this felicity, and will thus remain a bond of union, and medium of communion between Jehovah, and the redeemed. "He is made, or constituted an high Priest forever." "He shall sit, and rule upon his throne, and shall be a Priest upon his throne:" He will not be a *Priest* to make atonement, because he finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness by his decease at Jerusalem, but he will remain a *Priest* to intercede, and thereby secure their perpetuity in glory. He also appears as "a Lamb that had been slain," and why should he retain forever the marks of the cross unless these were to be exhibited as the procuring cause of the glory of his people?

He ever liveth *to make intercession for them.*

Various conjectures have been formed with respect to the particular manner in which our Lord carries on his work, as our Advocate. Some have supposed that he speaks with a real voice, and thus expresses his desire that such and such blessings may be communicated. It is the opinion of others that he merely presents the merit of his sacrifice holding forth to the view of his righteous Father the marks of his crucifixion, and demanding on



this account such mercies as the various circumstances of his children require. But the precise mode in which our precious Lord executes his office as intercessor is not revealed in the scriptures, and therefore it is unbecoming and unprofitable for us presumptuously to enquire. Here we must be contented with "seeing darkly as through a glass:" Many things relative to the state of glory will remain involved in mystery while we continue upon earth. We must put off this corruptible part and enter within the veil "before we shall know, even as also we are known." Yet all that is requisite for producing a solid, unshaken faith is clearly unfolded in the sacred oracles: Enough also of celestial glory beams through the medium of divine revelation to enliven our zeal, to enflame our love, to elevate our hopes, and inspire us with anxious desires to depart that we may see without a veil.

Three things, however, with respect to the intercession of this "Priest upon his throne" may with safety be asserted.

1. That he intercedes in our own nature. This appears equally proper on his own account, and also for the greater happiness and glory of his people. With respect to the Son of God himself it appears expedient that the same nature which had borne the cross on earth should wear the crown in heaven; that the same manhood which had stooped to humiliation and suffering in order to procure the blessing should afterwards have the honor of demanding, and dispensing those blessings;

that the self same nature of man which he had assumed, which had long been the subject of toil, and grief, and of a death the most painful, and reproachful should participate the happiness and glory of administering that kingdom which he had the labor and expence of establishing. It seems no less expedient that this intercession be made in the human nature with respect to them whom he represented in the covenant. It will no doubt forever excite their gratitude to behold the SON, who was *very* God, the Father's equal, and Fellow, condescending to put on their nature, and appear in the likeness of sinful flesh;" it must forever excite their wonder to contemplate that pre-eminence of glory to which their nature is exalted by its union to the Infinite Son: to see it exalted to the right hand of the Eternal Majesty, and the mirror by which the effulgence of the Godhead is reflected through all the heavenly world; it must forever enhance in their esteem all the blessings of salvation to receive them from the hands of that loving, condescending Jesus who had been slain for their redemption. This doctrine which appears so important is undeniably established by divine revelation. The same body of our Lord which was crucified afterwards arose, and even with every mark of its crucifixion. We find him on one occasion, as a mean of confirming the faith of his apostles, shewing them both in his hands and in his side the wounds which he had formerly received. We hear him at ano-

ther interview affectionately addressing them “ handle me and see,” examine to your full satisfaction not only for your own support in every storm of persecution which may await you, but for the confirmation of the faith of my followers in every age, “ for a spirit hath not flesh, and bones as ye see me have.” And that very body in which our Saviour conversed with his disciples ascended in their view towards the highest heavens until a cloud received it out of their sight, and now united to his divinity appears in the presence of God for us. Stephen, when admitted to a vision of the celestial world, “ saw the *Son of Man*, Messiah in the very nature of man, standing on the right hand of God; and John declares, “ I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain.” From this and other passages it is obvious that the Adorable Son not only appears in the body in which he suffered, but with the very marks of these sufferings. I have enlarged on this truth for the more abundant consolation of the heirs of promise. Amidst the diversified trials of the present state: that toil which we often feel in the labors of life, and even in the discharge of religious duty, or those exquisite pains with which the body is frequently afflicted, or the scorn which we experience from an ungodly world, or the encreasing infirmities of age, how reviving in either, or all these trials is the consideration that our nature in the

Person of Emanuel is now residing in the heaven of heavens; that it appears *there* as our Representative, and Forerunner, and that where the Head is exalted all the living members shall be collected. "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

2. As the Son intercedes in our nature, all his pleas are founded on that sacrifice which he offered, and that satisfaction for transgression which he made upon earth. He now appears, and prevails as an advocate, because he was formerly made a *sin-offering for us*, and obtained *eternal redemption*. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission," and this high Priest of our profession demands no remission of sin for his people; no mortification of lust; no progress in sanctification; no blessing either of grace, or glory only in virtue of that infinitely perfect righteousness which he finished upon the cross. This truth evidently appears from the history of the Jewish high Priest, his type, under the former dispensation. "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and shall bring the blood within the vail, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat." Again, "but into the second service went the high Priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for his own sins, and the sins of the people."

Contrasting Jesus the Son of God our high Priest with those of the order of Aaron, and shewing the excellence of the former beyond the latter the apostle declares, "Neither by the blood of goats, or calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us." Every accusation that he now answers as our representative; every indictment that he quashes; every benefit that he demands in our behalf he presents to the uncreated Majesty his own obedience, and sacrifice as the procuring cause. He sprinkles with his own blood the throne of justice, and thus secures peace and reconciliation with a righteous God, and as the counterpart of this produces in the consciences of his children "a peace which passeth all understanding:" He argues that every charge which can now be offered against them was formerly brought against him their sponsor, and cannot therefore be with propriety renewed: That as a double payment cannot in justice be required of the same debt, nor a double satisfaction for the same offence, therefore there can be no condemnation to any whom he represented in the covenant. Sisters and brethren in Jesus Christ, what a living fountain of consolation is this, "that we have an advocate with the Father," and that every plea which he makes is founded on an argument infinitely relevant at the court of heaven? "Seeing therefore we have a great high Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God," who shall suc-

cessfully lay any thing to our charge? Every curse which we had incurred was inflicted upon him the Surety interposing in our room, and every act of obedience which could be required of us, he performed in his life, and with this atonement he has entered the holy place there to appear in the presence of God for us.

3. The intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ is always prevalent. It is of little moment to us in what manner he executes his office as advocate, whether by expressing his will in real words, or by holding forth the marks of his former sufferings. This is our confidence, and consolation that he is ever successful. Even in his state of humiliation the divine Redeemer could appeal with full assurance, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always." How much rather will he be heard when he has finished the work which was given him to do, and has attained the perfection of his glorified state? The most faithful and skilful Advocate that ever appeared at a human bar, may possibly fail of success. Although the cause of his client is just; the evidence clear, and satisfactory, and his expectation most sanguine, he may be, and often is disappointed in the issue. Not so with him who interposes in our behalf at the right hand of Jehovah. No cause however obscure, or complicated, or seemingly desperate in which he undertakes can possibly be lost. No sinner of the human fan-

ily however discouraging his situation in point of former guilt, or present unworthiness who commits to this Advocate the management of his concerns ever was, or ever shall be disappointed in the end. No argument which he offers to the Eternal Father was ever repelled as irrelevant. While Moses "lifted up his hand, Israel prevailed," and much rather while Jesus the illustrious antitype holds up his hand, while he raises up his voice in behalf of his children he shall prevail, and they through him shall be heard. After the apostle had contemplated the dignity of Messiah's Person, and pronounced him greater than Melchisedec, and more glorious than the angels; after he had contemplated the infinite, everlasting merit of his sacrifice that "by this one offering he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified," he draws this important, consoling conclusion, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Let us pause a moment, and for the encouragement of any doubting, disconsolate communicant reflect on this animating assurance. "He is able to save to the *uttermost*," in any conceivable emergence, in any possible extremity those who humbly rely on his fulness, and faithfulness, and mercy. Some christian present is probably disposed to consider his own situation as altogether singular. "There is a mystery of deceit, of enmity, of unbelief in my heart," he may be saying, "which was

never felt in the heart of any other : I am afflicted with temptations more abominable, and blasphemous than were ever experienced by a mortal ; I am tossed with wave after wave, and must be overwhelmed ; and all my other afflictions are aggravated by this that *my Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* I am afraid that *his mercy is clean gone forever,* and that *his promise* with respect to me doth *fail for evermore* No language can express the thousandth part of my perplexity, and anguish." All this may be true, despondent believer, and yet thy condition is by no means desperate, nor even discouraging, because Jesus thine Advocate saves to the *uttermost* them that come unto God by him. He is infinitely wise to see through all the peculiarities of thy case ; he is infinitely compassionate to sympathise in all thy distresses ; he is infinitely powerful to support thee in every discouragement either inward, or outward, and infinitely meritorious to prevail with the Father in thy behalf. However unworthy thou art, worthy, divinely worthy is the Lamb that was slain for whom thou shouldest be supported, and comforted. " How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works," from every fear of wrath on account of transgression, and with this very blood Jesus has gone to the most holy place to intercede in thy name. Let not therefore thine heart be troubled, but honor thine



Advocate by leaving thy case with all its perplexities to his wise, and merciful management. He knows by experience the bitterness of walking in darkness, and therefore most tenderly feels for thee in the hour of spiritual desertion. He knows by experience the fury of the great Adversary, the terrors of *the roaring lyon*, and will not leave thee to his rage. This high Priest of our profession is not only *faithful*, but *merciful*, and “in that he himself suffered being tempted he is able to succour them that are tempted.” With what tenderness does he declare, I will not leave you comfortless; I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”

This doctrine thus illustrated,

1. Affords a very animating view of the Redeemer's love to his children; of his constant, ardent concern for their salvation. Their redemption from the curse, and all its consequences, occupied his thoughts from eternity past, Ages before the world was created, or his chosen were called into being, he looked forward with compassion at their misery, and exulted in the prospect of restoring them.— “He rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men.” How fervent was his zeal, and how unwearied his labors in promoting their interests, while he *tabernacled* in our world. He was *eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*. While he himself submitted to hunger, he miraculously supplied the wants of others: While he was be-

yond comparison a "man of sorrows," he tenderly sympathised with others in their affliction, and dried up the tears of the mourner. This life of suffering to himself, and of kindness to others, he concluded by "giving his life a ransom" for our iniquities. But even *here* the love of God our Saviour toward man did not cease. Having loved them without beginning, he loves them without abatement, or end. Neither the treachery of one disciple in betraying him, nor of the other disciples in deserting him in that hour when chiefly he required their sympathy, nor all the ignominy, nor agony of the cross did not chill the ardor of his zeal in the advancement of their interests. Neither is his attention diverted from them a single moment by all the glories of the throne, or the acclamations of those exalted orders of being, who there approach and adore him. Men, when suddenly elevated to high stations, often forget or despise their former associates. Being exalted above them, and rendered independent of them, they become regardless of their interests, and even disown any former acquaintance. But different is the conduct of the ever-loving, and faithful advocate. He does not exceed us more in the elevation of his station, than in the depth of his condescension, and the ardor and immensity of his love. Although the Father has placed him on his right hand, and "thrones, and dominions, and principalities," as ministers of state, constantly attend him, yet he is not ashamed to call you by the endearing appellation of "bre-

thren, and sisters : He looks through all the shining orders of angels, and beholds with a *piteous* eye his afflicted; dejected members upon earth. Could you draw aside the vail, and penetrate for a moment into the holy of holies, you might there see the Dear Redeemer standing forth your Representative ; clothed with your nature in a state of inconceivable glory ; bearing your names upon his breast plate ; managing all your concerns with unerring skill, and unwearied attention ; asking for you remission amidst all your failures, support beneath the pressure of every cross, peace of mind amidst all your disquietudes, and victory over every adversary ; preparing for you mansions of glory, and pleading that in your Father's good time you may be fitted for those mansions, and exalted actually to possess them.

2. This doctrine may inspire us with a becoming confidence this day in approaching the table of our Lord. It is an old proverb which although familiar, I will take the liberty of repeating, " They need not be afraid who have a friend at court," and while Jesus is our advocate with Jehovah, we may draw near this sacred communion in the full assurance of being accepted. " He has made peace by the blood of his cross," and with this blood has entered the " Holy of holies," there to appear in the presence of God for us. " Seeing then," beloved brethren, " that we have a great high Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." The

greater confidence that we exercise in discharging the duties of religion through faith in the mediation of our ascended Lord, the more acceptable and glorifying such services are, because we thus express more elevated thoughts of his atonement and intercession. Does a conviction of guilt agitate and discourage? Upon an impartial review of days, and months that are past, do we recollect numerous and shameful failures; vows that were deliberately made, and yet repeatedly broken; precious time misimproved; opportunities of promoting our own edification, or the edification of others neglected? Does this recollection of former imperfections rise up as an insurmountable barrier between thee, and the table of thy Lord? Remember for thine encouragement that thou hast "an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for thy sins." By a constant exhibition of his divinely meritorious blood before the throne, he answers every charge that is urged against thee, and then issues out a new pardon in thy behalf. Let every intended communicant raising their thoughts to the High Priest of our profession, repeat that challenge of triumph, *who is he that condemneth?* "Who shall stagger my confidence in obeying the command of my dear Saviour, or receiving that provision which his bounty is offering? Resting all my hopes for pardon and peace on that *plenteous redemption* which is in his blood, I will freely go unto the altar of God, unto God my ex-

eeding joy ; there my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness." Is another discouraged from approaching through the prevalence of strong corruptions ? " Dost thou find a law in thy members warring against the law of thy mind," and the more anxious that thou art to attain a suitable frame in the solemnities of religion, does thy heart appear the more unmanageable, and prone to depart from the living God ? All this *deceitfulness*, this *desperate wickedness* of which thou art complaining, only furnishes a new errand to the ever-living, ever-prevailing advocate, and it affords him a new opportunity of bringing glory to himself by causing thee to "abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost."—*Sanctify them through thy truth* is his petition before the throne, and he is not only a Priest to demand this blessing, but a King, and therefore mighty to dispense it ; to mortify each rising corruption ; to subdue every adversary, to improve and perfect every grace, and to "present thee faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." He loved thee insignificant, undeserving, debased as thou art in thine own estimation, and "gave himself for thee that he might sanctify and cleanse thee with the washing of water by the word," and it is his constant solicitude at the court above, that this with every other benefit of his purchase may be actually administered. Sooner therefore shall heaven and earth pass away than a single mercy which he procured upon his cross, and now

demands upon his throne, fail of its application. And the more frail that thou art in thyself, the more languid seemingly thy love, the more wanton and wandering thy heart the deeper will be thy debt, and the louder thy song *for ever* to that Jesus who redeems, and sanctifies, and saves. “O thou of little faith, wherefore shouldst thou doubt?” Is not “the blood of the Lamb” meritorious “to cleanse thee from all sin?” Is not his righteousness an “everlasting righteousness,” and therefore sufficient to cover all thy deformity, and is not his appearance with the Father an infallible security for the communication “of grace to help in the time of need?” Although you may look with shame upon your “idle schemes; your airy hopes; your groundless fears; your opportunities lost; admonitions slighted; Blessings neglected; trifles admired, with innumerable other infirmities,” yet amidst all that humiliation, and sorrow which arises from this view, behold this great *High Priest who is over the house of God*, and then draw near with true hearts; hearts awed by his authority, constrained by his love, resting on his promises, and *rejoicing in the hope of his glory*; draw near to this feast of love *by the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us*: How should the heirs of promise triumph in the offices of their redeeming Jehovah, and how cheerfully should they obey every command with a confidence on the sufficiency of his covenant, and his infinite readiness to impart? Receive this

day in the ordinance of the supper another pledge of his love, and another earnest of his final appearing. Yes, believing communicants, he who now lives to make intercession for you in heaven, will shortly come and translate you to *live* with him. Who knows but the Forerunner within the veil is saying on this occasion of some disconsolate guest, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom?" What heart does not bound with joy at the reviving prospect? Who would not unite in the ardent, elevated exostulation of the spouse, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved; and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether. Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus."

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SERMON VI.

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2 TIMOTHY IV, 8.

*All them also that love his appearing.*

PAUL, the inspired author of this epistle, occupied a station peculiarly exalted among the followers of the Lamb. He was possessed of natural powers surpassing those of his fellow apostles, he had received a more than ordinary measure of the Divine Spirit in his illuminating and sanctifying influences, and all these endowments both natural and gracious were eminently devoted to the ad-

vancement of his master's kingdom. None who are acquainted with the history of his ministry, of his *travels*, of his *watchings*, of his *fastings*, of his *perils* whether by sea or land, will charge him with the least ostentation, or arrogance when he asserts, "I labored more abundantly than they all : I have whereof I might glory in Jesus Christ in things pertaining to God : I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The christian of common stature in the divine life is therefore sometimes tempted to say, "the assurance of future salvation might be expected by a Paul : one who had done so much, and endured so much in the cause of his master : one who had walked so intimately with his God, and received so many and tender expressions of his love : No wonder that he could exult in the prospect of his dissolution, *I am now ready to be offered : I have fought a good fight ; I have kept the faith : Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day* : This language of confidence and joy is becoming the lips of the chiefest apostle, but it would be the most inexcusable presumption in me : So inferior are my attainments, and so unprofitable has been my life that I may justly be considered the *least* of all, and the *servant* of all : If I ever should be honored with a station at the right hand of the Judge, it must be the most remote ; If I ever am in-



vited to inherit the kingdom prepared for the righteous, I must be the last to enter ; If I ever do occupy a mansion in the region of glory, it must be the most obscure in all the heavenly palace ; I can only expect to stand afar off and hear the hosannas, and witness the happiness, and glory of the rest." Christian, amidst those reflections listen to the declaration of the Apostle, " not for me only is this crown laid up, and these glories reserved, but for all them also that love his appearing." None who improve by a living faith the infinite Jesus, and his everlasting righteousness can possibly perish, nor shall one of them fail of that kingdom which was prepared of the Father. The lowest, the weakest member in his family will be as infallibly saved as an Enoch, or an Abraham, or a Paul. The title of any to the inheritance of heaven does not depend on what they may do or suffer, but what was done or suffered by Jesus-Jehovah their Substitute. Their security for the kingdom is not founded on the degree of their graces, or the lively exercise of these graces, but on the reality of their grace. Where faith is implanted in the heart, altho' it be imperceptible as " a grain of mustard-seed," it shall be preserved, and improved, and crowned with eternal life in the end. There may be different grades in glory hereafter, as there are different degrees in grace here, yet all who are *justified* shall be *glorified*. Every vessel that was *chosen* from eternity, and *sanctified* in time shall be placed

near to *that river which proceeds out of the throne of the Lamb*, and from its *living, ever-flowing waters* be filled through eternity to come. Each heir of salvation "shall be perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God forever." A crown of righteousness is laid up for all them also *that love his appearing*.

Different manifestations of the Son are spoken of in the sacred volume. He appeared in *the fulness of time* when, agreeably to ancient prophecy and promise, he assumed the nature of man, and began to suffer as *a ransom for the sins of many*. The apostle thus declares, "but now once in the end of the world he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" He is also represented as *coming* when he interposes by any signal dispensation of his providence whether in mercy or judgment. We hear him thus declaring to his disciples in the days of his personal ministry upon earth, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man *coming* in his kingdom;" *coming* visibly in the extension of his church by the abundant out-pouring of his spirit, and the general diffusion of his gospel. But the manifestation of the Son of God at the end of this world is emphatically called *his appearing*. It will be the last; the most public; the most interesting; the most glorious. He will then *come not to minister, but to be ministered unto*; not to be judged, but to judge; not to be arraigned before the bar of another, but to arraign before his own bar

all the kindreds of the human kind, and not the nations of mankind merely, but the myriads of revolting, reprobate angels. "Behold he cometh, and every eye shall see him." Men may shut their eyes against him when he is now revealed in the amiable, endearing character of a Saviour, but they must behold him when exhibited in the grandeur of the judge, in the unveiled effulgence of "his own glory, of his Father's glory, and with the holy angels." As every eye shall see him, every knee shall do him homage either voluntarily, or reluctantly. No longer will *Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mock him*: No longer will the impious, infuriated Jews offer him a reed, a mock emblem of royalty, or in derision set a crown of thorns upon his head, because his head shall wear the real crown, and his hand hold the sceptre of universal, everlasting dominion: No longer will the multitude in the madness of their rage cry out, *let him be crucified*, for while all the hosts of the redeemed will shout in transports of joy, "lo! this is our God; we have waited for him; he will save us," the damned throng, amazed and confounded, "will call to the mountains and rocks to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Again, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another

as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats."

Contemplations on the second appearing of our Lord can never be unseasonable either for the sinner or saint, because it is an event which we all shall realize, and by which our state for eternity will be unalterably fixed. These eyes must behold the throne erected, and the judge descending. These ears must hear an unchanging sentence either of approbation, or of exclusion from his gracious presence. But reflections on the second coming of our Lord are peculiarly seasonable on the present occasion. We have now assembled to commemorate his dying love in the ordinance of the supper: In this holy communion our faith should be employed in contemplating not merely the past, but the future; we should alternately recollect that "decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem," that dreary night when he was delivered for our offences, and by the blood of his cross secured the complete, eternal remission of our sins, and again be looking forward to that brighter morning when the heavens shall reveal him to complete the mediatorial scheme, and perfect the redemption of his church. "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come: till he appears the second time to be "glorified in his saints. and admired in all them that believe."

May a ray of his glory enlighten, and cheer

our hearts while I attempt in all the simplicity of his gospel,

I. To shew the import of the exercise *looking for*, or *loving* his appearing—and

II. Why the believer may reasonably look, or long for this event.

1. This exercise implies a firm belief that the Son of God will appear. We cannot rejoice in the prospect of any event without a full persuasion that it will certainly take place, and there is no article of our religion more clearly revealed in the scriptures, nor more frequently recommended to the consideration of the christian than the future manifestation of his Lord. Reason itself suggests the propriety that there should be a general judgment of the world ; that the friends of God might be publicly acquitted from every charge that is falsely brought against them, and that they should be honorably rewarded for all those services which they render to his cause. Reason also suggests it to be proper that those who wilfully oppose his kingdom on earth should be publicly convicted of their impiety, and be exposed as monuments of reproach and punishment. Our own consciences frequently admonish us of a judgment to come. Why this remorse for the past, and this anxiety about the future which we so frequently feel ? Why the operations of a secret principle excusing us when we do right, and sternly accusing us when we do wrong ? These are solemn presages of a future retribution : They are the voice of conscience which erects its

tribunal in the heart as a counterpart to the tribunal of the great Judge, and by which this monitor within anticipates the decisions of the final day. But the general judgment which reason suggests as *proper*, and conscience forebodes as *probable* the bible establishes as undeniably certain. " Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied—behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints," or angels who shall attend as ministers of state to direct the procedure of that day, " to execute judgment on all." " I beheld," says Daniel alluding to the same occasion, " I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit—his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him ; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him ; the judgment was set and the books were opened." This event which was predicted in the Old Testament is taught with evidence still more luminous in the new. " Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead." This day is *appointed* ; although it is a secret to us, it is known to the Eternal mind, and unalterably determined : There was a period appointed for the manifestation of Messiah in the flesh as the Saviour of the world ; there is a period fixed with equal precision for his

revelation as its judge: Then having closed the mediatorial work he will dispense rewards to his friends, and take vengeance on those who do *not obey his gospel*. But this event which is taught as a truth interesting to all is brought home more immediately to the conscience of each individual in the following passage. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." How interesting the fact, and with what precision is it taught? *Every one must receive the things done in his body*. All distinction of character arising from rank, or fortune, or occupation will then be done away. The rich will no longer have any ascendancy over the poor: The Pastor must mingle with those who are now the people of his charge: The master will sink to a level with his servant, and he who now sits in judgment upon others must himself come down to be judged. The faith of the christian ought often to be directed to that certain, solemn event: He should aim at living under habitual impressions of that hour when he must appear before the bar of his judge, give an account of his stewardship, and receive according to his works. Looking forward to that occasion the apostle declares, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment—but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come who will both

bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart." The more duly we realize this appearing of our Lord the more regardless we will become either of the applause, or censure of the world. *It is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment*; his approbation cannot materially profit, neither can his reproach materially injure me; there is a bar more awful before which I expect to be summoned; a balance infinitely impartial, and eternally decisive in which all my actions must be weighed: *He that judgeth me is the Lord.*

2. The exercise, *loving the appearing of our Lord*, implies a real concern to be prepared for that event. The criminal who is arraigned before a human bar, and is conscious of having committed the offence charged against him cannot long for the hour of trial. Each anticipation of the time when his judge will ascend the bench; when the evidences will be adduced, and the indictment substantiated fills him with emotions of terror, not of joy: Neither can the sinner, chargeable with all the guilt of his nature, and life; without God, without Jesus, and without hope of future happiness, long for the manifestation of his Lord: His conscience startles with secret horror at each anticipation of the hour of his coming, and he aims at burying the thought in the pursuits, or pleasures, or company of the world. In order therefore to love the second appearing of our Lord, and look forward with joy to that period we must be prepared



by faith in the blood of atonement, "by repentance towards God," and by holiness of heart and of life. And to all such the prospect of his manifestation may be a source of the most refined, exquisite joy. The christian, living by faith upon the infinitely blessed Jesus, brought near to God by the application of his atoning sacrifice, clothed with his righteousness, and adorned with his image does not merely believe it as a matter of faith, but exults in it as the consummation of all his hopes. *Then* he will actually receive that prize for which he had eagerly run; he will enjoy that inheritance which he had long and anxiously expected, and put on that crown for which he had fought "against the devil, the world, and the flesh." How elevated in the prospect of this glorious event were the views of the apostle? Borne on the wings of a lively faith and hope his soul appears altogether transported beyond this world while his body remained in it. "I am now ready to be offered;" I have nothing to do but die, when the message is delivered; "I know whom I have believed," and resting on Jesus, as "the Captain of my salvation," I hope to rise victorious over death and the grave: *The sting of death is sin*, but that is extracted by my glorious, infinite substitute "who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; who was delivered for my offences and rose again" as the pledge of my resurrection; *and the strength of sin is the law* which is armed with vengeance against every transgressor, but this

law both in its precept and penalty was magnified by another in my room ; " thanks be to God who now giveth me the victory," a complete, eternal victory over the law, and sin, and death and the grave through our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. This exercise implies a patient waiting for the manifestation of our Lord. There are many occurrences which try the faith and patience of a christian while he continues in this world. Owing sometimes to exquisite affliction in his body ; or reproach heaped upon his character by false friends, or open, unfeeling adversaries ; the imperfections which mark his best services here ; the little progress which he makes in holiness amidst all the means which he enjoys, and especially the hidings of his Father's countenance he becomes weary of this world and longs to depart. He finds from painful experience that the present life is little else than a succession of disappointments, and vexation ; that every cup presented for our enjoyment is mingled with some bitter ingredient ; that our most gilded prospects are merely visionary, and mock our expectations. Thus through the rage of remaining corruption, or the want of spiritual support, or outward disappointment, and persecution, the christian is sometimes tempted presumptuously to ask, " why does my Lord delay his coming ? Why am I detained so long in this theatre of vanity and sorrow, where my sun is often clouded, and I am doomed to darkness and doubt ? O that

I had the wings of a dove, I would fly far hence, even to yonder regions where sorrow and sighing shall be no more." But this peevishness of temper, and this impatience amidst the trials of life arise from enmity of heart against God, and a distrust of his providence. The exercise of ardent love to our Lord Jesus Christ, and of faith on his promises will constrain us to wait with submission and patience the time of his manifestation. All the afflictions of whatever nature which the righteous endure upon earth are appointed by their faithful, compassionate Lord; they are arranged by a wisdom which cannot err, and by a love infinitely surpassing the love of friend to friend; they are not continued a moment longer than is requisite; they are all designed to prepare them for a more welcome reception of their Saviour when he appears, and add to their felicity in his presence. Are the redeemed infirm or afflicted in body now, all these infirmities and afflictions will heighten the enjoyments of that region where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; where there shall be no more disease, nor death, but their present frail, vile bodies "shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body," and flourish in immortal youth. Is their divine Comforter rarely enjoyed, and when they do behold him through the medium of ordinances, is it but *in part*, and only for a moment? This very circumstance will enhance inconceivably the joys of that hour when they shall *see him face to face*; when he shall reveal himself to them.

in all his grace, in all his glory, and never depart from their view. Are they surrounded by enemies here, by those who are apparently irreconcilable, and delight in torturing their feelings? This trial however painful will add to the pleasures of that society where harmony uninterrupted will everlastingly reign: where every bosom will burn with the purest flame of love not only to Jehovah the fountain of love, but to all around; where there shall be one throne which all the nations of the saved shall encircle; one object which all behold, even *the Lamb in the midst of it*, and one song in which every heart and every voice will be united. Learn therefore, ye redeemed of the Lord, learn *in whatsoever state you are therein to be contented*; learn to wait, and to wait with a holy submission for the *coming of your Lord*. However numerous, or painful, or protracted thine afflictions may be thou hast the promise and oath of thy God in covenant that thou shalt be supported under them, that thou shalt be relieved from them, and that they shall ultimately issue in thy good. Although *the vision of thy Lord may tarry long*, wait for it, and wait with a suitable resignation to his righteous pleasure. Does the dutiful scholar leave to the discretion of his teacher when to advance him from a lower to a higher class in the seminary? Does an affectionate son submit to the pleasure of his father when to give him the full possession of the inheritance promised him, and wilt not thou leave to the wisdom, and the will of thy

father the moment of thy translation from earth to heaven ?

4. This exercise implies an earnest desire for the revelation of our Lord. Submission to the divine will as to the time and circumstances of our departure is by no means inconsistent with an unfeigned, ardent solicitude for the arrival of that time ; and although the prospect of a little usefulness in the church, or in society, and particularly an acquiescence in the will of our Father may reconcile us to remain longer on earth, yet to live from day to day without lifting up our thoughts to the heavenly city, or feeling any earnest desires for the fruition of those pure, uninterrupted, everlasting consolations which are there to be expected argues a disposition both carnal and earthly. Is not our treasure in heaven ? Are not our dearest relations *there*, our Father, our elder Brother, angels our fellow-servants, patriarchs and prophets, and apostles with a large proportion of our dear companions who died in the Lord, and shall not we long to be there ? Have we for many years been carrying on a painful, doubtful warfare with corruption and the world, and shall we not wish to be crowned with the honors of victory ? Have we been so long enveloped with the shadows of earth, walking in darkness with scarcely a ray of light, and shall we not be looking out for the morning of glory which shall never be succeeded by night, nor obscured by any clouds ? Have we been so often deceived by the empty, unsatisfying pleasures of time, and

yet not desire with holy importunity the sublime, substantial joys of eternity? Who would not exchange the cistern for those *living fountains* which shall always flow, and yet be always full? Moses earnestly longed for a view of the natural Canaan, which was merely a type; his spirit was moved with ardent desires to see "that goodly mountain even Lebanon;" to behold with his own eyes the land promised to the fathers, and towards which their faith and hopes had been so long directed? Was he thus anxious for attaining the shadow, and can we be indifferent about the substance, the Canaan of eternal rest? Shall we feel no desires to see those *trees of righteousness* which flourish in perpetual verdure; to drink of *that pure river of life* which flows out from the throne of God and waters and refreshes the whole paradise above? More especially, shall we not long to see Jesus *the desire of all nations* of whom Enoch only the seventh from Adam prophesied; whose glory Isaiah saw, and mentioned with rapture; on whom the hearts of the faithful in all ages have fastened as their Beloved and Friend: who is the wonder of angels, and the glory of heaven? Surely, Brethren, it is our reproach, our unutterable reproach that we are so prone to this world with its pleasures and pursuits. The night is far spent, awake from your slumbers and "be looking and longing for the coming of this day of God."

To enquire why the christian may reason-

ably long for the approach of that day was our second proposition.

1. He may reasonably long for that day because his happiness and glory will then be promoted in the resurrection of his body. Although the believer's death is disarmed of its sting, stripped of all its terrors in the death of Jesus Jehovah his covenant Head, yet it is a consequence of transgression, and therefore constitutes a part of his humiliation. In this event the tender relation between the soul and the body is dissolved, and those partners which had been intimately united, and endeared to each other by many considerations are then doomed to a long, and painful separation : The body which had been formed for perpetual exertion in the service of its Creator is consigned to the grave there to languish joyless and inactive. But at the *second appearing* of our Lord the trumpet shall sound ; the ashes which had slumbered for ages shall be reanimated ; every particle shall be carefully collected, and the body, redeemed from the inactivity, the corruption of the grave, shall be re-united to the soul never to be separated. Then, and not till then will the christian's felicity, and glory be consummated. True it is, the soul when translated to heaven at death becomes ineffably blessed in the full fruition of it's God ; it participates all that happiness which the unembodied Spirit is capable of participating, but the soul is only a part of the human person, and therefore neither its dignity nor joy can be complete while in a

state of separation from the body. The spirit from the hour of death until that of the resurrection must be considered as in a widowed state, and is not perfected either in glory or bliss until its reunion with the former companion the body. "We ourselves," says the apostle, "which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the **REDEMPTION** of our bodies." Redemption will then be consummated in its largest extent with respect to its heirs, when their souls are not only conformed to the image of the first born, and arrayed in the immaculate, unfading robes of his righteousness, but their very bodies are raised up to an immortal life; when they are both delivered from the bondage of corruption; when they are brought to a union intimate, and indissolvable, and rendered capable of eternally contributing to the perfection of each other. With what rapture ineffable did the apostle look forward to that event; how anxiously did he long for its approach? "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead," that is, participate all that plenitude of glory, and bliss which may then be expected, and shall then be realized. *For this corruptible shall then put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.*

2. The christian may reasonably long for the appearing of his Lord, because he will then be honorably acquitted from every charge that is now brought against him, and be amp-



ly rewarded for his services in the cause of his Master. Innumerable accusations are *laid in* against the righteous in the present life. The law occasionally arraigns them before its bar, compares their imperfect obedience with its rigorous requirements, utters its denunciation against the least defect, and sends them away disconsolate : The world often arraigns them before its bar, misconstrues their best intentions, misrepresents their actions, pronounces their sincerity to be mere hypocrisy, their experiences as mere delusion, passes sentence upon them as a generation of deceivers, and sends them away disconsolate : The great accuser arraigns them before his bar ; he charges them with falling short of the purity of the divine law in every service ; he represents Jehovah as *a hard Master*, unwilling to pardon sin, or bear with their infirmities ; he often shakes them from their confidence by suggesting to them that their hopes must be disappointed at last, and thus sends them away disconsolate. But every charge that is, or possibly can be urged against them will then be answered by the adorable Judge who had undertaken in their room ; every indictment he will for ever quash by an exhibition of that infinitely meritorious sacrifice which he once offered up in their nature and name. He will everlastingly put to silence every challenge of the law, of a censorious world, of the Great Accuser by declaring that *decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem* was accomplished for them in particular : He will

publicly announce to all spectators that he as their Surety endured the curse, and that was a sufficient reason why they should be delivered from the curse ; that he sustained the wrath of his righteous Father, and therefore this wrath ought not to be inflicted on them : that he in the capacity of a substitute really *died* and therefore it was a matter of unquestionable right that they should *live* and *live* forever. No longer, disquieted believer, will thy peace be disturbed, or thy hopes clouded by accusations of any nature from any quarter. The sacrifice of Jehovah thy Sponsor will be admitted as an ample plea for thy redemption from hell, and his righteousness wrought out in thy nature and in thy covenant-room, will be acknowledged as a full title to all the immunities and glories of heaven. None shall henceforth lay any thing to their charge, because *the Lord the righteous Judge* shall openly acquit them in virtue of his own perfect righteousness exhibited in their behalf.

Nay, the Son of God in the character of a judge will not only acquit his ransomed from every accusation, but will honorably acknowledge and reward their performances. However imperfect their services may be in themselves, or insignificant they appear in the estimation of others, yet as done by faith in his promises, out of gratitude to his love, and zeal for his glory they are precious in his view, and shall be fully remunerated at last. "Them that honor me," is his promise, "I will hon-

or." "Blessed are they which do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Not a tear which now flows for their own sins or the iniquities of others shall be then forgotten. Not a prayer which they offer up for blessings on themselves, or the spread of his gospel through the world shall remain unrewarded, and your very *confession* of him this day *before men* shall receive in return his *confession* of you in the presence of his Father, and the holy angels. "He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment," an emblem of purity and victory, "and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

3. The christian may reasonably *long* for the second *appearing* of his Lord, because he will then be admitted to the full enjoyment of all that blessedness which the gospel reveals, and his hopes anticipate: Here he is a pilgrim, and stranger, but then he will reach his everlasting home: Here he is indeed an heir yet he is only in a state of minority, but then he will be admitted to possess all those privileges which are connected with his adoption into the family of God: Here he is like a soldier in the field of battle surrounded by legions of enemies, fiercely assailed, and often overcome, but then he will receive the palm and the crown. No sooner will the judgment be finished, and the damned consigned to their

own place, than all the multitude of the redeemed will accompany their Lord with that invitation in his lips, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." YE BLESSED. There is a meaning in this expression the ten thousandth part of which cannot be conceived, until *our Lord appear*, and the glories of heaven are disclosed. The soul was indeed blessed in the enjoyment of its God since its dissolution from the body, but these joys are inconceivably augmented by its union to its former partner the body. Every sense of the *outward man* will serve as an inlet of happiness and glory to the experience of the inward man. What joy indescribable must transport the spirit when it looks abroad and beholds through the medium of the bodily eyes the light of the celestial world, one serene, unclouded, eternal day of which the splendors of the meridian sun are scarcely a semblance : When it sees the bodies of the just seated in their mansions around all luminous, shining like so many stars, and suns in the kingdom of their Father ; especially when it looks toward the throne, and sees exalted to the midst of it that Jesus who undertook for sinners, and gave his life as the price of their redemption : that Jesus of whom they had often read in the scriptures : of whom they had heard in the sanctuary ; whom they had often sought in the devotions of the closet ; whose absence they had deplored as their greatest misery, and the pledges of whose

love they had esteemed as the crown of all their joys; when they see him face to face in the full confidence that they shall go no more out? What joy must transport the soul when it hears through the medium of the bodily ears ten thousand, thousand saints, and ten thousand, thousand angels mingling their hearts, and their voices in the sweetest harmony without one jarring note, without one discordant string? We are often elevated while we attend the worship of the sanctuary on earth, when we hear the followers of the Lamb chanting forth the praises of creating and redeeming love, what must be our emotions when we enter the sanctuary above, when we hear the voices not of a single society, but of all the redeemed from all countries, and ages; of Enoch *who walked with God*; of David *the sweet singer of Israel*: of Apollos the eloquent preacher of righteousness: of these with un-numbered millions all striking their golden harps, and saying with loud voices, voices improved and refined to the uttermost, "salvation to him that sitteth on the throne, even to the Lamb forever and ever?" Peter thought it good to remain on the mount with Moses, and Elias, where he might see their glory and hear their conversation. We often feel happy in the fellowship of our friends, of those in whose sincerity we may confide, and by whose discourse we may be entertained, or edified; what then must be the advantage, and what the delight of the heavenly world when we shall sit down not with a few, but

with all the prophets, and apostles, and martyrs of our Lord, when each will feel the most unlimited confidence in the friendship of the other, and when it will be the glory, and felicity of each to contribute to the glory, and felicity of the whole.

Brethren, are these things so? Are such glories reserved in the celestial world? Will they be disclosed at the manifestation of our Lord, who that loves the Saviour would not long for his manifestation? Who that has tasted of the pledge does not earnestly aspire after the full possession?

Permit me to apply this subject by asking this large assembly, are you prepared to stand before the Son of man? Suppose that the hour of retribution was now come; that the *white throne* was erected; that the judge in his uncreated effulgence was descending; that the trump of God was blown, and the nations summoned to appear before him? Are you ready for these interesting, awful events? Are you born of his spirit? Are you living daily by faith on his covenant, and righteousness, and promises? Are you emptied of self, of your own strength as weakness, your own wisdom as folly, your own righteousness as guilt, glorying in Jesus as your salyation, and hope, and thus prepared to receive the summons with confidence and joy? Alas, are there not some of you; are there not many of you who have rarely reflected on these realities? Amidst your eager solicitude about this world, and its concerns you have neglected making

preparation for the next. You have rarely employed an evening; nay, may I not add, you have rarely occupied an hour in serious reflection about the soul, the precious, precious soul that never dies; that must shortly plunge into a world unknown, a world of bliss or torment, of glory or reproach. You have rarely thought of *a judgment to come*, when you must stand in the presence of an impartial God; give an account for all the deeds you have done, of all the instructions you have heard, of all the opportunities for promoting your own salvation, or the salvation of others which you have enjoyed; and then according to *your words*, and works be adjudged either to heaven or hell. Brethren, do you believe that it is *appointed for all men once to die*, and after death the judgment, is it not folly, is it not madness in the extreme to live unprepared for death, and judgment? You know not the day, nor the place, nor the manner of your departure, and be admonished this hour that as you live you will probably die; and as you die you must remain forever. *Where the tree falleth, there it shall lie.* The moment of your dissolution determines your destiny beyond the peradventure of a change. The soul once damned shall never be redeemed: The flames of hell once kindled around you are never to be quenched: The tormenting worm once envenomed will give no respite, and the door of the bottomless pit once locked upon you shall never be opened more. "The Lord Jesus will be revealed from hea-

ven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Shall I be pronounced your enemy, because I thus plainly address and admonish you? Certainly not. I only aim at convincing you of your disease, while there is *balm* in the gospel, and a *Physician* to administer it: I would point out to you the gathering storm, while there is a *covert* within view; a *covert* into which you may enter, and be eternally safe: I would shew you the *avenger* who pursues, who is thirsting for your blood, while the door of *the city of refuge* is yet open for your admission.

Will you listen to the counsels of a friend? Are you sensible of your danger, and resolved to turn your attention to the great interests of eternity? Would you acquaint now yourselves with God, and be at peace, thereby stand unruffled amidst all the terror, and all the grandeur of the judgment-day? Are such your resolutions, I congratulate you on this auspicious occasion, and assure you in my master's name that all things are ready on the part of heaven to complete a negociation. The everlasting Father is ready: He reaches forth the olive branch of peace, and proclaims, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out your transgressions for mine own name's sake;" "I have no pleasure in the



death of the wicked ;” Nay, for your more abundant encouragement he has confirmed this truth by the solemnity of his oath, “ As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but would that he turn from his wicked ways, and live : turn ye, turn ye, why will you die, O house of Israel ?” *Why will you die, O inhabitants of Salem ?* Are not the mercies of Jehovah as free to pardon you, as for the pardon of others ? Is not the door of hope as wide for your admission, as for the admission of all the millions who have entered before you ? Does not the laver of Calvary roll plenteously in the channel of the gospel, is it not as divinely meritorious for the remission of your crimes, as those of Manasseh the murderer, or a blaspheming, persecuting Saul ? Is not that garment of salvation, which the expiring Surety pronounced *finished*, brought as near in the promise, and tendered as freely to you, as for others who have put it on ? “ There is no condemnation to any who are in Christ Jesus,” and not a sinner who applies to him will be rejected. It is your duty, your interest, your honor to improve the offered redemption, and to improve it without the delay of another moment. “ Behold ! now is the accepted time ; behold ! now is the day of salvation ” *To day* you have heard his voice through the medium of a feeble, most unworthy ambassador ; to-day you have seen in symbol his body which was broken, and his blood which flowed for the remission of sin, *harden not your hearts.*

2. We learn from this doctrine the character of those who may worthily participate the ordinance of the supper. They are such and only such as *love the appearing of our Lord*: Who live as *strangers* and *sojourners* upon earth, and are looking and longing for his approach as the consummation of all their hopes. The provision offered on this table is *the children's bread*, and therefore none but they who are adopted into the divine family; who claim God as their Father, and heaven as their home, have a right to it, or can be profited by it. Ye who have entered the temple this day with the design of commemorating the Saviour's death in the institution of the supper, turn your eyes upon your own hearts, and impartially examine your real character. Are you the "circumcision who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and count all things but loss for the excellency of his knowledge?" Is it your unfeigned desire in the discharge of this duty, and of all other duties to be strong *only* in his strength; to be wise *only* in his wisdom; to be righteous *only* in his righteousness imputed; to be holy *only* in his holiness imparted; to become nothing that Jesus may be all in every part of your salvation? Do you aim daily *to live by the faith of the Son of God*, bringing every offence which might ruffle the peace of your consciences to his atoning blood for pardon; every lust to be subdued by his all-conquering power; every grace to be cherished and invigorated by the influences of his Spirit;

every want to be supplied from his everlasting fulness; every care whether temporal or spiritual to Him as *caring for you*, and every tear to be wiped away by his compassionate hand? Amidst your conflict with corruption, with a *heart desperately wicked* are you looking forward with holy importunity for that hour when you shall be presented before him *without spot, and blameless*; when you shall love with an ardor inconceivably greater, and serve without a wandering thought for ever? Amidst the vanity of worldly enjoyments; the vexation of worldly pursuits; the delusion of worldly prospects do you *joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ* as your unchanging, all-satisfying portion, and are you waiting with *earnest expectation* for the time when you shall see the King in his perfect beauty in the heavenly state; when your eyes shall be feasted in contemplating those worlds of bliss, and glory which shall then open to your view? "Do you *indeed* love him who first loved you?" Do you feel yourselves unspeakably obligated to that dear Redeemer who hath done so much, and suffered so much for your salvation, and would you now express this heart-felt obligation to your precious Lord, your gratitude for his goodness, your respect for his command, by receiving the symbols of his body and blood? Are you ready in simplicity and sincerity of soul to declare, "the love of Christ constraineth us:" We desire *to do this*, to attend to this ordinance *in remembrance* of Him who was not

unmindful of us ; *who thought upon us in our low, helpless, hopeless estate*, and we look forward to a long eternity when, with understandings more enlightened, hearts more expanded, an eloquence more expressive, and elevated, we shall admire and “ shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.” If such be your exercises, and such your desires even in the lowest degree, then with freedom I invite you to this banquet of love. Here is *living bread* for those who *hunger—after righteousness* ; bread to satisfy, and strengthen for enduring the toils, and dangers of the wilderness : Here is *wine that maketh glad the heart* ; wine to cheer the drooping pilgrim until he reaches the Canaan of everlasting rest. *In this mountain is the Lord of hosts making for us a feast of fat things ; a feast of wines on the lees ; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.*

Shall I again exhort all to look frequently for this *appearing* of their Lord, and to aim at constant preparation for it. This anticipation of his approach, and of the privileges then to be expected will be a great mean of promoting our consolation and peace. “ We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Who, as he approaches the harbour after a tedious, tempestuous voyage ; or who that is within view of his own home after a fatiguing, and dangerous journey ; or what heir who is just receiving into possession an estate which had been long in expectation, does not feel sensa-

tions of joy ; and can the christian remain unmoved, unelated in the near prospect of attaining *eternal life* ; that perfection of purity and joy for which he had frequently prayed, and for which he had been eagerly looking, and longing ? There their day knows no night ; their song is liable to no interruption ; their vision is darkened by no veil ; their sun obscured by no cloud ; their strength is subject to no decay ; their love to no languor, and their happiness to no end. And yet, fellow christians, how transporting is the thought that this plenitude of bliss will soon, very soon be ours in actual, eternal possession ? “ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first : Then we which are alive, and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort your own hearts, comfort one another with these words.”

“ Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,” prepare each of you for meeting the Saviour with triumph *at his appearing and kingdom.* AMEN.

## SERMON VII.

EPHESIANS III, 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 principalities, and powers* mentioned in this place, are probably the angels *who kept their first estate*: Various titles are ascribed to this celestial hierarchy which may be considered as expressing either the original excellence of their nature, or pointing out those exalted stations in which they are called to act. It is the opinion of some that these dignified titles are given to the angels because of their important agency in the government of this world. Some have even conjectured that particular countries, or nations are committed more immediately to the superintendance of particular angels under God the Supreme Ruler of all. Michael is therefore called *the Prince of Israel*, and Luke the evangelist mentions that *a vision appeared to Paul in the night a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, come over to Macedonia, and help us*. By this man some learned Commentators understand the angel who superintended the region of Macedonia, and now appeared in the form of a man. Whether this conjecture be strictly correct I shall not offer to determine, yet it is highly probable that individuals, and cities, and nations are often indebted to angels under

God for their protection in danger. Daniel pronounces Michael *one of the chief Princes*, and also *the Great Prince that standeth for the children of Israel*, the church of the Living God, and John, in the revelation which was given him, *beheld seven angels standing before God, and to them were given seven trumpets*, foretelling events which would occur in different periods of time until the end of the world. These holy spirits are frequently employed for the protection of the heirs of promise in the hour of danger, and consolation to them in circumstances of distress. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them:" "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation?" On the other hand remaining perfectly loyal to their adorable sovereign, and inspired with a burning zeal for his glory they stand always ready to cut off the enemies of his government. An angel of the Lord *smote king Herod because he gave not God the glory*: An angel troubled the host of the Egyptians in their pursuit of the Israelites, and by an angel of the Lord the whole Assyrian army was destroyed in one night. These exalted spirits are also represented as coming with the great Judge at the consummation of all things; as sounding the alarm of his approach; as collecting *his elect from the four winds of Heaven*, and assisting in the general judgment.

But although these titles of authority may

be assigned to the heavenly host because of their agency in the government of the church, and the world, they are more probably designed to express that superiority of station which a part of them sustains over the rest. No doubt can be entertained, but a variety of rank was originally established, and still exists among this higher order of intelligences. Among the spirits who fell there is mentioned a *Prince of devils, the Prince of darkness, and the Prince of the power of the air*. These and other passages plainly intimate that among the inhabitants of heaven who rebelled, one stood in rank superior to the rest, and probably was instrumental in seducing them to revolt: And among those of the celestial hierarchy who remained faithful to their Sovereign, and opposed the rebellion of their compeers we read of *Michael the arch-angel, and of Gabriel who stands before God*. This latter Seraph appears to occupy a station near to the throne of the Eternal Prince and probably through him orders are issued forth to be executed by others of inferior rank. We are also informed by John in his revelation, that *there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels*. It is therefore evident that particular angels among those who sinned, and among those who sinned not, were invested with authority over the rest. Whether this distinction of rank proceeded from any difference of intellectual endowments among these hosts of heaven, or whether it depended on the mere



sovereignty of Jehovah is a question on which the scriptures are silent. The Lord God, as Creator and Disposer of all beings both rational and irrational, does according to HIS WILL : He as an adorable Sovereign promotes whom he pleases, either among angels or men : He possessed an unquestionable right to perform his will in their creation at first, and he possesses the same right to consult his pleasure in their future disposition and government.

These principalities and powers are *in heavenly places*. A pure, perfect spirit enjoys heaven wherever he is, because he enjoys the favor of Jehovah, *which is life*. Gabriel is in the presence of God, is favored with the most satisfactory, elevating assurances of his good will, whether he appears to Zechariah in the temple foretelling the birth of a son, or on the plains of Bethlehem announcing to the shepherds the nativity of our Lord, or whether he is employed to strengthen the Saviour in his agony, or is sent forth to minister to some heir of salvation. Yet there is a place in the universe consecrated as the more immediate residence of the blessed. This is called in scripture the *throne of God ; the city of the Living God ; the palace of the King ; the highest heavens ; the third heavens, and the heaven of heavens*. This which is designed to be the temple of the King Eternal, and for the accommodation of his loyal subjects is no doubt garnished in a manner the most sumptuous and splendid. There Jehovah sits enthroned in light ineffable, diffusing a perpetual

stream of joy and glory among all the favored inhabitants ; there Jesus resides in the full display of his mediatorial honors, the object of adoration, and praise to all the extatic hosts ; there dwell that *innumerable company of angels* who kept their first estate, unless when sent abroad on messages of love to the righteous, or of indignation to the unrighteous ; there dwell also *the spirits of just men made perfect*, with the body of Enoch, of Elijah, of Moses who probably ascended from Tabor the mount of transfiguration, and of that cloud of witnesses who arose to attest the death, and resurrection of our Lord.

But it may not be improper to notice that these principalities and powers are not always stationed in the upper court, in this heaven of heavens. The Lord God "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." As pure, unembodied substances, unretarded in their progress by matter, they fly with inconceivable activity from place to place in his vast dominions to execute his commands, and perform his purposes. They are one moment encamping around a particular believer, shielding him from dangers unseen to which he is exposed : At another moment they hover around the bed of an afflicted saint sympathising, supporting, aiding towards the restoration of his body to health, or waiting to conduct his departing spirit to the regions of bliss : Again, they are sent abroad to fight the battles of the Lord against the enemies of his church. They are

this day thronging this sanctuary to witness the order and exercises of the worshippers. They feel a joy ineffable while they behold the lively frames of some, their faith strengthened, their repentance renewed while they look on Jesus whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, their love kindling and rising into a flame; and they weep, if angels can weep, while they notice the indifference, and impenitence of others. No doubt the host of God is this moment hovering around the sacramental table, gazing upon the symbols of the body of *our* Saviour, and *their* Lord; admiring and adoring "this mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh," and bleeding and dying for the redemption of sinners. These *principalities and powers* are thus sent forth, or kept immediately before the throne as the pleasure of their Sovereign may dictate, or the interests of his glory require.

To these exalted intelligences "are made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"

By the *church* here mentioned, we are more properly to understand the New Testament dispensation. The apostle therefore mentions with peculiar emphasis that *now*, that is, under the present economy of mercy. The light is much clearer under it, than under any former dispensation; the mysteries of divine grace are more fully disclosed, and the perfections of God which shine in the plan of our redemption now appear both to angels and men, with a more astonishing and com-



manding glory. Since the actual appearance of the Son of God in the flesh, and the removal of sin by the sacrifice of himself, "the light of the moon is become as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold as the light of seven days." That morning which dawned upon the world shortly after the apostacy of man; which gradually increased its luster during the age of patriarchs and prophets has now nearly attained its meridian splendors. So that to principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, and to all intelligent spectators in every part of the divine dominion the mysteries of the cross are more fully unfolded under the present, than any preceding dispensation.

But the term *church* may with propriety be considered in a sense more extensive, and as comprehending all the most interesting discoveries of the scheme of redemption which from age to age have been made to our world; those various periods at which these celestial spirits were admitted to more elevated views of the divine perfections which shine forth in this plan.

When the apostle speaks of the *manifold wisdom of God* as particularly displayed to these exalted spectators, we must not understand this to the exclusion of his other attributes, because the recovery of man through the cross of his Co-eternal Son is a scheme in which they are all concentrated, and brought most luminously to view. In some parts of the natural world we are led to admire one at-

tribute of the Divine Author, and in others another attribute. We discern a high display of his power in giving instantaneously existence to this astonishing fabric : We admire that wisdom which arranged so nicely its various parts, and rendered each conducive to the perfection of the whole ; we admire that bounty which is never exhausted, but supplies from age to age the necessities of every thing that lives. In some occurrences of divine providence justice appears awful, and in others mercy appears obvious and amiable : but in the restoration of man through the mediation of the Son of God all these perfections shine forth with a luster unparalleled, and each reflects light and glory on the other.— Yet there is no perfection of God which inspired men more frequently celebrate as displayed in this plan than his wisdom. “ We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery :” “ We preach Christ crucified to—them who are called the wisdom of God :” “ O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” This is an attribute which the holy angels as onlookers particularly discern and adore.

In the more full discussion of these words, we are naturally led to enquire what parts of this scheme peculiarly exhibit the glory of Jehovah’s wisdom—and

II. At what periods of the church the glory of this wisdom shone forth to the astonishment of angels, and all the hosts of heaven.

I. This wisdom is evidently and eminently

displayed in the constitution of Messiah's person by whom, as the great agent, our redemption was accomplished. *In the Word made flesh, Immanuel, God with us,* are united two natures essentially and infinitely different. The constitution of the human frame is justly considered as affording a bright display of the Creator's wisdom ; the union of two substances widely different, a material body with an immaterial, immortal Spirit ; the intimacy of this relation so that they act and react upon each other, and necessarily participate in the joys and afflictions of each other. While the inspired David contemplated his own frame ; matter moulded and wrought up into a fabric so exquisite as the body, the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and expressive countenance ; when he contemplated the nicer and nobler structure of the soul, formed for the enjoyment of its God, and capable of endless progress in wisdom and happiness, he exclaims in holy surprise, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* "How passing wonder ;" how surpassing all created conception must the Person of the Son of God be considered ! What opposites there meet, and become intimately and indissolvably united ? He is the Creator, and yet a creature ; a feeble babe, and yet *the mighty God* ; a child of yesterday ; and yet the *Father of eternity* ; in the form of a servant, and the likeness of men, and yet *God over all* ; acquainted with grief, and yet *bles- sed forever* ; nursed by the arms of a mortal, and yet wielding with his own arms the ele-

ments of nature, and *upholding all things* ; nearly related to man being actually a partaker of our nature, and yet *the Father's Equal and Fellow* ; without comeliness, or beauty, or form, and yet *the brightness of Jehovah's glory, and the express image of his Person* ; subject to earthly parents, and yet greater than the Princes of the earth ; *King of kings and Lord of lords*. Such is our Immanuel by whom the church is redeemed ; and no wonder that angels desire to look into the ineffably mysterious constitution of his Person, and while they look behold in it the manifold wisdom of God. And I feel constrained to remark in this place that it is owing to the extreme blindness of the human understanding, and the desperate depravity of the heart that this mystery is so little admired and adored in our world. We discern wisdom in the other parts of the divine workmanship ; we discern it in forming the smallest insect which moves on the earth, and the least atom which floats in the air, and regard with indifference, or contempt, the Person of Immanuel, which in the estimation of every holy, intelligent onlooker is the *chiefest of the ways of God*. "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect ;" on whose understandings the Holy Ghost has shed the rays of spiritual light, "yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought : Which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." But

as Christ crucified was to thousands when he lived in person upon earth *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*, so he is to many at present, notwithstanding the additional evidence which he gave of his Messiahship by his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension on high. Yet however uninteresting to some, it has not failed to excite the wonder and gratitude of others. "Without all controversy great is the mystery of godliness," and in the train of mysteries which are brought to view in the gospel, this is mentioned as the first in importance and glory, "God was manifested in the flesh." "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." This same mystery has excited wonder in heaven nearly six thousand years past, and with praises to the author and subject of it, the arches of heaven will resound throughout eternity to come.

2. To *principalities and powers* this wisdom of God is displayed in securing glory to himself while he announces good will to revolting, ruined man. A prince may freely pardon the rebel, or a judge dismiss the criminal from an indictment which has been proved against him, but the majesty of the law must suffer, and other subjects may be emboldened to transgress. They are led to suspect that the law is inexpedient in itself, or that the sanction annexed to it was unduly severe, or that the Prince was either unable or afraid to inflict the penalty on those who transgressed. But in this the wisdom of Jehovah shines un-



paralleled in that he fully vindicates the glory of the law ; shews that it is *holy* and *just* and *good*, and at the same time freely forgives the offender. The nature of the law appears more expedient, and its sanction more awful than if the transgressor had suffered in his own person the literal execution of the threatening, and yet this transgressor is restored, not merely to the immunities of a subject, but the more exalted privileges of a son and heir. *Grace now reigns through*, in a perfect consistence with *righteousness*. The great God is *just* in the very act of *justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus Christ*. The remission of the rebel, his reconciliation to the favor and confidence of his Prince is as eminently an act of justice as of mercy ; it is perfectly consistent with, and tends to reflect glory on each divine perfection. Here is a display of wisdom which excites the astonishment of angels now, and must command *their* admiration and *ours* forever. The government of God is rendered more glorious, sin exhibited in a light more odious, more enormously evil by the disobedience of man, and yet myriads of revolting men raised to mansions of bliss, and soaring even beyond the angels who *kept their first estate*. O what must be the emotions of *principalities and powers* while they contemplate him whom the Father *set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood* ; magnifying the law by his own vicarious obedience, and making it honorable while he announces the jubilee of release to those who had wan-

tonly transgressed and degraded it. With what extatic hearts and elevated voices must they raise that song which shall never, never end ; *O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out : For of him, and through him, and to him are all things ; to whom be glory and dominion forever.*

3. To *principalities and powers* the wisdom of God appeared illustrious in bringing the greatest good out of sin the greatest evil ; in overruling it to the greater advancement of his own glory, and the more exalted privileges of man who had been tempted to rebel. No doubt the spirits of darkness were filled with malignant triumph at the apostacy of our family ; they probably erected their standard, and raised the shout of victory, concluding that the field was their own ; they beheld this earth which was designed as the theatre of obedience now polluted and degraded by transgression ; they saw the divine image which had been enstamped upon our nature and which constituted the fairest part of this lower world sullied and effaced by sin ; they beheld the law, which was in itself holy and just, trampled under foot, and man who was formed for the service of his Creator now in the act of open hostility ; they probably concluded that this earth which was designed as the residence of holy beings, was now connected as a province with hell, and that the purposes of Jehovah in the creation of this world were

defeated. But divine wisdom interposes and the apostacy of man is overruled to an issue directly the opposite and infinitely glorious. This earth which had been polluted by the sin of man is purged by the obedience of his Co-eternal Son; it is more honored by the personal residence and immaculate obedience of the Divine Redeemer than by the obedience of myriads of finite beings forever; our nature is restored to a dignity much greater than was lost by transgression; redeemed men are reinstated in the favor of their Sovereign, and there secured from the possibility of future apostacy, and those many mansions in heaven which had been emptied by the revolt of angels, are replenished by the millions of ransomed men; and new displays of the wisdom, and sovereignty, and justice, and forbearance of Jehovah are afforded to all rational spectators in all parts of his dominions. *I come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin reigned unto death, grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

From this very imperfect view of the manifold wisdom of God which is made known to angels through the medium of the cross, we proceed,

II. To enquire at what periods of the church the glory of this wisdom most illustriously shone forth.

1. This wisdom was made known to the

astonishment of these principalities and powers at the proclamation of the first promise in Paradise. It has been conjectured by some that even previous to the creation of this earth Jehovah intimated to the angels the future revolt of man, his design to restore a portion of the human family by the substitution of his own Son, and that this respect to our nature offended the angels, and occasioned their rebellion. As our knowledge of the heavenly hosts is derived only from revelation, and as the scriptures do not support this conjecture, we shall pass it over without any remark.— But we may venture to assert that events so interesting as the apostacy of man through the temptation of a fallen spirit, and his restoration through the interposition of the eternal Son would be very early intimated to the angels of light. As the Lord God designed the redemption of man through the sufferings of Jesus Christ to be the brightest display of his own perfections he would probably disclose it without delay for exciting the wonder and joy of these *principalities and powers in heavenly places*. Perhaps it was their knowledge that this earth was afterwards to become the scene of transactions thus sublime which constrained these sons of God to shout for joy when its foundation was laid. We find therefore that after the expulsion of Adam from paradise, which he had forfeited by disobedience, a *cherubim with a flaming sword* was stationed to *keep the way of the tree of life*. This is a circumstance pecu-

liarily instructive, and interesting. This minister of justice had already learned that a *new and living way to the holiest of all* was opened up in the counsels of heaven, and he occupies this post with his sword in his hand to enforce it : He there stands to instruct our parents that reconciliation by the covenant of works was altogether impossible ; that the *tree of life* had lost its efficacy for giving life, and therefore in vain would they partake of its fruits ; that there was no salvation but by faith in that *seed* which had been already revealed, and was afterwards to be borne.

This knowledge in the mysteries of redemption must have gradually increased to the angels during the progress of the patriarchal and mosaic dispensation : this scheme became more fully unfolded to them by the institution of sacrifices ; by the erection of the tabernacle and temple ; by the successive prophecies which were delivered during a period of nearly four thousand years, by the various washings and ceremonies that were in use under the legal economy. By every new revelation that was made, and by every new mode of worship which was introduced these *principalities and powers* obtained more distinct, enlarged views of the divine wisdom which appears in this plan. To shew the deep interest which they feel in the scheme of redemption we find them standing on each end of the mercy-seat as an emblem of their searching into its mysteries : They aided in conducting the church through the wilderness ; they at-

tended in dispensing the law from mount *Si-  
nai*, for it was delivered, says Stephen, *by the  
disposition of angels* ; they appeared to Daniel  
foretelling the incarnation of our Lord, and  
his actually “ finishing transgression, making  
an end of sin, making reconciliation for ini-  
quity, and bringing in everlasting righteous-  
ness.”

But to these *thrones, and dominions, and  
principalities, and powers* this manifold wisdom  
shone forth with still brighter glory,

3. When Messiah actually assumed the  
human nature, and appeared in our world,  
these first born sons of God were seemingly  
all admiration, all ecstasy on this impor-  
tant occasion. Gabriel, who had foretold to  
Zechariah the birth of John his illustrious fore-  
runner, now appears to the shepherds and an-  
nounces the birth of his more illustrious Suc-  
cessor. Having hailed the appearance of the  
*morning star*, he hails with still greater trans-  
ports of joy the approach of the rising Sun.  
“ Behold,” he declares to the shepherds, “ I  
bring you good tidings of great joy, which  
shall be to all people : For unto you is born  
this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which  
is Christ the Lord.” But the principalities  
and powers could not remain in their *heaven-  
ly places* at a period so interesting. They  
drop their crowns ; they start from their man-  
sions ; they hasten down to the plains of Beth-  
lehem to unite in the contemplation of this  
mystery, and swell the anthem of praise. “ For  
suddenly there was with the angel a multitude

of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards man." Although these created spirits had been long acquainted with this mystery of godliness, "God to be manifested in the flesh," yet how must they have kindled with new transports of wonder and joy at the view of this mystery actually accomplished? What amazement unutterable must have seized them when they behold now lying in a manger him who had lately lain in the bosom of the Father, and had been *daily his delight*; wrapped in *swaddling clothes* him who had formerly been clothed with *light as with a garment*, and had irradiated all heaven with his glory; not born of an earthly princess, but descended from an obscure, despised virgin; not dazzling the spectators with the rays of his divinity, but appearing *without comeliness or form*. Although their eloquence was that of heaven, yet they want language to express their emotions, and therefore sing in simple strains, *glory to God in the highest*; of all the displays of his perfections this is the most commanding; here is wisdom; here is sovereignty; here is condescension; here is love without a parallel, without even a comparison in all the transactions of God.

Throughout the whole course of our Redeemer's ministry upon earth, these angels of God attended as anxious spectators, and from all the doctrines of his mouth, from all the miracles of his hand, from his patience amidst

complicated sufferings, from his forbearance towards those who insulted him, from his ardent zeal in performing the will of his Father they were constantly acquiring new discoveries of the nature and glory of this plan. But the last scene of Messiah's suffering was the most distressing, the most insupportable to him, and must therefore have excited the most profound astonishment of surrounding angels. When the Son of God, as our representative and sponsor, stood trembling in the garden; when through the exquisiteness of inward agony the blood was pressed thro' all the pores of his body; when the plaintive exclamation was extorted from his mouth, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and recoiling nature began to expostulate, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," how must these heavenly choirs have been lost in amazement, and laying aside their harps silently admired and adored? What high proofs did they then receive not only of the *manifest wisdom*, but also of the awful, inexorable justice of Jehovah? Angels therefore who sung praises at his birth; who ministered to him in the wilderness appeared *strengthening* him in the garden: They afterwards appeared at his sepulchre to aid and attest his resurrection from the dead; they arose with him when he ascended on high, and opened wide the gates of glory for his admission; with joy ineffable they conducted him to the right hand of the Father, and through him, as *the Lamb in the*



*midst of the throne*, they are now learning and will be forever learning the manifold wisdom and searchless sovereignty of God.

1. May not this subject, as thus illustrated, inspire us with the most elevated thoughts of the scheme of redemption, and excite us to the profound contemplation of its mysteries? We usually form our estimate of any work from its nature, the character of the persons concerned in its execution, and the consequences probably resulting from it. In all these respects the recovery of man, through the intervention of the eternal Son as Mediator, is infinitely interesting and worthy of our most ardent research and profound veneration. The stage on which it is transacted is this world: The Personages immediately engaged in it are the co-equal, co-eternal Three, Father, Son and Spirit, all concerting, concurring and co-operating; drawing the outlines from eternity past, gradually filling them up by all their operations through every successive period of time, and finishing the draught throughout the ages of eternity to come. For to this work every prophecy and promise, in whatever age it was delivered, immediately pointed, and to this every event in divine providence either directly, or indirectly is rendered subservient. The onlookers are all the hosts of heaven, *angels*, and *thrones*, and *dominions*, and *principalities*, and *powers*. To them is made known by the church, where this scheme is disclosed, the manifold wisdom of God. Surely that work must be stupendous which these superior

orders of being value so highly; into which they enquire so eagerly, and in the success of which they feel so deeply interested. The result of this plan with respect to Jehovah is the highest conceivable manifestation of his glory; the majesty of his law vindicated; the rigor of his justice displayed; the honors of his government supported; the treasures of his mercy unlocked, and poured forth in abundance upon our world; sin appearing more odious, righteousness more amiable, and thus the order of the universe more established. The issue with respect to man is the redemption of millions from the lowest depths of guilt, and reproach, and wretchedness to the utmost elevation of holiness, and honor, and bliss. "The law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one man, Jesus Christ." Turn aside then, O brethren, and behold this *great sight, this wisdom of God in a mystery*, into which the angels desire to look; in the contemplation of which they feel honored, and delighted, and profited. And while you *behold in this glass the glory of the Lord*, may you be *changed into his image*; enflamed with his love, and filled with his consolations.

2. We are encouraged from this doctrine to persevere in our attachment to the gospel of the Son of God; to consider the open pro-

fession of his name, and support of his cause as equally our duty and glory. Many appear to imagine that religion is beneath their attention; that the study of its mysteries, or regard for its institutions is fitted rather for those who have nothing else to engage their attention, or that it is suited for those in the lower walks of life, whose birth is more mean, whose understandings are naturally contracted, and whose education is more common.— Under this impression those particularly in the higher stations of life often look upon our holy religion with indifference, or contempt. Such conduct is as impious, as the principle from which it proceeds is erroneous and dangerous. The angels, certainly, are not mean in their origin or situation. They were formed before us in order of time, and are stationed above us by the appointment of their Creator. They are incomparably our superiors in point of age, of intellectual capacities, and their advantages for improving those capacities. They do not *excel us in strength* more than in wisdom, in a profound, comprehensive knowledge of the divine perfections as exhibited both in creation, and redemption, yet they are still eager to *learn*, and even to *learn by the church*, by that gospel of reconciliation which is there unfolded. To these *principalities and powers in heavenly places are made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God*. In their origin, in their rank, in strength, in age, in experience, in attainments both of wisdom and purity, they stand far a-

bove prophets, or apostles, or ordinary ministers of the cross, yet they deem it no degradation to attend as scholars upon these, and from them; *as stewards of the mysteries, and manifold grace of God*, to receive new instructions. Since angels are our companions in the study, and admiration of the gospel and its doctrines, we need not feel mortified although men may stand aloof, and be ashamed to confess it.— Compared with *principalities and powers in heavenly places* the wisest among men are mere fools, and the most mighty are contemptible, and mean. Nay, brethren, to be ashamed of our Lord Jesus Christ, of his gospel, of his people, of his ordinances is really to be ashamed of our glory, because his assumption of our nature into an intimate union with his divine, his suffering in our room, and for our advantage was the highest conceivable honor which could be conferred upon us — Through this scheme men who were a *little lower than angels* by birth, and degraded far below them by transgression, are exalted much above them in honor and happiness. “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance,” worthy not only of our belief, but are boasting, and rejoicing “that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” Nay, brethren, to be ashamed of the Saviour, and his cross, is to be ashamed of that in which patriarchs, and prophets, and holy men have gloried since the foundation of the world. “They enquired, and searched diligently— what the spirit of Christ which was in them

did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

3. We may infer from this doctrine that indolence, or indifference in man is altogether inexcuseable, when "principalities and powers" are so eager, and unwearied in exploring the mysteries of redeeming grace. They are not so immediately concerned in this scheme as we are. They have no guilt to be pardoned, for they kept their first estate, and performed with sinless perfection their Creator's will: They have no pollutions to be washed away, for they appear *without spot before the throne of God*. They have immediate access to his presence, and enjoy the uninterrupted expressions of his love, and therefore do not require a Mediator to introduce them. Besides, "these thrones, and dominions, and principalities" do not behold the *Word* manifested in their nature, or expiating with his blood the crimes of their revolting tribes.— "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," and is reserving them in everlasting chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day." Yet *these sons of God* cordially acquiesce in his procedure; they revere his justice in executing vengeance on fallen angels; they adore his sovereignty in shewing mercy to fallen man; they admire his wisdom in effecting our recovery in a consistence with the glory of all his perfections. They rejoice when a sinner repenteth, and they all go forth either alone or in bands to

minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation. Were pure, unembodied spirits visible to the eye of flesh, we might see these hosts of God now thronging our assembly, and devoutly witnessing the solemnities of our worship.

“Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” how pleasing is the reflection that we are not alone in doing homage to the Son of God the Saviour of the world; in expressing our admiration at his love, and our obedience to his command? “All the angels of God worship him,” and exult when we unite in offering him the same reasonable service.— While we are approaching the sacred festival, that memorial of his dying love, a multitude of this seraphic host attend us on the right hand and on the left: While we are receiving with a firm faith, and ardent love, the bread and the wine, and in them a crucified Redeemer as our portion and glory, they exult that he did not come in vain, nor bleed, nor die in vain; they congratulate him, and rejoice with each other that the Saviour sees in our redemption “the travail of his soul, and is satisfied:” While over the symbols of his body and blood we renew the dedication of our all to be for him, and subservient to the advancement of his glory both here, and hereafter they fall before the throne, and exclaim, *thou art worthy to receive this ascription of honor, and thanksgiving, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed them to God by thy blood.* Fellow christians, is not the thought transporting that

these very angels "who excel in strength," who are exalted in station, who are immaculate in purity, who do the divine commandments, will be our companions forever in contemplating, and loving, and serving the glorified Jesus? No doubt they anxiously wait for the period when our minority shall be past, and we shall attain to "the stature of perfect men:" when this contraction of mind shall be done away, and our souls shall expand to comprehend more fully the unsearchable riches of his grace; when our affections which are often chilled, and frozen, in this distant, dreary region, shall be melted under the full beams of the sun of righteousness; when we shall see as they see; love as they love; serve as they serve; enjoy as they enjoy, and tune our harps to the same elevated notes with them. "And I beheld," says John, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders." The communion of saints, and angels is intimate now, but it will be inconceivably more intimate, and endearing hereafter, when we who are as yet babes in understanding; who think, and speak, and act as children, shall become "equal to the angels;" when we shall enter, to go no more out, the same palace of the King Eternal, and surround the same throne.— "And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: Saying with a loud voice—blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him

that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Bear with me while I admonish you again, that since angels are so eager in exploring the wonders of redeeming love, so ardent in their expressions of gratitude, we ought not to remain uninterested; we in whose nature the Saviour appeared, whose *sorrows he carried*, and for whose redemption he was slain. Aspire with a holy diligence at knowing him more perfectly, and loving him more ardently. "He is fairer than the children of men; yea, he is altogether lovely." There is a preciousness in his person, in his offices, in his promises, in his character, in his covenant, which after the most diligent, successful research of time and eternity cannot either be uttered or conceived. Let every thing therefore which reveals or recommends the lovely, loving Saviour, his word, his ordinances, his sacraments, his sabbaths, his ministers, his children as bearing his image, be precious in your esteem. Rejoice particularly in the return of our communion sabbath, and remember, brethren and sisters, that it is no ordinary day of rest; therefore we ought not to feel satisfied with the ordinary exercises of admiration, or gratitude, or joy. We not merely commemorate the resurrection of our dear Redeemer, but that *decease* which preceded his resurrection, and procured our own: That death in which our victorious Lord conferred honor on the law of his Father by bearing its penalty, invaded in the *greatness of his*



*strength*. the empire of hell, seized those *principalities and powers* which had combined against his glory, and our happiness, *spoiled* them of their *lawful captives*, chained them to the wheels of his chariot, and although his apparel was red with his own blood which flowed in the arduous conflict, he came forth *mighty to save*. These are the great events exhibited for our contemplation in the ordinance of the supper, of which we ought to entertain a mournful, grateful recollection. While we reflect with joy on Messiah's triumph over sin, and satan, and death, and hell, our joy ought to be mingled with sorrow, and our glorying with humiliation when we realize the amazing expence at which the victory was obtained. While we rejoice that he conquered, let us remember that in conquering he *died*; while "he put away sin" it was by the *sacrifice of HIMSELF*, by bearing those sins in his own body upon the tree; while "he redeemed us from the curse of the law," it was by being made "a curse for us;" while "he spoiled principalities, and powers," our confederated, implacable enemies, it was upon a *cross* that the battle was fought, and the victory won: These are truths not forgotten in heaven, and they ought not to be forgotten or contemplated with indifference upon earth. But I conclude that you may enjoy an opportunity of *seeing*, and *handling*, and *tasting* in the institution of the supper that crucified Saviour who has been set before you in the message of reconciliation. May he

who was "seen of angels;" whom they saw in Bethlehem, in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross, in the tomb, as he ascended, as he sits enthroned in the heaven of heavens, be seen and enjoyed by you "in the breaking of bread." While you are receiving the symbols may the heart of every communicant glow with his love, and may each of you be saying in holy exultation, "my Lord, and my God," "Whom having not seen I love: in whom although I see him not yet believing I rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

"Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength; that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word: Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his that do his pleasure: Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominions: Bless the Lord, O my soul.—AMEN.

*THE GOSPEL DESIGNED FOR ALL  
NATIONS:*

A

SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE  
NORTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

AT THEIR FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

IN TROY, FEBRUARY 8;

AND BY PARTICULAR REQUEST, IN ALBANY,  
MARCH 6, 1798, AT A SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE SOCIETY.

~~~~~  
THE SECOND EDITION.  
~~~~~

*And that repentance and remission of sins should be  
preached in his name among all nations.*

LUKE XXIV, 47.



## SERMON VIII.

MARK XVI. 15.

*And he said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.*

THE general diffusion of the gospel among the nations is an event frequently foretold, and absolutely promised in the oracles of God. With all that majesty which so eminently characterizes the poetry of the east, with a fervor of stile expressive of the extacy of their souls, and with a confidence peculiar to inspiration, did the Jewish prophets foretell the wider extension, and increasing glories of Messiah's reign. Not confining themselves to a particular age, or to the posterity of Abraham they embraced in their rapturous view, all periods of time, and all the kindreds of the nations. "It is a light thing," says the evangelic Isaiah, personating the everlasting Father in his address to the Son as our Surety, "it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." With equal transports of gratitude, and admiration, and joy, did he anticipate the period when Jehovah should be one, and his name one throughout the world; when the light of the knowledge of his glory long imprisoned, by the partition wall, within the limits of Palestine, should burst beyond its

narrow boundaries, kindle farther and wider, and illumine with its radiance the remotest corners of the earth.

But, beloved in the Lord, more glorious things are reserved for us. Those events which to Enoch, to Abraham, to Isaiah, were only in prospect, we contemplate as fully realized and accomplished. The day of the Son of Man they beheld *afar off*. Elevated on the mount of inspiration, their eyes caught a few solitary rays refracted over the horizon, and feebly gilding the general gloom. But lo! upon us the Sun of righteousness has actually arisen. On yonder skies we behold him irresistably ascending, amidst clouds of opposition, until he blazes in all the grandeur of meridian glory. Jesus, the great angel of the covenant; Jesus, the glorious antitype of the Levitical economy; Jesus, "the desire of all nations," foreseen by the eye, and foretold by the lip of ancient prophecy, has descended from heaven and tabernacled in our world. In his birth, in his life, his death, his resurrection and ascension, he amply confirmed the truth of his mission, and evinced himself to be the Messiah promised to the fathers. As a proof that he was the *Mighty God* announced by Isaiah, he produced miracles the most astonishing, causing "the blind to see," "the deaf to hear," "the lame to walk," "the dead to arise:" as a proof that the gates of paradise were re-opened for us, and the holiest of all made accessible by him, as "the way, the truth, and the life;" "the veil of

the temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom :” as a proof that he was the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, the wall of partition, separating between the tribes of Abraham and of Adam, is cloven to the ground, the ensign of the cross waves aloft to the nations, and the sovereign command is issued forth, “go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

The great object of this society is to combine our efforts for promoting the more general diffusion of the gospel, and however unworthy a member I cheerfully seize this opportunity for stirring up your souls, and my own, ardently to persevere in the important design. To all who have embarked in the missionary cause, and are duly impressed with the magnitude of the enterprise, the following queries must appear highly momentous :—  
 What are the peculiar principles of that gospel which we are commanded to preach ?  
 What is the extent of our commission ? What is our obligation to prosecute the undertaking ?  
 Three queries which are obviously suggested in the text, and pertinent to the present occasion.

I. What are the peculiar principles of that gospel which we are commanded to preach ?  
 It is unnecessary to enlarge, before this intelligent audience, on the different significations of the term *gospel*, as employed in scripture. Sometimes it is understood in a strict, limited sense, and simply imports an assemblage of absolute, unconditional promises ; it is mere-

ly a declaration of Jehovah's love to our perishing world ; and literally signifies "*good tidings of great joy.*" Sometimes it must be understood in a sense more general, and comprehends the whole system of revelation.— The latter is obviously its meaning in the passage submitted to consideration. To preach the gospel, therefore, is to unfold the various doctrines of revelation, according to their separate importance, and their intimate connection with each other. In discharging this duty with fidelity, it is required,

1. That we proclaim the apostacy of all mankind, and the ruin which necessarily succeeds, in consequence of their apostacy. The universal corruption of human nature is at once an essential and an obvious principle of our holy religion. In the light of revelation, we behold the human family as "all gone aside ;" as "altogether become filthy ;" as "alienated from the life of God ;" and "dead in trespasses and sins." These, and similar expressions, do not import the suspension of natural life, but they express that state of guilt and condemnation in which we are born : they also teach us that the energies of spiritual life are totally destroyed ; that communion with God, the fountain of rational felicity, is wholly interrupted : that we are disqualified for, and invincibly opposed unto all that is morally, or spiritually good. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This corruption of our nature was



sensibly felt, and often deplored; by the more contemplative among the heathen. The passions of pride, envy and revenge, which broke forth in acts of injustice, oppression and violence; not to mention war, which frequently desolated nations, and drenched the earth with the blood of its inhabitants, were to them awful proofs that mankind had fallen from their primitive purity. But although the fact, that our race had degenerated, was undeniable, yet the cause, by unenlightened reason, neither was nor could be discovered.\* This interesting information, it was reserved for the gospel to afford. With the lamp of revelation in our hand we are conducted up those deadly streams to the apostacy of our first parents, as the source of our corruption and woe. "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The doctrine of our federal representation in the first Adam, and of our condemnation through his fall, however mortifying to the pride or offensive to the wisdom of this world, constitutes an important part of the counsel of God. It has uniformly been considered as an essential doctrine of the gospel, and as such has been publicly avowed, and faithfully defended by all, † in every age whose profession.

\* See Halyburton's *Insufficiency of Nat. Rel.* chap. 9.

† For a short, yet satisfactory, vindication of the divine procedure; in the appointment of Adam our federal head, and imputing his transgression to our account, I refer the

has reflected honor on the christian name, or whose labors have promoted the advantage of the christian cause. Whoever thou art, child of Adam, whatever be thy external condition, however elevated in rank, or affluent in fortune, thou art by nature a child of wrath, an heir of hell. "There is none righteous, nor not one. What thing soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

But are we called to mourn as those who have no hope? Are we doomed to the melancholy exercise of contemplating the ruin of mankind, without any prospect of a recovery? No. Glory to God; although we have destroyed ourselves, in Jehovah is our help. In his wisdom he contrived, in his power he executed, and in his ~~grace~~ grace revealed a method for our reconciliation, a method by which he can be just, and the justifier of the ungodly.

This is another doctrine of divine revelation

reader to "Meditations on the Lord's Prayer; by Lord Chief Justice Hale:" A defence so candid, and avowed by a person of his acknowledged integrity and literary eminence, carries with it double weight, and demands at least serious reflection, from those who wantonly reject, as irrational, the venerable doctrines of Christianity. He was no priest, who ought, as they suppose, to "tremble when their citadel is assailed;" but a lay-man; and consequently no farther interested in the vindication of this doctrine, than he felt concerned for the support of truth, and the welfare of mankind. He was no implicit believer, who tamely resigns the exercise of judgment, and receives his principles from parental or priestly authority; but a philosopher, a friend to free enquiry, an eminent statesman, and a civilian little inferior to any that ever adorned the bench of his country.

which it is our duty and glory to proclaim. The scriptures represent all the Adorable Persons of the Godhead as equally concerned, and sustaining their respective capacities, in the economy of our redemption. Moved by pure, unmerited mercy, the Father from eternity made a sovereign and absolute choice of a portion of our family, whom he predestinated to glory? These he gave as an inheritance to his eternal Son, becoming their surety and representative in the covenant of grace. There appears to have been a transaction awfully solemn, between Jehovah the Father and his Son at the concertion of this wondrous plan, in a formal surrender of the elect by the former, and their cordial reception by the latter. "I know my sheep," says the Divine Redeemer, "and am known of mine:" "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all." Do any ask what was the cause of this choice? I reply, the sovereignty of Jehovah was exclusively the cause. Sovereignty was the cause why men were chosen in preference to angels. Sovereignty was the cause why one man was chosen in preference to another. All the grace manifested to the people of God in time, as their pardon, their conversion, their adoption into the divine family, their perseverance in holiness, and final introduction to glory, is a consequence of their being chosen in eternity. These blessings are so many rivulets of salvation, flowing from electing love, as their benign, everlasting source.— Art thou, believer, highly favored above the

rest of the world? From a state of condemnation and wrath, hast thou obtained peace and reconcillation? Once a stranger and foreigner, art thou now constituted a child of God, an heir of glory, and sweetly emboldened by the spirit of adoption to cry, *Abba Father*? Instead of that consciousness of guilt, those forebodings of destruction, which, like arrows of the Almighty, shot through and drank up thy very spirit, art thou occasionally refreshed with the smiles of his countenance, with blessed foretastes of those joys unutterable and full of glory, which are at his right hand? Thus thou art distinguished, being *chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world*. Not thine own excellence, but thy Father's good pleasure, was the moving cause. "He hath saved, and called thee with an holy calling, not according to thy works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given in Christ Jesus, before the world began."

I have neither time nor inclination, at present, to notice the various objections which have been occasionally urged against this scriptural doctrine. The two following, however, so frequently, and confidently proposed, we cannot pass altogether unnoticed.

The doctrine of election has been represented as militating against the freedom of human agency; as hampering the gospel-call, and rendering the sinner's acquiescence therewith, unwarrantable and presumptuous. This objection, however, does not really exist in the doctrine, but is created by the ignorant or

intentional misrepresentation of its opposers. Salvation is not offered to any as *predestinated*, nor refused to any as *passed by*. Were these the terms upon which the gospel offer was made, there might be some foundation for the cavil. The sinner in the language of despair might reply, "I possess no evidences of being chosen from eternity, and therefore am unwarranted to accept of the remedy proposed." On the contrary, Jesus, with his unsearchable riches, is tendered to each hearer of the Gospel individually; he is offered to all indiscriminately: to all, without any exceptions arising from age, rank, condition or moral character. The invitation of the Gospel is as absolute, as unhampered, as if the decree of election did not exist. Since therefore salvation is offered to all without exception, the refusal of any to acquiesce cannot arise from the consideration that he is not elected, for this is unknown to him; but must spring from the enmity of his heart against the Gospel. His incapacity for believing proceeds not from his being passed by; but from that loss of moral principle and power which he sustained by the fall.

Another objection not less triumphantly urged is, that the belief of absolute predestination leads to the rejection, or at least neglect, of every ordinance and thus emboldens to continue in sin. "The purpose of God," it is argued, "is unalterable; his will is irresistible; such as are elected must necessarily be saved independently of means,

while the damnation of the rest is unavoidable." These principles, "that the purpose of God is unalterable, his will irresistible; that the elect, and they only, will be saved," we readily acknowledge; but the inference, "that therefore the means of grace are superseded," we deny, as both unscriptural and dangerous. It cannot consistently be maintained that this doctrine discountenances the use of means, because the decree of election is not presented unto us as the rule of our duty, but the authority of God, speaking in his word. *There* he commands us "to give diligence to make our calling and election sure;" to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." But let us appeal to facts, and ascertain whether the cautious preaching of this truth be attended with this effect. Where are the sanctuaries of public worship generally most crowded? Where do the hearers hang in trembling attention upon the lips of the speaker? Where are their hearts apparently solemnized? Where is every inferior thought seemingly absorbed in concern about the weightier interests of eternity? In those places, I am bold to affirm, where this and other peculiar doctrines of the gospel, are faithfully and judiciously taught. "I am sorry," says an eminently faithful, and successful servant of the cross, "that this doctrine of election is so rarely taught; and I am sure that it is not only the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, but that the work of the Gospel, in conversion of sinners and in the

edification of saints, did prosper more when such doctrine was more commonly taught than now.\*

It is absurd to assert, "that if elected we shall be saved, therefore means are superseded," because we are appointed to holiness as an indispensable prerequisite to glory? Duty and privilege, the means and the end, are connected intimately in the counsel of God. We are indeed *chosen* absolutely *to salvation*; but no less absolutely *to sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth*.

In conformity to that eternal transaction, by which the Son of God was ordained the Mediator of the covenant, he in the fulness of time, assuming the manhood into a personal union with his divinity, appeared in our world, and by obeying the precept and undergoing the penalty of the law, "brought in everlasting righteousness." This, my brethren, is the substance and glory of the gospel: that Jehovah the Son, Co-equal and Co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the Divine Essence, assumed the character of Jesus; that he was invested with our nature; that he was substituted in our federal room; that he sustained by imputation our iniquities, and by the effusion of his blood made an actual and ample expiation for sin; these are the principles which render the Gospel a scheme worthy of God, wondrous to angels, and pacifying to the awakened conscience.

\* Traill's Sermons, Vol. 2, page 32.

To reveal Jesus in his person, his offices, his relations, and the salvation which he bestows is the chief design of Christianity. Do we search the scriptures? "They testify of Christ." Do we consult the prophets? "To him they all bear witness" "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Do we meditate on the promises? They are *all yea and amen* in our Lord Jesus Christ. Do we contemplate the Levitical Law in its complicated, mysterious structure, its rites and ceremonies, and sacrifices? "The Law is a school-master, leading us to Christ."

In relation to the Son of God there are two principles peculiarly prominent in the living oracles, and which ought to be avowed *first of all* in every discourse, whether at home, or among the heathen.

1. His necessary, uncreated, underived divinity. The God-head of Messiah may be pronounced the corner-stone upon which the fabric of redemption is founded. Without this the gospel ceases to afford consolation to ourselves, and by the savages to whom we are attempting to proclaim it cannot be received as a *joyful sound*. The sentiment may be unpopular; it may be branded as illiberal, yet, supported by the word of God, I feel emboldened to utter it, that the prince of darkness is as worthy of our communion, and our countenance, as the man who persists deliberately, wilfully, and avowedly, to deny the deity of our Lord. Thou art the *Son of God*—thou art the *Holy one of God*, are the confessions of



Beelzebub to the glory of Jesus. True it is, devils are his obstinate enemies. Implacably they resist the progress of his kingdom : yet, in *our* opposition to him, there is a colouring of malignity with which these apostate spirits cannot possibly be charged. They never opposed him as *their* Saviour ; as clothed with *their* nature, and appearing exclusively for the purpose of *their* redemption. The finite mind cannot expand to conceive the complicated blasphemies, which are necessarily involved in the denial of this doctrine. It not only charges the Father with inconsistency, who, upon bringing his first begotten into the world, says, *let all the angels of God worship him* : It not only charges the Son with presumption, *who thought it no robbery to be equal with God* ; it not only gives the Holy Ghost the lie, who has afforded the most pointed testimonies to the Saviour's godhead ; it not only charges the angels with idolatry, who ascribe with a loud voice, *salvation to him who sitteth upon the throne* ; but it infuses the wormwood of perdition into the sweetest cup of christian consolation. Expunge from the sacred page that single truth, that Jesus, our surety, is Jehovah the Eternal, and you rob christianity of the brightest jewel that adorns her crown : you rob the christian of his comfort in life, of his triumph in death, and of his confidence at the tribunal ; our preaching becomes vain, thy faith, O believer, also is vain, yea and we are found false witnesses of God. The deity and atonement of our Lord stand and fall to-

gether. Could any, but he who is infinite in his nature, communicate infinite merit to his undertaking? Could a being, who is not almighty in power, sustain the shock of almighty wrath, and by one offering of himself, expiate the guilt, not only of millions of persons, but also of millions of transgressions in the same persons, which are all infinite in malignity? Then might this hand grasp the ocean, or this arm wield the elements of nature.—

“The temporary sufferings of him who was Eternal, could alone be a full compensation for the eternal sufferings of those who are temporary.” Rejoice, O christian, in the divinity of thy Redeemer! This is the name by which he is called, *the Lord our righteousness*. He is distinguished with every name, and perfection, and honor, and operation of God.— He, who suffered as our Substitute, is the Father's *Equal*, and *Fellow*, the *brightness of his glory*, and the *express image of his person*. “By him all things were created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him.”

With the essential Deity of the Son of God we ought to connect,

2. His substitution in our covenant room as a leading doctrine of our religion. He uniformly acted in a public capacity, as the federal Head of an elected world. All that he did, or endured, bore an immediate relation to his people. Each instance of suffering that he

underwent, from the blood of his circumcision to the blood of his cross, is imputed to their account, and secures their redemption from wrath. Each act of obedience, which he performed, from his assumption of our nature till, at death, he exclaimed *it is finished*, is charged to them, and constitutes their title to glory. To assert that the Redeemer stood in any other capacity; that he suffered merely as a pattern of patience, as an example of heroism, or a martyr to the truth, is literally to make his cross of none effect. It is to degrade the oracles of God to a level with the alcoran of Mahommed, or the shasters of the Bramin. With equal propriety we might be directed to believe in Paul, or Peter, or Apollos, for salvation, as in the Son of God; for they, during their lives, were noble advocates for the truth, and at last sealed with the blood of martyrdom the doctrines they had taught. But the reality of his substitution in our covenant room, of his vicarious sufferings, and of our acceptance through a vicarious righteousness, are taught as clearly in the scriptures as language can express them. "He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification." He "bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness. There was an actual interchange of condition between Messiah, and his ransomed. Their transgressions were really accounted to him, and constituted the procuring cause of his condemnation and sufferings. "The Lord hath

laid on him the iniquity of us all :” “ He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows :” On the other hand, his righteousness is imputed unto them, and procures their justification and peace : “ There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus :” “ whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.”

For the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Godhead, is reserved the application of the purchased redemption. His office in the economy of grace is not less important, nor less clearly pointed out, than those of the Father and of the Son. By his almighty energies he raises from the death of sin, and imparts to the soul principles of life immortal and divine. “ It is the Spirit that quickeneth.” He is exclusively the efficient in the regeneration, and sanctification of the soul. The children of the kingdom are therefore represented as being *born of God, born of the Spirit ; begotten again to a lively hope, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* It would be equally unnecessary and unseasonable to notice the varied objections, which the pretended friends and avowed enemies of the cross have alternately adduced against this principle of the gospel. Sufficient it is for all modest enquirers after truth, that thus hath Jehovah revealed, and had he not designed that this doctrine should be both believed and professed, he would not have taught it with such precision by the lips of his apostles and

prophets. All the characters by which man is represented in his natural condition, and the official titles by which the divine Spirit is designated, concur to render this truth unquestionable. Why is the former pronounced to be "without strength," to be "dead in trespasses and in sins," unless to shew that as readily might the breathless corpse imbibe the energies of life, and start from the tomb, vigorous and healthful, as the sinner, independently of divine aid, put forth any spiritual exercise or act? Why is the change effected by the first communication of gracious principles, called a "new birth," a "new man," a "regeneration," unless to manifest that as we are not the cause of our natural, we neither are, nor can be, the cause of our spiritual existence? Why is the Spirit Jehovah entitled the *spirit of faith, of love, of patience, of repentance*, unless to prove that by his agency upon the heart these graces are produced and perfected? "By grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God." With the rod of revelation the minister of the gospel may smite the rock of the human heart, but the power of God only can make the waters of repentance to flow forth. Like the prophet, we may descend into the valley of vision; with deep concern we may contemplate the *dry bones* scattered around; travailing as in birth for their re-animation, we may cry, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord;" but the energising breath of God must breathe upon them before the *sha-*

*king* will take place : “ before bone will come to his bone, and sinew to his sinew, in the new creation.”

We might enumerate a variety of other truths which constitute an essential part of the Gospel ; but we proceed to the

II. Second enquiry, Which is the extent of our commission ?

This is written in terms the most comprehensive, the most unlimited, and is addressed to *every creature*.

First. It respects sinners indiscriminately who hear the word of reconciliation ; persons of every character and condition. No exception is made in the everlasting Gospel ; no terms are introduced to hamper the general call or discourage the sinner from complying ; no qualifications are specified, as repentance for former sins, or reformation of conduct, as prerequisite to our acceptance of the great salvation. Jesus with the boundless plenitude of his covenant, with his blood to atone, his righteousness to justify, his grace to sanctify and qualify for glory, is proposed unconditionally. In my master's name, and by his divine appointment, I offer to each individual within these walls a free salvation. Are you diseased ? Jesus, whom I proclaim, is an infinite *physician*. Are you defiled ? He is made of God *sanctification*. Are you spiritually naked, stript of that attire of innocence which once adorned our nature ? He has a *robe of righteousness* and *garments of salvation* to bestow. Are you impotent, and unable

to believe? He is the "author and finisher of our faith." Unable to repent? "He is exalted to give repentance and remission." Are you dead in trespasses and sins? Jesus, whom I proclaim, "is the resurrection and the life." The very dead he makes to hear his voice and live. Let not the recollection of former crimes, of deliberately persevering in sin, of wilfully rejecting the invitations of the Gospel, or resisting the monitions of the Holy Ghost, discourage you from accepting the offered atonement. His love, O sinner, is boundless as his being; his grace is an ocean without bottom, without shore. None are this moment elevated higher in the climes of bliss, none are filled with greater extacies of joy, none pour forth louder acclamations of praise to the author of their salvation, than those who were once plunged deepest in perdition. Often, often, has a sovereign Jehovah chosen the rudest stones in nature's quarry, polished them with his grace, and reared them up on his building of glory. "His arm is not yet shortened that it cannot save."

The commission, however, is still more comprehensive, and extends to all the nations of the earth. Nothing is more obvious, from ancient prophecy and the writings of the apostles, than the final introduction of every *kindred*, and *tongue*, and *people* to the privileges of the gospel. Messiah is exhibited under characters the most general, as the *saviour of all men, the desire of all nations, a propitiation for the sins of the whole world.* Images in na-

ture the most significant, are employed to shadow forth both the extent, and the perpetuity of his kingdom. It is compared to a grain of mustard-seed, which although in itself almost imperceptibly small groweth into a tree, so that the fowls of the air lodge in its branches; to a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, which should gradually extend, should at length fill the whole earth, and remain forever. Although the gospel had long been partial in its spread: Palestine being the only country enlightened with its glory, and the posterity of Abraham the exclusive recipients of its blessings; yet now "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, the kings of Tarshish, and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts, yea all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end\* come."

\* If by the *end* here mentioned, with Bishops Newton, Hurd, and other judicious commentators, we understand the overthrow of Jerusalem, there cannot possibly be a more luminous argument for the authority of prophecy, nor a more encouraging argument for us to persevere in our undertaking. The prediction, in its varied parts, received an accomplishment, no less minute than if it had been a literal history of events which had already occurred. "It appears, indeed," observes the former of these writers, "from the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the Gospel was preached not only in lesser Asia, and Greece and Italy, the great thea-



III. Our obligation to attempt the more general propagation of the Gospel was our third enquiry, and now invites our attention. I might mention the explicit command of the great God our Saviour: "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy-Ghost." Does not this command as properly belong to us; is it not as absolutely binding on us, as on the apostles, whose ears heard it audibly from the lips of their present Lord? I might observe, that it receives an additional obligation from the awful solemnity of his immediate departure. No sooner had Zion's King instructed his disciples in the things that concerned the future interests of his

tres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain. How improbable, and to all human appearance, impossible was it that a few poor fishermen, and such inferior, illiterate persons, should propagate and establish a new religion in so short a space of time, throughout the world; doubtless it was not man's work, but God's; and from the same divine Spirit proceeded both the prophecy and the completion."—Disser't. on Proph. vol. i. page 409, 410. Correspondently with this Bishop Hurd eloquently remarks, "Against all appearance the success followed. In less than half a century the sound of the Gospel went into all lands, and within three centuries from the death of Christ, Christianity ascended the imperial throne, and had the utmost parts of the earth for her possession."—Lec. on Proph. vol. i. page 199. Contemplating success so unexpected and astonishing, Zion may ardently exclaim, *What hath the Lord wrought!* she may triumphantly add, *What is he not still able to effect!* *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he can utter ordain strength, for the boundless diffusion of his Gospel: Jehovah hasten it in his time!*

church and issued the royal mandate, *preach the gospel to every creature*, than lo ! he is parted from them : making the cherub his car and the cloud his pavillion, he ascends on high, and enters his glory, to return no more " until the restitution of all things !" I might add, as another circumstance heightening our obligation to activity in promoting the extension of his gospel, the constraining influence of redeeming love. " We know the grace of the Lord Jesus, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." The degradation and the sufferings of the Son of God in the room of his people impose on them an eternal obligation for zeal in his cause. He has thereby set us an example that we should follow his footsteps. Can we contemplate the immensity of his grace, in veiling the grandeur of the God in the meanness of the man ; the obscurity of his birth, that the arbiter of worlds was born in a manger ; the poverty of his life, that the heir of all things had not where to lay his head ; the mingled ignominy and agony of his cross ; can we contemplate these, unawed with astonishment, uninflamed with gratitude and love ? " Behold what manner of love is this !" What finite mind can survey its infinite dimensions !

— " Where roll my thoughts

" To rest from wonders ! Other wonders rise,  
 " And strike where'er they roll ; my soul is caught :  
 " Heaven's sovereign blessings clustering from the cross  
 " Rush on her in a throng and close her round,  
 " The pris'ner of amaze."  
 " What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?"

The very earth, that felt the pangs of dissolution, and shook to her centre; the rocks that were rent; the graves that were opened; the dead who arose; the sun who veiled himself in darkness, rebuke our insensibility and sloth. But we shall confine our attention to the two following considerations, obligating **O** us to disinterested zeal in this cause:

1. A concern for the glory of God. True it is, his operations, both in creation and providence, illustriously display his infinite perfections: "The heavens declare the glory of God," and the firmament sheweth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge:" Every object around us is instamped legibly with the characters of divinity; all the varied orders of being, whether animate or inanimate, from the minutest reptile crawling upon the earth, to that blazing orb which rolls majestic along the heavens, proclaim the wisdom, the benignity and grandeur of their Great Creator. These have afforded to every nation under heaven, convincing proofs of the divine existence and perfections. Contemplating the sun which sheds light and fertility on the earth, the moon that with her milder radiance gilds the evening gloom, or the comet ranging stupendous through the trackless void, the savage wanderer of the woods, no less than the lettered inhabitant of the village, have acknowledged their Author to be divine. Yet, it is reserved for the gospel to exhibit the most illustrious, the most

astonishing display. "The Lord God hath magnified his word above all his name." On the page of inspiration his holiness, his justice, his grace and condescension, perfections which his other works revealed obscurely, are legibly and luminously inscribed. Here he is revealed as "the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious:" as the God of *love*, of *peace*, of *patience* and *consolation*: as a "Father to the fatherless, and merciful even to our unrighteousnesses," through the atonement of his son. "Here that immaculate purity which cannot look upon sin, and that astonishing love which cannot behold the ruin of a sinner, are awfully displayed: the majesty of the divine government is sustained, and the rigor of the law fulfilled: justice is satisfied, mercy, without restraint and without measure, flows upon our guilty world." In the gospel exclusively, is brought to human view that mystery of condescension and grace, "God manifested in the flesh;" "the express image of Jehovah made of no reputation." This, my brethren, may justly be pronounced the glory that excelleth. A God invested with our feeble nature; sustaining, by imputation, our transgressions; expiring as a sacrifice for our sins, is a subject into which "angels desire to look; a subject, which to angels themselves, must remain forever unexplored. But, alas! my brethren, are there not myriads of our race, by whom the attributes of God as illustrated in the gospel, are unadmired, unknown? Nations,

countless as the stars of heaven, inhabit this globe, who have "neither heard his fame nor seen his glory." "They are become vain in their imaginations, and have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." With rude admiration, they gaze on the natural sun—breaking from the east, and kindling day around them, but their eyes have never beheld the sun of righteousness, whose benign glories dissipate the more malignant gloom of spiritual darkness. Often have their ears been shocked with the voice of God speaking terribly in the earthquake and the thunder, but have never been saluted by his still small voice in the word of reconciliation. They feel some sense of obligation to him in *whom they live, move, and have their being*: but, alas! his glory they give to others, even to gods of their own creation.

With a concern for the glory of God, we may connect as a second obligation for preaching the gospel, compassion for our fellow mortals. Sympathy for an object in distress, and a painful solicitude for its relief, are equally dignified and general characteristics of human nature. Who, that rolls in affluence, can deliberately witness a fellow mortal perishing with hunger, and not minister a pittance to his wants? Who, possessed of the common feelings of humanity, could coolly view a fellow creature shivering in the blast of winter, without endeavoring to afford him seasonable relief? But a thousand, thousand fold more

pitiable is the spectacle here exhibited to our view. Not the body merely ; it being perishable in its nature, its miseries, however exquisite, are but of momentary duration ; it is the soul, the precious, never, never dying soul, which claims our compassion and our aid. Do not your hearts melt within you while your eye rolls over that western wilderness ? There you behold millions of your fellow mortals “ perishing without vision ; ” they are often stung with remorse for guilt, but strangers to that Jesus whose blood speaks reconciliation and peace. They are whelmed occasionally with apprehensions of approaching ruin ; but ignorant of that Jesus who redeems from the wrath to come. Hark ! from the dark thickets of yonder forest, a voice breaks upon my ear ! “ Come over, ye servants of the most high God that teach the way of salvation, come over and help us. Are we not your brethren by nature, sprung from the same common Parent, and involved by transgression in the same condemnation and woe ? ” Ah, beloved, we are verily guilty concerning these our brethren, in that we have seen the anguish of their souls, and have not relieved them ! Turning our faces towards the west, with apparent earnestness, we have often prayed, *be ye converted, be ye saved ;* but where are the monuments of our zeal for their conversion and salvation ? Shall we remain any longer unmoved by the cry of their miseries ? Can they, to whom their own salvation is their chief concern, be altogether

unconcerned about the salvation of others? Is it possible that any who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, who have felt those joys unutterable, which overflow the soul under the assurance of his love, is it possible for such to read that awful declaration, *he will pour his fury, upon the heathen*, and yet refuse their substance, refuse their service, for conveying to them the glad tidings of reconciliation? Let none deliberately mock the Most High, or wantonly insult their misery, by advising us "to leave the work to holy Providence; that God will extend relief to them in his own time." Jehovah it is true worketh, but it is equally true he worketh by means. The gospel has never yet been propagated by miracle. As far as its joyful sound has extended through the earth, it has unvaryingly been effected through the intervention of means. Must the Eunuch be savingly enlightened in the knowledge of the truth? Philip is dispatched to preach to him Jesus. Must the Samaritan woman be instructed in the doctrines of salvation? The Son of God must needs pass through her region. Is Cornelius, the Roman centurion, to be proselyted to the christian faith? Peter is employed as the instrument of his conversion. Are the people of Macedonia to be visited with the gospel of peace? Paul is addressed by the vision, *come over and help us*.

The improvement of this doctrine is not less interesting than it is obvious.

1. We are encouraged amidst opposition,

however inveterate, to persevere in our present undertaking. The design of evangelizing the nations is not the sudden sally of enthusiasm : it is not the delusive dream of the visionary ; then it might possibly evaporate with the moment. No, it is the cause of Jehovah, and must invincibly prevail. While his sovereign command, *preach the gospel to every creature*, authorizes us to proceed ; his inviolable promise ensures both support and success : “ Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.”

A thousand prophecies relative to the spread of the gospel, and the conversion of the heathen, yet await their accomplishment. “ In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God : All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.” Amidst prospects so glorious, what eye does not sparkle with joy ? What heart does not beat high with expectation ? “ Let Zion rejoice, let the children of Judah be glad,” for yet a little while and their king shall extend unlimited the honors of his reign. “ Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise unto the ends of the earth ; ye that go down to the sea and all that is therein the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit :” *thou inhabitant of the rock sing, shout from the top of thy mountain*, for ere long shall the



light of salvation dart joyous upon thy dreary abode.

Come, beloved in the Lord, let us awake from our security ; let us shake off the lethargy of former years ; let our exertions hereafter bear some proportion to the magnitude of our enterprize, and our assurance of success. Does the enemy of the cross eagerly seize and industriously circulate, whatever tends to the dishonor of the Son of God ? Shall we be less active in diffusing the gospel of his glory ? To glut the avarice or gratify the ambition of their imperious masters do not the minions of despotism brave opposition ? Do they not encounter the perils of the ocean ; submit to the fatigues of the wilderness, laugh at the glittering spear, and rush unmoved on death arrayed in tenfold horrors ; and shall we, who have enlisted as good soldiers, under Jesus, the great captain of salvation ; we, who profess to have imbibed his Spirit, who endured the cross and despised the shame ; we, whom he redeemed from the curse by enduring that very curse in our room ; we, for whom at the expense of his blood, he procured an inheritance incorruptible, and crowns of glory that never fade away : shall we betray less ardor and zeal ? Carelessly can we fold our arms in sloth, or basely shrink from opposition, when our Captain waves aloft his standard, and calls aloud to follow on ? O, my brethren, to all the boasts of modern infidelity, let us not afford the additional triumph,

that the friends of Zion are cold and unconcerned about her interests.

Let none dare to discourage us by multiplying objections. I repeat the declaration, the design of evangelizing the nations is the cause of God, and must invincibly prevail. Do any ask, where is your authority, what is your warrant for interfering with the religion of the heathen unsolicited, unexpected? I reply, the commission, instamped with the signature of Zion's King, is this moment spread to our view : *Preach the gospel to every creature.* Do any ask where are your missionaries; whom will you send; who will embark for you in an enterprize so difficult, so hazardous? I reply, that with Jesus Jehovah is the residue of the spirit. In him all the fullness of the god-head dwells bodily; and he can easily raise up evangelists, pastors and apostles, sons of thunder, sons of consolation, as the necessities of Zion require. Do any ask where are your resources for supporting expences so great as a mission to the heathen must naturally incur; your friends are few in number, most of them inaffluent in condition? We reply, that creation is our master's and the fulness thereof. The gold and the silver are his, the cattle on a thousand hills are at his disposal; his servants, therefore, he can send forth, if he chooses, without money, without scrip, without purse, and not suffer them to lack. Sooner shall the ravens of the wilderness minister to their wants, or yonder cloud pour down manna for their supply, than

the purposes of God come short of their accomplishment. Do any further ask, if missionaries were furnished, if funds equal to the expense were collected, is there a probability, or even a possibility of success? Are not the Indians roving in their habits, enveloped in ignorance, drenched in superstition? I reply, with God nothing is impossible; the most unsettled his grace can arrest; the most benighted it enlightens; the most stubborn it effectually subdues; the rude rover of the wilderness, no less than the politer citizen of Athens, or of Rome it "can turn from idols, to serve the living God." We reject as unworthy a reply that popular objection, that the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Thus saith the Holy Ghost, "BEHOLD! NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME."

Only believe, and your eyes shall yet see the salvation of our God. Read, ye that despond in the prospect of our present difficulties, read the triumph of his church in former periods of the world. At the command of their covenant God, Israel, crushed by oppression, disheartened by disappointment, suddenly revive: swell beyond the chain of their captivity, and march forth from Egypt joyful and victorious. Alternately were the laws of nature suspended and reversed to subserve their deliverance, and their defence. Have you never read of that host of God who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths

of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens?" Behold, again, the apostles of the Lamb, few in number, mean in condition, unskilled in worldly policy, unaided by worldly power, with no sword but *the sword of the spirit*, with no shield but *the shield of faith*, they go on conquering and to conquer. No sooner is the trump of the gospel blown by this spiritual priesthood, than lo! the walls of superstition totter on their base, every idol sinks to the ground, and men of all kindreds and all characters, crowd to the standard of the cross. Abashed for his former unbelief the Jew rapturously exclaims, lo, I have found the Messiah of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write! Convicted of his folly, the Gentile starts from his image, where he blindly kneeled, and bows in homage to the Son of David, as his Saviour and King. "Who hath heard such things, who hath seen such things? The earth brought forth in a day, and a nation was born at once; for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Hitherto hath the Lord of hosts performed his promises, and hath he now lost power to redeem? Is his arm unnerved by the shock of opposition, or fatigued by repeated exertions? Justly might he admonish our unbelief with the ancient rebuke, *O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt!*

2. From a variety of appearances in Provi-

dence, are we not encouraged to hope that these prophecies are hastening to a fulfilment? Fatigued with her former confinement, Zion begins to stretch forth her arms; and complain, "The place is too narrow for me, give place to me that I may dwell: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Exertions the most unexampled, exertions the most disinterested, are making for the more general diffusion of the Gospel. Forgetting each inferior distinction; nobly crucifying that unsocial, unchristian spirit, which rallies around the standard of party, so hostile to the glory of Christ, and repugnant to the genius of his Gospel, christians of different denominations are now concentrating their efforts towards one great design. This day we are assembled to commemorate a new æra in the annals of the Christian world. A wonder indeed! Professors of various communions, once torn by religious faction, each meditating the aggrandizement of their own party, rather than the honour of their common Redeemer; whose pretended zeal for the Lord of hosts evaporated too much in rancorous reflections upon each other, now associate together: they sit as brethren in the same assembly: with one mouth glorify God, and with one mind deliberate on the means of enlarging his kingdom. The witling may deride our union as mere folly, or as the collusion of priests for promoting the reign of superstition; the snarling bigot may represent it as a conspiracy against

the truth, and a fearful stride to latitudinarianism ; but confident I am, that he who hath wrought this which you both hear and see, is the Holy Ghost. While I look around this large assembly ; while I recognize our unity of design, and harmony of measure ; while I mark that solicitude which heaves in every breast, and solemnizes every countenance, my imagination involuntarily transports me to that memorable occasion, when, on the day of Pentecost, the disciples with one accord waited for the promise of the Father, in the effusion of his Spirit. Thou Breath of the Lord, that as a rushing wind descended upon them blow mightily on our assembly. Each heart inflame with an apostolic enthusiasm ; each tongue endow with an eloquence divine to proclaim to the stranger and the foreigner, the wonders of Messiah's grace ! Hail, all hail, ye, whom zeal for the Lord of Hosts, and compassion for perishing mortals, have prompted to similar exertions ! However remote in residence, or different in name, of whatever clime of the earth, or kindred of the nations you may be, our bosoms glow towards you with the affection of brethren : Our arms are extended to embrace you as workers together with ourselves in the Gospel of one common Lord. Jehovah the Spirit bless you abundantly, and cement you more and more : By the liberal effusion of his influence may he preserve your union as lasting as its objects are important and glorious. " Zion's watchmen are seeing eye to eye : " Blessed

pledge of the more blissful period when the Lord shall be one, and his name one throughout the world.'

A variety of other events in Providence might be mentioned, leading us to expect the speedy ingathering of the Gentiles: The general shaking of the nations is held forth in scripture as the forerunner of the coming of him who is the desire of all nations. God has also forewarned us that he would previously pour out his fury upon the seat of the beast and is not this prediction already accomplished in part. The vials of divine wrath have lately been emptied forth, and lo! the smoke of his torment ascendeth! One circumstance, however, appears peculiarly hopeful for the heathen, which I tremble to mention! the increase and effrontery of infidelity among ourselves. It is a part of the divine procedure, at once mysterious and awful, that he makes trial of individuals and nations; he affords to them for a season the ordinances of his grace, but if these be unimproved, he transfers them to others: thus were the Jews at first rejected, and the Gentiles introduced to the privileges of the Gospel; thus the churches of Asia, where the power of godliness so eminently flourished, owing to their apostacy, are now utterly forsaken; the candlestick of ordinances is removed, and the dew of the Holy Ghost altogether suspended. Tracing the movements of Providence, in former ages, and comparing our present condition with that of other Christian nations, when

their judgment began we are filled with the mingled emotions of terror and joy ; of terror for ourselves, and of joy for the heathen. That lamp, the glorious Gospel, which has long shone neglected in our abodes ; which through the foul exhalations of the pit begins to glimmer, and threatens to expire, a righteous God may suddenly snatch from our enjoyment, and fasten in the dark places of the earth. Already have our spiritual judgments obviously commenced. Rarely has infidelity assumed a more effrontful air. Many that were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and early instructed in the principles of his religion, have openly renounced their profession. They imagine their talents can be consecrated to no better or nobler purpose, than the derision of every thing sacred. By a bold denial of his gospel, and renunciation of their baptismal engagements, they trample under foot the Son of God ; account the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace." If any such are present, with all the fidelity of Jehovah's messenger, I would embrace this opportunity to warn them of their danger. The experiment of avowedly rejecting the great salvation must be considered *at least as hazardous*. Have you deliberately weighed the awful import of that declaration, " If any man be ashamed of me and my gospel, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father, and with the holy angels." Where



wilt thou stand, "thou baptized infidel, thou washed to fouler stain," where wilt thou stand when yonder heaven shall reveal thy judge, in the full blaze of his glory? Can thy heart endure when the very elements of nature shall melt before the lightnings of his indignation? Whither wilt thou flee for help, when the hills and the mountains, to which a blind despair may hurry thee, shall start aside, and leave thee a defenceless prey to his thirsting sword? The apostate angel may palliate his doom, by pleading "that no redemption was procured for him;" the savage of the wilderness may lessen his condemnation, by pleading "that the Saviour was never offered to him;" but no circumstance, thou gospel despiser, can be suggested to soften the horrors of thy damnation. That declaration from the lips of the affronted Saviour, *I called and ye refused*, must shut thee up in sullen and silent despair. Be not deceived, my beloved hearers, let none consider these as imaginary terrors that shall never be realized. O, no! as certainly as my voice now vibrates upon your ears, shall the arch angel's trumpet thunder the summons along the tomb, *awake, arise, ye dead, and come to judgment*. Let none regard these representations as magnified, in order to excite unnecessary fears, or to startle the timid and the weak. O, no! As far as the drop of water is surpassed by the infinite ocean, so far will the terrors of that day rise above the efforts of description. "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief

captains—shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and cry to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb ; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?” Acquaint now yourselves with him and be at peace. This day is the great God renewing his overtures of mercy. He is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses : Touch the sceptre of his mercy ; improve the sacrifice of his Son, and “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be redlike crimson, they shall be as wool.”

3. From these words are suggested the doctrines upon which, in preaching the gospel, we ought principally to dwell. Whether at home, or among the heathen, let it be our first concern, to fasten upon the sinner’s conscience, a conviction of his natural degeneracy. Let us exhibit to him, in the mirror of divine revelation, his real though fearful counterpart, his guilt, his corruption, his utter inability, by any strength of his own, to emerge from his wretchedness, and thus prostrate him submissive at the feet of sovereign mercy. Whence arises the bold invasion that has lately been made upon the doctrines of grace, which have constituted in all ages the bulwark of christianity ; the general opposition to our election by the Father’s love, our justification by a vicarious righteousness imputed, our instatement in the covenant, and progres-

sive sanctification, by the operations of the Holy Ghost? It proceeds principally, if not entirely from ignorance of our original depravity. He who acknowledges the apostacy of mankind, who acknowledges that by the demerit of this apostacy we have forfeited every claim upon the divine favor, must also acknowledge that if all are recovered, this recovery must be purely of grace; if a part only are restored, undeserved mercy is manifested to them, but not the least injustice done to the rest. To the conscience awakened with a sense of guilt and trembling under apprehensions of divine wrath, it becomes us to proclaim a crucified Jesus, as the only remedy. There is no redemption from the curse, but through the application of his blood: There is no title to the heavenly inheritance, but by the imputation of his righteousness. Some who make pretensions to superior attainments in divine things, have suggested the propriety of carefully concealing in our addresses to the heathen, the peculiar doctrines of christianity, and of adopting in their room a system of rational religion. They suppose that by this accommodating principle, we should arrest their attention, prepossess their affections, and probably succeed in their conversion. This method should it eventually prove successful, would literally be making their faith, to rest not on the power of God, but in the wisdom of men. It would as a writer justly observes, be "heathenizing ourselves, instead of Christianizing the

heathen " But however, plausible these insinuations appear in *theory*; in *fact* they are notoriously false. The artless, unaffected doctrines of the cross, have ever triumphed in the conversion of sinners: they constitute that artillery of heaven, before which the ignorance of superstition and the hardness of infidelity are equally unable to stand. The great apostle of the Gentiles was no unsuccessful preacher of righteousness; yet, did he aim at modelling his discourses to meet the different dispositions of his hearers? Did he aim at gratifying the curiosity of the inquisitive, at flattering the pride of the speculative, or meeting the ruder apprehensions of the vulgar? No: Whether his audience was the sensual inhabitants of Crete, or the more polished citizens of Athens, or of Rome, his theme was unvaried: He determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. With the same doctrine the Moravians in the north, the Danes in the east, a Brainard,\* a May-

\* No apology I trust is requisite for inserting a few remarks of the great Jonathan Edwards in his life of Mr. Brainard.—“ And here it is worthy to be considered, not only the effect of Calvinistic principles upon Mr. Brainard himself, but also the same effect of such doctrines as taught and inculcated by him, on others. It is abundantly pretended of late years, that these doctrines tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate all reasonable motives to the practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling blocks before infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrines are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force, and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind; but where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of

hew, an Edwards, and an Elliot, in our own country, have brought in the first fruits of the pagan world, as a pledge of the ingathering of the whole.

Again, while we recommend the sinner to the Lord Jesus for reconciliation and acceptance, let us unequivocally point out the necessity of the Spirit for sanctification. With equal propriety might Christ and his righteousness be overlooked, as the Holy Ghost and his operations. Perhaps a concealment of this scriptural truth may be considered as a prin-

their doctrines, in bringing infidels who were at such a distance from all that is civil, humane, sober, rational and Christian, and so full of prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise of reason, self-denial and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in morality; let them bring an instance of their doctrine, producing such a transformation of a people, in point of morality."—To these we may add a few observations of Mr. Brainard himself. "Those doctrines, which had the most direct tendency to humble the fallen creature, to shew him the misery of his natural state, to bring him down to the foot of sovereign mercy, and to exalt the Great Redeemer, discover his transcendant Excellency and infinite preciousness; and so to recommend him to the sinner's acceptance, were the subject matter of what was delivered in public and private to them, and from time to time repeated and inculcated upon them;—Gen. Rem. page 66. A single observation like this, founded on actual experiment, is more convincing than volumes of speculation. By their respective fruits, we must judge of principles, as well as of persons. Facts in divinity, no less than in philosophy, are obstinate arguments. These doctrines therefore which have overcome all possible opposition, which triumphed, in the first promulgation of the Gospel, over the influence of combined wealth, policy and power, which have since succeeded in purifying the most profligate, in civilizing the most savage, which have prostrated the pride of philosophy at the foot of the cross, and changed even the lion into a lamb, prove themselves fully to be both the wisdom of God, and the power of God,

principal reason why the preaching of the gospel is so mournfully unsuccessful among ourselves. By not duly realizing our utter inability to produce a saving change upon our hearers, or teaching them the humiliating lesson, that they are without strength; that they cannot act faith, repentance or any other grace, independently of divine aid, we have provoked the gracious Spirit to depart; and what is the consequence? Ordinances have lost their usual efficacy; they are not, as formerly, the power of God for the conviction and conversion of sinners. To our mournful *experience*, we have now been taught, what we refused to learn from his *word*, *that without him we can do nothing*.

Permit me to intrude further upon your patience, by inviting the attention of two classes of my audience.

Such of us, brethren and fathers, as are invested with the sacred office of the ministry, these words call loudly to make our own calling and election sure. Pretensions of zeal for spreading the gospel must be mere mockery of the Most High, if we ourselves have not previously honored him by believing on his Son; besides, of all men, the ungodly minister is, beyond conception, the most miserable. Each terror of the law, which he denounces against others, fastens the seal to his own condemnation. While, with his hand, he points his hearers the path to immortality, his own feet are gliding imperceptibly along to endless destruction. He is employed

in recommending a Saviour, in whom he has no interest ; in painting the joys of heaven, which, without a change, he shall never participate ; in describing the horrors of a hell, to which he is hastening. The weight of our present work, requires us also to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Our situation is awfully critical, no less than important : do we look at home, infidelity rages ; like a mighty torrent, swelling as it advances, it has broken in upon our borders, and thousands on every hand are hurried and overwhelmed in its deadly stream : rising again, as they rot, they now float upon the surface, and are polluting, with the contagion of hell, the whole atmosphere of the church. Do we look abroad, a field immense and uncultivated opens to our view, The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is spreading wide her boundaries ; but, alas ! who is sufficient to explore and improve her uncultivated parts ? These things are mentioned, not to discourage from our present purposes : God forbid ! but they are designed to shake us from every created confidence, that we may rest upon Jehovah, as our support. To him, no difficulty is unconquerable, no obstacle insurmountable. Relying on his strength, the feeble become as David ; worm Jacob threshes the mountains, and beats them small as dust. Opposition, in the discharge of our duty, we must calculate upon meeting ; our greatest temptation, however, does not arise from the open adversary ; the enemy in the camp, the traitor in

disguise, is our most dangerous foe. The reproach of being "righteous overmuch," of being "frantic, wild, or enthusiastic," secretly insinuated by a brother, or a friend, has often served to shake from his firmness the *man* who could have met unmoved the majesty of tribunals, and the terror of flames. But let not these things trouble us, neither let us hold our reputation, or even our lives dear, that we may finish our course with joy. Brethren must be comparatively hated, houses and lands must be forsaken, when the honors of our master and the salvation of souls are at stake. What avail all the pain, the poverty, or reproach, that can accompany the cross, when the unutterable glories of the crown open upon our view? Need we startle at the apprehension of being disowned by an acquaintance, however respected, or a brother, a sister, or parent, however dear, while we remember that they who turn many to righteousness, shall shine as stars and as suns forever and ever. The conversion of a single savage will reward us a thousand fold.—Elevating thought! At this event new transports will thrill the spirits of just men perfected: there will be joy before the angels of God: Jesus, our beloved, will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: the Holy Ghost will have another monument to the glory of his grace.

Again, let such as are not immediately connected with any pastoral charge, examine whether providence be not calling them to em-



bark as missionaries to the heathen. The present is a singularly favorable opportunity for such of bringing glory to the Redeemer, of rendering inconceivable services to their fellow-creatures, and embalming eternally their own names among the living in Jerusalem. "Honorable among men, honorable in the eyes of angels, and of God himself, will our first missionaries be." Might I, without the suspicion of ostentation, be indulged in expressing my own feelings, I would declare that next to that grace of the Lord Jesus that counted me faithful for the ministry, I adore his goodness in giving me a seat in this Missionary Society; and a greater glory than either would I account it, were his providence pointing me out as a suitable missionary preacher to the heathen. If a bare cup of cold water given to a disciple of Jesus shall not be forgotten; if the honest confession of his name will be honorably acknowledged in the presence of his Father and the angels; how accumulated must be the reward, how unutterable the glory of those who leave all and follow him; who exchange the lap of ease, and affluence, and honor, for the fatigues, the poverty, and perils of the wilderness! Near to the Mediator on his throne will such be invited to sit down; palms of victory will be put into their hands, and crowns of pre-eminent lustre set upon their heads. Behold the ark of the covenant rests, even the everlasting gospel; is there no tribe of Levi to lift it up and bear it along? Ocean divides

Y

its waters that you may safely pass over ! Will you tempt the Lord by waiting for farther signs ? Lo, the pillar of cloud and of fire, the pavilion of the redeeming angel, descends ; it hovers over yonder waste, will you not venture forward under its divine protection ? Already the voice re-echoes through the wilderness, *prepare ye the way of the Lord* : 'The mountains sink, the valleys rise, crooked places are made straight, and rough places plain. Go through ! go through ! ye ministers of our God, and may the Breaker go up before you, even Jehovah our King, upon your head.

Now " Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things ; and blessed be his glorious name forever ; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory !" AMEN, and AMEN !



TO THE FEMALE MEMBERS OF HIS CONGREGATION,  
PARTICULARLY TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE FEMALE SOCIETY LATELY INSTI-  
TUTED IN SALEM, FOR THE PROMOTION OF  
RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE, THE FOLLOWING  
SERMON, PREPARED CHIEFLY FOR THEIR  
USE, AND NOW PUBLISHED AT THEIR RE-  
QUEST, IS INSCRIBED WITH PROFOUND ES-  
TEEM AND AFFECTION,

BY THEIR BROTHER

IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE  
REDEEMER'S CROSS AND CONSOLATIONS,

*ALEXANDER PROUDFIT.*

SALEM, AUGUST 6, 1805.

## SERMON II.

PHILIPPIANS 3.

*Help those women which laboured with me  
the gospel.*

THE religion of Christ Jesus the Lord is literally and eminently a religion of love; it diffuses through the heaven born spirit a principle of love, not only to God who is perfection itself; who is the author of every blessing both temporal and spiritual, but it inspires love the most ardent and unfeigned to all who bear his image. The christian, expanded by the benign influence of this religion, contemplates the redeemed of all countries as one great society of brethren and sisters; he considers the followers of the Lamb by whatever name they are known, in whatever region they reside, under whatever circumstances they are placed, of whatever colour they are or station they occupy, as one great family united by a relation intimate and indissolvable; as the offspring of the same Father, as redeemed by the same divine Jesus, as renewed by the same spirit, as fellow heirs of the same grace and glory.—Animated and ennobled by this principle, the apostle concludes his epistle to the Philippians with the most tender expressions of affection to their persons, and concern for their prosperity.

*Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved; Overlooking those outward distinctions which probably existed among them as men, he ad-*

dresses them indiscriminately whether male or female, whether bond or free as *brethren*; *They being many* he considered as *one body* in Christ and members one of the other; he pronounces them *dearly beloved*, not for any excellence which they naturally possessed, because they were formerly "children of wrath even as others, hateful and hating one another," but for the righteousness of Jehovah Christ with which they were adorned, and his image which appeared in their lives and conversation.

*And longed for*; as a fond Father ardently desires to see the face of a beloved son who had been long absent, or as an affectionate husband whom duty had called from home is impatient to return and revisit the partner of his life, the apostle longs to see these believing Philippians; he is anxious to know how their souls prosper and *to impart some spiritual gift for their more complete establishment*.

*My joy*; He pronounces them his present joy; It was a source of sublime, unspeakable rejoicing that he had been instrumental in their saving conversion; that he had brought them from the corruption of their natural state into *the glorious liberty of the sons of God*; *And crown*, he acknowledges these believers not only his present joy but his future glory, his distinguishing honor in that hour when they "who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars;" when each sinner brought to salvation through our instrumentality will add another jewel to our upfading crown;

“ So stand fast in the Lord, dearly beloved :” he exhorts them to an unshaken constancy and steadfastness in their christain profession ; that “ as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they would carefully walk in him ;” that they would aim at growing up more and more unto the measure of the stature of his fulness ; that they would improve him daily as their light in darkness, their shield in danger, their glory in reproach, their confidence in death.

“ I beseech Euodious, and beseech Syntiche that they be of the same mind in the Lord ;” Harmony among its members, mutual confidence, mutual esteem and affection form the chief glory of the visible church ; by a deportment thus peaceful and amiable *the children of light* are peculiarly distinguished from *the children of darkness* who are *hateful and hating one another, who are enemies to God* and consequently enemies to each other. The apostle, therefore, earnestly entreats these members of the Philippian church *to be of the same mind*, to cherish that forgiving, affectionate disposition which became them as the acknowledged followers of the Lamb ; that as they were *one* by outward profession, were baptized in *one* name, had *one* hope of their calling, and received at *one* table the symbols of the Lord’s body and blood they would cultivate a disposition suitable to a relation so intimate, that no jar nor jealousy might be permitted to interrupt their christian communion or embitter their christian consolation,



but that they would be of *the same mind* as the Lord, making his word the rule and his glory the end of their actions.

To whom the apostle alludes under the character of *true yoke fellow* in the succeeding verse cannot be fully determined, altho' various conjectures are formed. It is the opinion of some commentators that he referred to one who had usually accompanied him in travelling from place to place, and had contributed much to his support in advancing the gospel of our Lord; but the person addressed as *true yoke fellow* was more probably some leading character in the Philippian church: one whose gifts and graces and disinterested zeal in promoting their spiritual interests had raised him to eminent influence and importance in that particular society. To his attention the apostle affectionately recommends "those women who had labored with him in the gospel; help those women;" minister to them all necessary encouragement and support; sympathise with them amidst every disappointment which they may experience; exhort them to remain "stedfast and immoveable" in their christian profession, and to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord;" animate them to a holy zeal in these labors of the gospel by the prospect of that "incorruptible crown, that exceeding, eternal weight of glory which will be shortly conferred on the faithful followers of the Lamb. They who overcome shall inherit all things;" they will be exalted to a seat "with the Me-



diator on his throne, even as he also overcame and sat down with the Father on his throne."

Without trespassing on your patience by any other remarks on the different branches of the text, it is intended to enquire in what manner women may consistently unite with ministers in the labor of the gospel and also to mention some considerations by which they are reasonably constrained to this spiritual service.

Our first enquiry is, the manner in which women may consistently unite with ministers in the labor of the gospel.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that they are not called to *labor in the gospel* by assuming the ministerial office, or publicly engaging in the exercises of preaching and exhortation. This is a service which our adorable Lord has not required, and which, therefore, they are not warranted to perform. But there are other duties more private in their nature, and more suited to the delicacy of their sex, in which they may be nearly, if not equally subservient to their Master's glory, and the edification of souls.

1. They may and ought to labor with ministers by frequent prayer for Jehovah's blessing on their administrations. All our success in the discharge of each ministerial duty depends intimately and exclusively on his cooperating grace. *Man may plant and water, but God must give the increase*: The utmost fidelity in our Master's service; the most painful application to our private studies; the

most ardent zeal in proclaiming from the pulpit the whole council of God ; the most unwearied diligence in going around from house to house, *warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom*, will be profitable only as they are countenanced with the breathings of the Divine Spirit. *Holy women* may, therefore, labor with ministers by recommending their admonitions and exhortations to the blessing of the Lord, by frequently and fervently wrestling with him for success to their labors whether private or public ; that *their gospel*, through the energies of the spirit of life and of power, *might have free course and be glorified* in the salvation of men. Much may be done, much *has* been done *in the closet* for the advancement of the gospel in the church ; when christians, retired from the view of the world, with no eye upon them but the eye of their Father, approach *the mercy-seat*, assail heaven by humble, fervent supplication, and “ give the Lord no rest day nor night until he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Their *prayers* come before him “ as incense and the lifting up of their hands as the evening sacrifice ” through the all-prevailing name of Jesus ; and afterwards descend in showers of blessing on the sanctuary. “ The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous ” person “ avileth much. Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night, though he bear long with them ; he will avenge them speedily ? ”

2. Women may and ought to labor with

ministers in the gospel by the diligent instruction of their household, whether children or servants ; by improving every scriptural mean “ for bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” By a becoming zeal\* in this respect they have eminently cooperated with ministers, and eminently contributed to the advancement of religion in the world. I am fully persuaded that the foundation of personal godliness and of the spiritual prosperity of congregations is ordinarily laid in private families. Unprofitable, humanly speaking, will be our *watering* from the pulpit unless parents are industrious at home in sowing the immortal seed : I am equally persuaded that the opportunities of female christians for advancing the spiritual education of their household are far superior to those of the male. They are not so perplexed with the cares of the world ; they are more constantly with their children, and therefore have a better opportunity of witnessing their conduct, of reproving what is improper and recommending what is right ; they possess, for the most part, a greater share in the affections of their children, and therefore admonish and exhort with a stronger probability of success ; again, being more generally present and con-

\* *An illustrious instance of female zeal in promoting the spiritual edification of her household, was the late Lady Falkland. She ordinarily spent an hour every morning in prayer and catechising and instructing them : On the morning of the Lord's day she rose earlier than usual, and occupied it in secret devotion and in examining her children and servants.*

versing with them they learn their various dispositions and acquire a happier talent of conveying instruction in a manner suited to their age and capacity. What numerous instances might be mentioned of female zeal and success in the spiritual admonition of their offspring. We hear upon one occasion the pious resolution of Hannah respecting the education of Samuel her son. "I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head; I will bring him that he may appear before the Lord and abide there forever. We read in his future life the blessed fruits of an early education thus pious. "Samuel ministered before the Lord being a child;" he was very early favored with the manifestations of the Most High, and grew up a public and lasting blessing to the nation of Israel. We may mention the exemplary zeal of Lois and Eunice, the grand-mother and mother of Timothy. Through their early attention and instruction, he, "from a child,\* knew the holy scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation;" and what an abundant harvest sprung up to the church from the seed thus early sown.— He was afterwards *a man full of faith and of*

\* The word, translated child, was generally used among the Jews for expressing a babe or suckling; it was usually applied to little children under the age of three or four years. This circumstance shews at what an early period the attention of these holy women was directed to the spiritual nurture of their son. Gradually as the powers of his mind began to unfold, they were directed to the truth as it is in Jesus and to the things which concern his everlasting peace.

*the Holy Ghost*, and was the honored instrument of turning many to righteousness.— John, the Evangelist, dedicates his second epistle to “the elect lady and her children whom he loved in the truth;” he appears to consider himself indebted to her for enforcing upon her family in private those doctrines which he delivered in public, and looked upon her children as the seals of her pious administrations; nay, her concern for the salvation of souls seemingly extended far beyond the boundaries of her particular family, because the Evangelist adds, “whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth.”

3. They may and ought to labor with ministers in the gospel by conscientiously attending their admonitions, and thus recommending religion by the force of their godly example.— Many women are mentioned in the sacred records as singularly devout “in walking in all the commandments and ordinances of God. Miriam the sister of Aaron accompanied Moses at their national thanksgiving, and animated the daughters of Israel by the ardor of her zeal. “Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her; and Miriam answered them, sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” To Miriam, the sister of Aaron, may be added *Anna the prophetess*, as one distinguished for her zeal in attending the public institutions of Jeho-

vah. *She was a widow*, therefore probably encumbered with the sole management of a family ; it may be oppressed and embarrassed with poverty of outward condition ; she had attained to the age of *fourscore and four years*, and consequently must have labored under much infirmity of body ; those circumstances could readily have been offered by a cold, lifeless professor as an apology for rarely appearing in the sanctuary of the living God ; they might have excused her in some degree to her own conscience and to the christian world ; but the tabernacles of the Lord of hosts were her chiefest delight ; for these she thirsted more ardently than the hart panteth after the cooling stream, and thither she must press amidst ten thousand difficulties and discouragements ; there she desired to appear not only for her own edification, but that by the influence of her example she might recommend to others the paths of righteousness. "This mother in Israel," the inspired historian testifies, "departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day," An attention thus uniform and ardent to every ordinance of God has an astonishing influence in recommending the gospel of Jesus. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." The solemn, devout appearance of one christian in the sanctuary admonishes the indifference and irregularity of another ; it is frequently a mean of exciting their emulation and enflaming their zeal.

4. They may and ought to labor with ministers by devising liberal plans for diffusing the gospel of Jesus and enlarging the boundaries of his kingdom. Their attention should be occupied enquiring what schemes may be adopted for instructing the ignorant around them ; for rousing to a consideration of their ways the secure and unconcerned, and conveying to distant and destitute places the knowledge of salvation through the Redeemer's name. Plans equally generous and disinterested have been executed in different ages by women of piety and fortune ; churches have been erected ; free schools established for the education of indigent children ; hospitals have been founded for accommodating the sick and the doctrines of life have been propagated in remote, unenlightened parts of the earth. I cannot be charged with extravagance in asserting that the zeal of *female* believers for diffusing the knowledge of Jesus has almost incomparably outshone, and their deeds of charity to the bodies and souls of men almost incomparably exceeded any thing recorded in the history of the *male*.— The boundless contributions of a Miss *Gray*,\* a Lady *Glenorchy*, and a Lady *Huntingdon* remain a lasting monument of reproof to men of fortune ; and their names will adorn the historian's page while charity is cherished or re-

\* Besides a series of liberal donations for pious and charitable uses, during a period of twelve years, Miss GRAY, at her decease, bequeathed above twenty-five thousand dollars to public institutions in and around the city of Edinburgh, where she resided.

ligion revered in the world. They *although dead*, yet live, and speak, and admonish by their liberal, disinterested exertions for promoting the honor of their Redeemer and the salvation of their fellow creatures. Having *freely received* from the hands of a bounteous God, they *freely gave* for the spread of his gospel and the promotion of his glory : *As vessels of peculiar honor* they were entrusted with a more than ordinary share of his treasures, both temporal and spiritual, and these they cheerfully imparted for the encouragement of every humane or pious design. Through their instrumentality various churches were formed and thousands\* of perishing sinners are now favored with the means of eternal life.

Is such the manner in which female christians have and may consistently labor with ministers in promoting the gospel of our common Lord ; are their opportunities both frequent and favorable for contributing to the advancement of his honor and the immortal interests of their generation, it is proper to

\* “ At her death, Lady HUNTINGDON left her churches to trustees and executors to continue the plan which she had commenced in her life and this they have pursued with great zeal and increasing success. Not fewer than one hundred thousand persons now enjoy the preaching of the gospel through her means.”—*Memoirs of Pious Women, Vol. 2, p. 300.* If a cup of cold water given to a disciple of Jesus will not be forgotten in the hour of final retribution, what an exceeding, eternal weight of glory will be conferred on one who has comparatively counted all things but loss for his sake ; who has virtually offered up houses, and lands, and possessions on the altar of love to the Saviour and compassion to perishing souls.



enquire by what considerations they are constrained to this service ?

This was our second enquiry and to this your attention is now invited.

1. To this labour of the gospel they are reasonably constrained by Jehovah's goodness displayed both in their creation and redemption. It is an eternal truth, and would to God it was more uniformly impressed on my own soul and the soul of every hearer, whether male or female, **THAT WE ARE NOT OUR OWN** ; we are not the authors of our own existence either natural or spiritual, and are therefore obliged *to live, not to ourselves, but to HIM* who made and redeemed us. Is the eye which sees, the ear which hears, the tongue which utters, the understanding which comprehends, the memory which retains, created of God, is it not reasonable that they should be devoted *to him* and employed *for him* ? Are the numerous blessings which crown our condition in life merely streams from the overflowing fountain of his goodness ; are our silver and our gold derived from his treasures. is it not reasonable that a portion of them be rendered subservient to his glory ? Are we redeemed from destruction by his rich, unmerited love ; was this redemption accomplished by a plan so mysterious, a price so immense as the death of an *only*, a beloved son, this adds an obligation infinitely powerful to shew forth his praise ; *to spend and be spent in his service* ? This is the argument which the great apostle employed for interest-

ing the hearts of the believing Romans and which I would now employ for impressing my own heart, no less than my sisters in Christ Jesus. *I beseech you by the mercies of God*, by all that sovereignty, that grace which was manifested in rescuing you from misery so great, and restoring you to glories so unfading, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, which is your reasonable service." This argument he afterwards repeats in his epistle to the Corinthian church; "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." Is the woman possessed of privileges in common with the man, is she created by the same Lord, redeemed by the same blood, endowed with the same rational and immortal powers, a fellow heir of the same grace and glory, she is, therefore, reasonably obligated to unite with him in the labors of the gospel.

2. To this service they are powerfully constrained by motives of compassion to the souls of their fellow creatures. We cannot altogether repress the feelings of pity and sympathy, while we behold the outward miseries of others. Who can deliberately shut their door against the man that is perishing in the wintry storm, or refuse a morsel of bread to him who is starving with hunger? Who can forbear to cheer the spirit broken with repeated calamity, or to aim at drying up the tears of the disconsolate widow? The moment that our eyes

behold the wretched object, they necessarily affect the heart, and the heart irresistably heaves with emotions of pity and longs to relieve. This tenderness towards the miseries of others, this disposition to sympathise peculiarly adorns the female character ; and remember, beloved sisters, it cannot be so nobly indulged as in pitying their spiritual woes, and attempting to minister relief. Surely compassion to the souls of men is incomparably more refined than even compassion to their bodies. Was I lost in some dreary waste, far from the habitations of men, and the shadows of the evening began to close fast around me, I should feel grateful to the man who met me in the hour of distress and conducted my wandering steps to some agreeable abode, but my obligations are infinitely greater to him who overtakes me when wandering in the maze of my natural state, estranged from God, enveloped in the gloom of spiritual night, and points out to me in the light of eternal truth the path *to glory and honor and immortality* : Was I travelling the burning sands of Africa, was my body exhausted with fatigue and my spirits fainting with thirst, I must esteem the man who melted at my misery and directed my drooping eye to some cooling stream, but I must hold him in estimation incomparably higher who meets me in all the wretchedness of my fallen condition, tortured with ten thousand anxieties, hurrying from cistern to cistern in pursuit of happiness, but always disappointed, and leads me to the refreshing

streams of the water of life, to that living fountain of which he who drinks shall thirst no more : Was I pursued hard by an unfeeling foe, did he press nearer and nearer, thirsting for my blood, I necessarily would feel obligated to the man who interposed in the moment of peril and secured me from the pursuer's rage, but my obligations are inconceivably greater to him who beholds me surrounded with legions of spiritual adversaries ; who points out the city of refuge, and thus secures me eternally from *the avenger of blood*. Was I, but I forbear to multiply comparisons ; as an immortal spirit is nobler than a frail, perishable body, to compassionate its distresses and aim at relieving them is charity incomparably the most exalted. Cast your eyes around, ye daughters of Zion, and behold what spectacles of woe meet them in every direction ! How many in parts adjacent, in parts remote are sickening and dying with the contagion of sin, and yet are either ignorant or regardless of the cure : They scarcely know that *there is balm in Gilead and a physician there* ; they have rarely heard the reviving tidings that *JESUS came to seek and to save them that are lost* ; that *the FATHER sent his SON to be the Saviour of the world*. While your eyes behold their pitiable situation, let your hearts tenderly sympathise, let them speedily devise the means of relief. “ Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

3. To this labor of the gospel they are constrained by a concern for their own future felicity and glory. In the sovereignty and grace of Jehovah a certain connection is established between obedience and reward. *He that soweth bountifully, is the heavenly record, shall reap also bountifully. If any man serve me, him will my Father honor.* The Lord God is not at all dependent on us for the accomplishment of his purposes; he could easily employ other agents for the execution of his designs, or he might with infinite justice have demanded the one half or third of our time and treasures for acts of piety and mercy without adding any promise of reward; he might afterwards have pronounced us *unprofitable stewards* restoring only a part of what his bounty had given us: But he rather deals with man as a free agent; he exhibits our duty and tenders an abundant *recompence of reward* to those who honestly aim at discharging it. "To them, who by patient continuing in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will render eternal life. Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or lands for my name's sake shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Each sacrifice of our outward ease or interest which is made with a view to the advancement of his glory will be openly acknowledged and amply rewarded at his final appearing. How full of condescension on his part, how replete with encouragement on our part is that testimony which the judge will finally bear

to the services of his people? "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom—for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; sick and in prison and ye came unto me; in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

I trust that it is unnecessary to repeat an observation which has been frequently made that these good works do not purchase our heaven; that they do not constitute either in whole or in part our title to the everlasting kingdom. There is one term of admission to glory for the most pure and the most profligate; for the most indolent, unprofitable cumberer of his Lord's vineyard, and the most industrious, useful laborer, **FREE GRACE** through the righteousness of Jehovah the Redeemer. Abraham, *the Father of the faithful*, Paul, *the chiefest of the apostles*, and *these women who labored in the gospel*, were as really, and exclusively indebted to *free grace* as Manasseh the murderer, the thief on the cross, or the Corinthian adulterer. *Grace*, to the utter exclusion of human works as the meritorious part, "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

This passage, thus briefly illustrated, evidently suggests.

1. That in the service of the adorable Re-

deemer toil and disappointment may be expected. It appears to be the unalterable appointment of God that nothing important can be accomplished in the present life without painful exertion and numerous discouragements. The traveller is frequently fatigued in the prosecution of his journey ; he suffers, in turn, from the scorching sun of summer and the chilling blasts of winter : The student frequently feels his body and spirits exhausted in the lawful pursuit of learning, in obtaining those qualifications which are requisite for the station to which providence is calling him : The patience of the husbandman is tried with the labors of the field, and his hopes of a ripening harvest are frequently blasted. This is a part *of the curse* which attends our apostacy from God, and is bitterly felt even by the generation of the righteous in this state of imperfection. *We that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened.* Arduous labor, numerous trials must also be expected by those who minister in holy things, and whose attention is earnestly bent on the salvation of others. The student does not become learned by slumbering on his couch and vainly dreaming, " I am wise ; " the husbandman cannot sit slothfully in his house and command his *pastures to be clothed with flocks and his vallies to be covered over with corn.* Can parents say to their children, *be ye fed,* and they are immediately filled, *be ye clothed,* and they are immediately warmed ? Neither can they who are eagerly set on *winning souls* to

the Saviour, address their ignorant families and neighbors, "be ye instructed" and they are instantly taught; "be ye regenerated" and the mighty change is effected; "be ye converted" and they are turned to the living God. In the accomplishment of any measure appropriate means must be employed. They who expect to be instrumental *in winning souls* must *labor in the gospel*; they must *spend and be spent*, embracing each favorable opportunity and employing every mean appointed of Jehovah for their conversion.— "They must endure all things for the elect's sake that they may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." What unwearied diligence is requisite seizing every opportunity *of doing good*; what wisdom in determining when to *forbear* with sinners or when to *admonish and exhort*; what *long-suffering in giving line upon line*, entreaty upon entreaty, notwithstanding their stupid indifference and neglect; what circumspection over our own conduct and conversation lest we defeat the force of our instruction by the levity of our example; what hours of ardent supplication with Zion's King for his blessing to accompany our endeavors; what continual heaviness, what unutterable anguish of heart amidst disappointed expectations, when they who *begin in the spirit end in the flesh*; when the blossoms which opened fair and promised abundant fruit are suddenly blasted *by the cares or pleasures of the world and the deceitfulness of riches*? What fatigue of body, what re-



proach of character, what anxiety and even agony of spirit did the great apostle endure in the work of the gospel? "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Again—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by love unfeigned, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true, as chastened and not killed; sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things." His deep solicitude, his great anxiety for the conversion of men, he compares to the pains of *a woman in travail*, and his unceasing exertions in promoting it to the strivings of a man in a race, or a soldier in the field of battle. He also represents these "women as laboring," or as it might be rendered, "wrestling with him in the gospel," plainly intimating their earnestness and diligence in the work, that their time and strength and worldly substance were made subservient to the spread of divine truth and the eternal salvation of men.

2. We learn from this doctrine that much may be done by persons of every station and every sex for the honor of our Redeemer, and the spiritual interests of others. Female

christians are frequently reluctant to engage in public measures for the promotion of religion; they are afraid of moving beyond the sphere allotted them in providence, of leaving that retired station, those more private virtues which are equally the characteristic and ornament of their sex. We acknowledge that a retired station and the gentler virtues appear more becoming their character; yet this diffidence of manners, this disposition for a retired sphere which in a certain degree is expedient and ornamental, may be readily indulged to excess. "Miriam the sister of Aaron" was bold in ascribing glory to Israel's God for the deliverance he had wrought and animated the daughters of Zion to that exercise: Hannah the mother of Samuel was open in offering the tribute of thanks to Jehovah for an answer to her prayers and the gift of a son: "Anna the prophetess" was public in the profession of her faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah, and spake of HIM "to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem: Priscilla, the wife of Aquila," was open, unshaken in her attachment to the apostle; accompanying him from place to place; she undertook to teach an "eloquent Apollos the way of God more perfectly;" yet were these illustrious personages impeached with presumptuous conduct, were they charged with throwing off that softness; that gentleness of manner which form the ornament of the female character? No, "they are held in everlasting remembrance;" their names are em-

balanced on the inspired page, and their zeal is exhibited as a pattern for the imitation of all succeeding generations. With what elevated sentiments of esteem and affection does the apostle mention the latter of these women ; he acknowledges not only his personal obligations to " this mother in Israel," but the obligation of the whole society of the faithful ? " To whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles ;" he considers her edifying conversation and example as diffusing their happy influence throughout every part of the christian community.

3. This passage may be improved for admonishing and animating female believers to a dignified zeal in promoting the gospel of our Lord. " Seeing, ye DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM, seeing ye also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," with a splendid retinue of *women*, in earlier and later ages, who lived the ornament of their sex, the glory of human nature, the blessing of their own age, the admiration of future generations : *women* whose characters were adorned with every virtue, private, relative, and social ; in whom appeared fervent piety to God, unfeigned charity to men, zeal for the diffusion of the gospel and solicitude for the salvation of others ; are ye " compassed with a cloud of witnesses so great, ARISE AND TRIM UP YOUR LAMPS ; lay aside every weight" and rouse into vigorous exercise each gift and grace in imitation of their high example. You have the same command au-

thorizing your exertions, the same plenitude of grace to support in the arduous work, the same compassionate Saviour to sympathise amidst every discouragement that may attend "your labors in the gospel;" and the same prize of immortality at the end of your christian course. Let each female hearer, who has beheld the glory of Jesus or felt the constraining influence of his love, solemnly enquire what are the peculiar duties of my station? How may I most successfully labor with ministers in advancing the gospel of my gracious Lord?

YE WOMEN who have an interest at our Father's throne: on whom the Holy Ghost has rested as the spirit of supplication, labor with us by frequent and fervent prayer for the success of our gospel; wrestle *mightily* with Israel's shepherd for his blessing on our feeble administrations, that it may please him "by the foolishness of our preaching to save" precious souls. "Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence and give him no rest until he arise and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

YE WOMEN, who are honored with children, whose tables are encircled with these rising *plants*, your own rejoicing and the future hopes of Zion, labour with us by ardently promoting their salvation; "be instant in season and out of season" advising and admonishing, and expostulating with them. If there be any consolation in Christ, any thing endearing in these little pledges of your Fa-

ther's love, any thing valuable in their immortal souls, any thing desirable in their usefulness through life, any thing interesting in their future glory and blessedness, "fulfil ye my joy" by making their instruction your chief employment, and their salvation your chief concern. The Lord God has conferred a peculiar honor on the woman in frequently, I venture to add, in ordinarily using her instrumentality for the conversion of her children; in reading the history of those who were early brought to the knowledge of the truth, or lived public and eminent blessings to the world, I have noticed that their first impressions may be usually traced back to her exertions; a Samuel, a Timothy, a Gardner, a Newton, a Lady Glenorchy appear each of them to have been indebted, under God, to the early prayers, and tears, and entreaties of a pious mother.

YE WOMEN, who are crowned with worldly affluence; on whom Jehovah has poured in rich profusion the treasures of the earth, *labour* with us by devising and executing liberal measures for the enlargement of his kingdom. While you reflect that your silver and your gold are derived from his bounty, let them flow in the advancement of his glory. Bear with me if I use freedom in admonishing and expostulating on the proper distribution of your wealth, because on this not only the salvation of thousands but your own eternal rejoicing and glorying intimately depend. "Charge them that are rich in this world," and

how does HE, "whose are the silver and the gold," require that these talents be occupied? In luxury of diet or dress; in personal or family aggrandizement; in adding possession to possession and thus securing an independence for their offspring after them? No, widely different is his solemn, sovereign command. "Charge them that are rich in this world that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

YE WOMEN, who are poor in this world; who are encumbered with many cares, who have numerous families and look on this hand and the other hand and see little prospect of their support, labor with us by throwing your "single mite into the treasury of God." It is not the possession of much, but the proper occupation of what you do possess that is accepted of Jehovah and secures the reward. "The widow's farthing" will be cheerfully acknowledged by HIM who judges "according to what a man hath and not according to what he hath not." One talent well improved amounts to more in his estimation than ten or ten thousand slothfully neglected.

Shall I multiply arguments for animating my christian hearers, male and female, to imitate those who have gone before "in the labors of the gospel?" Shall I call forth to their consideration the infinite, eternal obligations imposed on us by the redeeming love of the

Son of God? Shall I dwell on those complicated miseries from which he has delivered, the curse of a broken covenant, the terrors of an accusing conscience, the afflictions of the present world, the horrors of *the second death, the blackness of darkness forever*? Shall I mention those great and everlasting privileges to which he restores, "the assurance of our Father's love, joy in the Holy Ghost," support amidst the numerous evils of life, victory over death, the joys and glories of his heavenly kingdom? Waving these considerations, however interesting, I would direct your attention to the solemnities of death and of judgment. Suppose that we were this moment placed on the verge of eternity, that our eyes were now closing on all terrestrial scenes and our immortal spirits just winging their flight to a world unknown, whose condition would then be most joyous, whose reflections the most reviving? *Their's* who could look back on a life wasted in carnal ease and enjoyment, or *their's* who had actively occupied their hours for God and their generation; *their's* who could recollect evenings spent in unprofitable visits, in splendid circles, in the wanton dance, or *their's* who could reflect on evenings employed in teaching their families at home, in spiritual conference and prayer with their brethren in Christ Jesus, or in going around relieving the temporal and spiritual wants of his disconsolate members. In short, *theirs* who had wantonly "sown to the flesh and of the flesh must now reap corrup-

tion ;” or *theirs* who had been diligently “sowing to the spirit and of the spirit shall reap life everlasting ?” Surely their situation does not admit even of a comparison. The former begin to feel the remorse of a guilty conscience as a presage of “that worm which never dies,” and hell from beneath pours around them its gloomy horrors ; the latter experience a *joy unspeakable*, and the *day star* of glory sheds around them its cheering light. Suppose that you were this moment summoned to the tribunal of the Son of Man, that your ears already heard the dread alarm, arise, ye dead, and come to judgment, and that your eyes beheld *the great white throne* erected, the Judge descending *and the books opened*, whose condition would then be most blessed, and whose prospects the most glorious ? *Their’s* who had eagerly heaped up wealth for their children when the gospel of Jesus was not propagated, and his needy members not supplied, the naked not clothed, the hungry not fed, and the disconsolate not comforted ; *their’s* “who had slept on beds of ivory, that eat the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the stall, that chanted to the sound of the viol,” and gave every anxiety to the winds ; or *their’s* who had been *rich in good works, ready to distribute* for the encouragement of each pious and liberal plan ; who employed their vacant hours not in the wanton amusement, but going about doing good ; who occupied their wealth not in splendor of dress, not in *faring sumptuously*, not in the



support of each fashionable indulgence, but in spreading the knowledge of salvation, who, in imitation of the Eastern Patriarch, were "eyes to the blind and feet to the lame; who delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless also and him that had none to help him?" In short, whose condition will be the most blessed and whose prospects the most transporting on that all-dreadful, decisive day? *Their's* whom the Judge will hail with that reviving acclamation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; For I was an hungered and ye gave me meat," &c. or *their's* to whom he will denounce with a tone more terrible than thunder, "Depart from me, ye cursed, for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat," &c. Methinks I hear each individual anxiously exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end like his be peace."

O Lord, render each of us faithful to the death that *we may at last receive a crown of life*; enable us all whether male or female so to occupy our time and talents that when our Master appears we may receive him with exceeding joy. AMEN.



**MINISTERIAL LABOUR AND SUP-  
PORT:**

**A SERMON,**

**PREACHED AT MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT,  
FEBRUARY 21, 1810.**

**AT THE ORDINATION OF**

**HENRY DAVIS, D. D.**

**AND HIS INDUCTION AS PRESIDENT OF  
THE COLLEGE.**



*Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, over the which  
the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers...ACTS XX.28.*

*And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive  
a crown of glory that fadeth not away....I PETER, V. 4.*



**THE SECOND EDITION.**



## SERMON X.

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 23.

*In labours more abundant.*

THE traveller, as he draws near the end of his course, feels a pleasure in retracing the different stages through which he passed; in revolving in his own mind the dangers he escaped, the inconveniences to which he submitted, and the obstacles which he surmounted in performing his journey: It is a gratification to the labourer at the approach of evening to recollect the various toils of the day; to take a retrospect of the hardships he endured, of the discouragements under which he was supported, and the success with which his labors were crowned: The soldier towards the conclusion of life, finds a pleasure in recollecting the various campaigns in which he served, the dangers he braved, the enemies he vanquished, and the victories he won in fighting the battles of his country. That "good soldier of Jesus Christ," that chief of champions in the cause of christianity, whose words we have been reading, frequently indulges himself in reflections of a similar nature. He appears to feel a satisfaction too great for utterance while he recounts the temptations he had resisted, the persecutions he had suffered, the toils he had endured, and the opposition to which he rose superior in advancing the cause of his Saviour and Lord.

“ In stripes above measure,” he mentions, “ in deaths often, once was I stoned ; thrice I suffered shipwreck ; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness ; in watchings often ; in hunger and thirst ; in cold and nakedness,” and as he relates in the words selected for our present discussion, “ in labours more abundant.”

By the *labours* mentioned in this verse we are not to understand any peculiar trial which happened to Paul as a man or a christian ; they are designed to express his ardent, unceasing exertions as an apostle of the Lamb ; his unremitting activity in propagating the gospel of his master, and promoting the salvation of his fellow-men. These great objects occupied his undivided attention ; they summoned into action all his energies of body and mind ; He appeared to lose sight of his own ease and interest, and outward aggrandizement, and regarded himself as an infinite gainer if others became spiritually rich although at the expence of toil, and reproach and poverty to himself. Although the apostle sustained an extraordinary office in the church of the living God, yet his example is recorded for the imitation of all who succeed him in the service of the altar. Reverend *Fathers* and *Brethren*, this subject is peculiarly interesting to you and to me. On this auspicious,

solemn occasion it cannot therefore be unseasonable, and perhaps may not be unprofitable to enquire what *labors* are incumbent on us as the ministers of reconciliation, and what is our encouragement for becoming "in labors more abundant."

May a coal from the celestial altar touch the lips and heart of the speaker; inspiring him with a frame answerable to the magnitude of the occasion on which we are convened; may it touch the heart of every ambassador of the cross in this assembly, exciting him to exclaim in the language of the apostle, "the love of Christ constraineth me; I count not my life dear unto myself so that I may finish my course with joy, and—testify the gospel of the grace of God."

1. Ministers of the gospel ought to *labour* privately in the ardent prosecution of their studies; they should exercise an unwearied industry in improving their ministerial gifts, and thus becoming more qualified for discharging the duties of their important station. It is a very erroneous opinion, too frequently entertained, that the necessity of study in a great measure ceases when we are admitted to the capacity of public teachers. In schools of human learning and in seminaries of theology we can only lay the foundation, upon which the superstructure must afterwards be reared up by diligent application in private. The largest fund of knowledge which we can collect in the preliminary parts of our education for the ministry must soon be exhausted

unless it be replenished by reading, by reflection, and other means of information God forbid that I should be understood to represent literary attainments as the most important qualification, or even of equal importance with real grace in the ambassador of Jesus Christ; yet I may venture to assert that every species\* of learning, when sanctified by the Holy Ghost, will materially aid him in supporting the dignity, and discharging the duties of his office. No man can become too learned for the ministry of reconciliation. Every new acquisition of knowledge will enlarge the sphere of usefulness. There is nothing in the vast range of human science which may not be converted to the service of the sanctuary, either for the illustration and establishment of the truth, or the exposure

\* Those who deny the utility of learning to the christian ministry, not only oppose the opinion of the most eminent divines, but the practice of the church in the days of her greatest purity and glory. It is satisfactorily proved by Bishop STILLINGFLEET that in the times of Samuel, schools were established in Ramah, and other parts of Judea in which youth of apparent piety and prominent talents were taught the learning of the age, and that "God ordinarily called out of these schools those whom he employed in the prophetic office:" he adds "therein their only employment was to cultivate their natural faculties, to improve in knowledge, and true piety: the greatest part of the exercises of those who were educated in the schools of the prophets were instructions in the law and the solemn praises of God."—*Sacrae Origines*, vol. 1.—181-2. *Ox. ed.*

*Irenius*, who flourished in the second century, mentions that a school of sacred literature was founded at Smyrna under the direction of Polycarp, a Father in the primitive church: Eusebius, as quoted by Lardner, relates that such an institution was early established in Alexandria over which Pantænus presided, who was succeeded by St. Clem-



and refutation of error. By an extensive acquaintance with learning common and divine the herald of the gospel becomes "a workman that need not be ashamed;" he is rendered capable of "giving a reason of the hope that is in him; of evincing the reasonableness of that gospel which is the charter of all *his hopes*: and is thus qualified for confounding, if he cannot actually convince the *enemies of the cross*. It is obvious therefore that even in the age of inspiration literary acquirements were honored by Jehovah the spirit for the greater edification of the church. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and he was employed as the first and principal penman of the Old Testament scriptures; and Paul, who "had been educated at the feet of Gamaliel," preached much more and wrote much more than any of the other evangelists; or apostles. But a knowledge of sacred literature; a profound, universal acquaintance with the holy scriptures is of prime importance, and should be sought with pre-

ent, and that after him followed Origin; that the latter particularly instructed the youth "in logic, physics, geometry, astronomy, and ethics: he encouraged them likewise to read all sorts of antient authors, poets and philosophers; but above all he inculcated a diligent attention to the mind of God revealed in the prophets; he himself likewise explained to them difficult passages."—*Lard. cred. vol. 3.—26-7. Lon. ed.* Public schools, for the same purpose, appeared soon after the reformation, in almost every protestant country: and perhaps there is no more favorable presage for the rising respectability of the ministry, and the future prosperity of the churches in our own country, than the erection of similar seminaries by different denominations of christians.

eminent ardor by all who *serve at the altar*. While other books are permitted to attend as ministers of state, the bible should be elevated to the throne in our studies; while they are regarded as satellites revolving and shining in their respective orbits, the bible should be considered as the Sun which enlightens and cherishes the whole system. *Search the scriptures*, is the command of the Lord God to all his professed followers, but it is directed with peculiar emphasis to those who serve him in the gospel of his Son. They are entrusted with immortal souls of their own, and ought therefore to search the scriptures as a mean divinely appointed for their own sanctification and comfort; they are employed by *the chief Shepherd* for promoting the salvation of others, and ought to *search them* as a mean of qualifying them for the interesting work. Our great reformers considered the sacred oracles in the original languages as constituting the chief subject of study to those who were separated to the labours of the gospel. It was the maxim of Luther, that the man "most acquainted with his bible was the most accomplished divine." Beza in his eightieth year repeated the Psalms of David and the epistles of Paul in Hebrew and Greek; and Witsius, at an advanced period of his life, could rehearse almost any verse of the Old and New Testament in the original languages.

Need I apologize for repeating the remark that application to study, and particularly to the study of the sacred oracles, constitutes an

essential part of ministerial labour. It is required that *the lips of the priest should keep knowledge*, and that the people *should seek the law at his mouth*, but can we communicate to others knowledge which was never possessed by ourselves? Is he capable of *dividing aright the word of truth*, who has not patiently and painfully investigated that truth? Can any man as “a steward of the mysteries of godliness” make a proper or profitable distribution of these for the use of the family who has not endeavored to explore these mysteries, viewing them both in their separate importance and intimate connection? Can it be expected that he will bring from “this treasure things new and old” whose understanding has not been liberally stored with this treasure by reading and meditation? The minister of religion “is set for the defence of the gospel,” but can he execute that awful trust who has never learned to wield those weapons by which *the defence* must be made, and every adversary driven from the field; who has not profoundly investigated the gospel; who is not master in some measure of those evidences, external and internal, on which its authenticity rests; who has never traced the predictions and promises of the Old Testament to their literal and luminous accomplishment in the New; who has not contemplated the ceremonies and sacrifices of the former dispensation as immediately pointing to, and exclusively centering in *Jesus of Nazareth*, the great antitype, the real “Lamb of God who taketh away the sins

of the world?" *Ezra*, although a scribe divinely inspired, yet "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord" before he ventured "to teach statutes and judgments in Israel:" Solomon, the wisest of men, "gave good heed, and sought to find out acceptable words," and felt experimentally *his much study* to prove a *weariness to the flesh*: And Daniel, *a man greatly beloved*, and favored with eminent manifestations of the Most High, understood by books, by a careful research into the writings of preceding prophets, the divine purposes relative *to the desolations of Jerusalem*.

2. We ought to *labour* by faithfully and zealously *preaching the gospel* in public.—What should be our motive for prosecuting with unremitting industry our studies in the closet? Not merely to gratify an ardent thirst for knowledge, or to improve the understanding by the discovery of truths formerly unknown; not to acquire the reputation of polished scholars, or eminent divines. Nobler motives ought to actuate, and will actuate all who are called of Jehovah to the ministry of reconciliation. That same zeal for their Master's glory which rouses them to diligence in making preparation in private, will rouse them to equal diligence in seizing every opportunity for promoting the gospel abroad. Animated by the same spirit, and aiming at the same object with the great apostle, each faithful *laborer* will be ready to exclaim, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you: I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also

may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory :” He will religiously consecrate all his gifts, every talent, whether natural or acquired, to his master’s use in the conversion of souls, “ warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Knowledge thus occupied becomes the glory of the individual, and subserves the interests of Zion. Money locked up in a trunk, or buried in the earth, is neither profitable to the owner, nor to others, but when judiciously circulated proves a source of revenue to him, and tends to the convenience and advantage of others. A lamp however replenished with oil, or however carefully trimmed, is useless if *concealed under a bushel*, but when placed on an eminence diffuses light to all around : Thus all our ministerial qualifications, our gifts and graces however improved, are profitable only as they are devoted to the edification of the church. All the spoils which the royal David obtained in his conquest of the nations around were consecrated to the service of the literal temple, and all the knowledge which we acquire by meditation, by the study of books, whether sacred or profane, should be exclusively consecrated to the service of the spiritual temple ; either in unfolding the mysteries of redemption or in dispensing them to the household of faith. We are naturally prone to extremes : while some are too negligent in their previous studies ; while they prostitute in sloth or secular em-

ployments hours which ought to be occupied in preparing for their public administrations, and thus rush presumptuously\* into the pulpit ; others again spend in studies not immediately connected with their office, hours which might be employed more usefully in active service, *teaching from house to house*, or publishing the gospel of peace where openings are presented. While Paul admonishes Timothy his son “ to give attendance to reading ; to meditate upon these things, that his profiting might appear to all,” he adds with equal solemnity, “ preach the word ; be instant in season and out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

Excuse me if I make a digression from the subject by remarking, that in forming our discourses for the pulpit we cannot imitate a more excellent model than the “ great apostle, that master-builder” in the New Testament temple, “ I have determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified :” The Son of God, in his atonement, and righteousness, and interces-

\* The following anecdote, related of the great and good Mr. Bradbury, will be gratifying to every reader, but it is peculiarly instructive to those who labour in the gospel.—An acquaintance having called upon him at an advanced period of life, and found him intensely occupied in study, and seemingly impatient at the interruption, remarked that “ certainly it could cost him but little trouble to prepare for the pulpit having been so long in the habit of preaching ;” to which the venerable divine with an air of pleasantry replied, “ I always endeavour to have an Isaac on the altar ; if the Lord God is pleased to provide a lamb for burnt offering, I thankfully accept it.”

sion, is the *alpha and omega* of a sinner's hopes; he is the consolation and glory of the church militant; he is the consolation and glory of the church triumphant, and should therefore constitute *the beginning and ending* of all our discourses, whether from the pulpit or the press. Elegant diction may please the ear; brilliant composition may amuse the fancy; nice, ingenious disquisition, on different subjects, may improve the understanding, but it is the plain, practical, powerful, may I not add, unadorned exhibition of Jesus and his salvation, which usually proves effectual for arresting the conscience, for reforming the heart, and ultimately saving the soul: And ought we not to deplore, and deplore with tears, that in so many pulpits dissertations merely moral, or a species of subtle, metaphysical speculation are substituted for the "simplicity of the gospel of Christ:" And we need feel no hesitancy in asserting that a sermon which does not exhibit Jesus and redemption through his blood, however exquisitely prepared, or eloquently preached, is an insult to perishing sinners, and a prostitution of our sacred function. The parent is a thousand fold more consistent who professes solicitude for the welfare of his child, and yet offers it *a scorpion for an egg; a stone instead of nourishing bread*, or conducts it when athirst to some stale, putrid cistern, rather than the living, overflowing fountain. Is there any thing in the cold region of moral science, or metaphysical speculation to soothe the consci-

ence when set on fire by the lightnings of the law, or agitated by fearful apprehensions of *the wrath to come*? Is there any thing *here* to support the drooping pilgrim, and animate him in his career to glory when his *comforter has withdrawn* and *the candle of the Lord* scarcely sheds a glimmering ray on his path? Besides, we are not initiated into the ministry "to preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and that not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power." *Saul of Tarsus was no mean man*; he was no contemptible scholar; his natural genius was sublime; his mind, originally great, was expanded by every species of learning; his eloquence was bold and commanding; his imagination excursive and towering; his powers of reasoning were strong, and grasped every thing that lay within the intellectual range. Yet all these accomplishments, natural and acquired, he resigns at the foot of the cross, and desires to "become nothing that Jesus may be all and in all: We preach Christ crucified," he says, "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Charmed with the surpassing importance and glory of this subject, he devoutly exclaims, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord:" Filled with a holy indignation against any thing that would offer to intrude itself as a substitute for this sub-



ject, he mentions again, " 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."

I have felt a greater confidence in enlarging on this subject, from a consideration that these doctrines of the cross, in their native, artless simplicity, constituted *the faith* of the Fore-Fathers of this audience ; that *faith* which they openly avowed while they lived, and which they deemed it their duty, and glory, and joy to bequeath as the most precious legacy to their offspring. The assembly which I am now honored to address, have, in general, descended from a *host* of the most ardent, enlightened, disinterested champions in the cause of evangelic truth : a *host* who *resisted* to the loss of their property, their liberty, and in some instances, of their lives, in " contending for that faith which was once delivered to the saints ;" who in their attachment to the gospel, in its purity and simplicity, bartered the charms of civilized Europe for a precarious, perilous retreat in the woods of America. A brighter constellation\* never adorned, or blessed our world since the age of apostles.

3. We ought to labour by occasionally visiting and catechising *the flocks* which we are

\* Those who charge the author with an extravagant partiality for the original settlers of New-England, may consult the History of the Puritans by Mr. Neal, Dr. Calamy and others. Nay, the most honorable testimony has been borne to their talents, their learning, their piety, their zeal by some even of their intollerant persecutors.

are appointed *to oversee*. The importance of this part of ministerial service has been acknowledged in the purest periods of the church. The instruction of mankind, particularly of the rising generation, in this manner has usually revived with the revival of religion in all ages, and occupied the attention of those who attained to any considerable distinction either for piety or usefulness. It is the opinion of learned expositors that so early as the ministry of the apostles divine truth was arranged into the form of question and answer as the most convenient and successful method of communicating knowledge. Paul thus admonishes Timothy, "hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love;" again, "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, knowing from whom thou hast learned them." The mode of conveying religious instruction by catechising was adopted by the immediate successors of the apostles, and some of the most eminent lights in the primitive church were chiefly distinguished for their zeal and ability in that part of ministerial labour. No sooner had Zion begun to emerge from the gloom of antichristian night, and recover her former purity and glory than reformers directed their attention to this duty, and almost every protestant church prepared catechisms for the instruction of its particular members. Unless our people are rationally instructed and firmly established in the doctrines of christianity we cannot expect them to "remain

stedfast and unmoveable." A professor of religion, without a rational, profound acquaintance with the great principles of that religion, is like a ship without ballast, or a tree without roots ready to be overturned by every wanton gale, and perhaps there is no mean by which this knowledge can be so successfully infused as by the ordinance of catechising. A sermon exhibits the doctrines of revelation only in general terms, and therefore, however plain the language, or natural the arrangement, it is ordinarily above the capacity of the ignorant and young. A hearer must possess some acquaintance with the system of divine truth, before his knowledge will probably be much promoted from the pulpit. Besides, a public discourse is addressed to the congregation at large, and however vehemently pressed home by the preacher, a careless hearer is disposed to make the application to any other rather than himself; but in catechising, the minister can communicate his message in a manner level to the meanest capacity; he may without the least indignity to himself or the ordinance repeat the same truth again and again; he may vary his expression and impart the same sentiment in different language, so that none can misunderstand; he can bring the message home immediately to the conscience, and the heart, and has thus a greater opportunity of instructing the ignorant, of rousing the attention of the secure, of stripping the mask from the hypocrite, of answering the objections of opposers,

and of solving the doubts and animating the hopes of enquiring souls. It was probably in this exercise that Paul was occupied towards the conclusion of his ministry at Rome. He is represented by the sacred historian as "dwelling in his own hired house, and receiving all that came to him, teaching those things which concern our Lord Jesus Christ." And in his departure from Ephesus he appeals to the elders of that church, that he "had kept nothing back, but had taught them publicly and from house to house."

Diligence in catechising "the flocks, over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers," is thus an important part of ministerial labor; a service sanctioned by the example of apostles, and of those who have imbibed most liberally the spirit of apostles in different ages of the church: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," I would embrace this public, interesting occasion for impressing not merely *you*, but more especially *my own soul* with the importance of this duty: Let us hear it enforced in the very language of three of the holiest men, and most laborious, successful ministers of the periods in which they respectively lived; men "whose praise is in all the churches," and will flourish in the church while the church flourishes in the world. "Ministers of the gospel," one\* of them expostulates, "think not that all your work is

\* BAXTER'S Saint's Rest. p. 160.

in your studies and pulpits ; you are *shepherds* and must know every sheep, and mark their straying, and help to bring them home: Learn of Paul not only to “teach your people publicly, but from house to house;” enquire how they grow in knowledge and holiness, and on what they build their hopes for salvation ; see whether they worship God in their families, and teach them how to do it.” A second† remarks, “prudence will direct us to lay a good foundation of knowledge by catechising our people, and instructing them in the principles of christianity, without which our labours will be in vain. ‘This is *the master piece of a Master builder*. You can never adopt a better plan for securing success to your labours than the fruitful way of catechising. What age ever produced more lively and stedfast christians than the first ages, and then the care of this duty most eminently flourished in the churches. Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Optatas, Bazil, Austin, and Ambrose were all catechists.” A third‡ remarks, and it adds peculiar force to his observations on this subject that they were among his last expressions, uttered in the prospect of a speedy and solemn appearance at the judgment seat of his Lord “I lament that I have not attended more frequently societies for prayer, and that I have not been more diligent in catechising children in my congrega-

† FLAVEL’S Evangelical Pastor.

‡ The posthumous works of Mr. BROWN, a late professor of Divinity in Scotland.

tion. I am persuaded that these exercises are some of the best which ministers can use for promoting the welfare of souls, and it would be happy for the church if the zeal and care of her ministers were more exercised about these things."

4. We ought to labour by going abroad as opportunity is afforded, and conveying the message of salvation to those who are destitute. It is readily acknowledged that when a minister is ordained to the pastoral care of a particular congregation, among them his time and talents ought principally to be employed. They are a charge immediately committed to him by *the Great Shepherd*; at his hand their souls will be required, and consequently for their salvation his *prayers*, his *tears*, his *watchings*, his *fastings* ought chiefly to be devoted. Yet his labors are not exclusively to be occupied among them. Although he is ordained the pastor of a particular church he does not cease to be a minister of the church universal, and the latter still possesses a claim to a portion of his labours, as circumstances admit. Wherever, therefore, a field unoccupied may appear within his reach there the spiritual *sower* ought readily to enter, throwing around him the "incorruptible seed of the word." Our commission not only authorises, but obliges us "to preach the gospel to every creature; to be instant in season and out of season, to go out into the highways and hedges compelling them to come in to the feast of the gospel." This practice

may be derided by some as "methodism," and "enthusiasm." Would to God that such "methodism," such "enthusiasm" was more fashionable among us. Our Master would be more glorified ; the boundaries of his church more enlarged ; the triumphs of his cross more multiplied, and our own glory and joy more advanced. Besides, did not the compassionate Jesus "go about doing good?" Did he not feel constrained "to pass through Samaria" that he might instruct a solitary woman? Did not Paul consider himself a "debtor to the Greeks and the barbarians ; to the wise and the unwise, longing to impart some spiritual gift?" Did not Philip the evangelist travel a considerable journey, that he might teach a single Ethiopean in the method of salvation, and in his return "did he not preach in all the villages whither he went?" This is a duty peculiarly incumbent on us, because perhaps there is not a part of the globe where itinerant labors may be performed with more ease, or greater probability of success than in the country where we reside. *Lift up your eyes*, fellow labourers, and behold on the east, and the west, and the north, what an extensive, almost unbounded field opens to our view: "A field white already to harvest." The inhabitants of our new settlements use the same language with ourselves, therefore the road to their instruction is more open ; they are generally inquiring after the truth, and ready to embrace with open arms and affectionate hearts those who appear to communicate

among them the knowledge of salvation. "How beautiful upon their mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation?" Rarely have I enjoyed happier days than in my occasional excursions through those uncultivated regions: Rarely have I felt greater freedom of utterance, or greater elevation of soul than in *preaching* among their desolate inhabitants *the unsearchable riches of Christ*. All the toil to be undergone in travelling from place to place, and the little inconvenience arising from want of suitable accommodations are rewarded a thousand fold by that affection which is expressed for the person, and that attention which is paid to the ministrations of the messenger of peace: Rarely have I witnessed greater eagerness in crowding to the ordinances of grace, more solemn, silent attention, deeper awakenings of conscience, or more tender meltings of heart under the message of reconciliation than in my itinerant labours through the frontier settlements. Every hearer apparently hangs upon the lips of the speaker eager to catch the word of life as it is uttered. The standard of the cross is rarely erected among them, and all are seemingly anxious to press to it; the tidings of salvation seldom resound through their abodes, and are therefore heard with greater transports of gratitude and joy. O brethren, had we been more "zealous for the Lord God of hosts," and more solicitous about the souls of men,



our labours might have been "much more abundant" both at home and abroad; Our particular "vineyards might have been better cultivated," and "the wilderness" through our means have become "fair as Eden, and fruitful as the garden of the Lord."

Such are the duties incumbent upon us as *servants of the Most High God*, and while we contemplate their variety, their arduousness, we may reasonably ask, *Who is sufficient for these things?* To mention some considerations which may tend to encourage was the second branch of our discourse; and to this your attention is now invited.

1. We may derive encouragement from the infinitude of our Master's fulness, and the repeated assurances that he is ever ready to communicate. "In him," the Mediator of the covenant, "it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell," and, thanks be to his name, as duty is arduous this grace will be imparted. Are we ignorant, incapable of exploring the windings of the human heart, or exhibiting the mysteries of redemption with that skill which appears requisite for ensuring success? "He possesses all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" and to them who humbly depend on his teaching he will impart a measure of knowledge proportioned to the work allotted for them. Are we weak in body; are our feeble frames, *through their often infirmities*, ready to sink beneath the pressure of public and private duty; Jesus whom we serve, is Jehovah, "who fainteth

not, neither is weary" by any possible exertion, and his omnipotence is pledged for our support: Amidst all those discouragements which can arise from the frailty of the flesh, and fatigue in the discharge of duty, he meets us with that reviving interrogatory, "hast thou not known; hast thou not heard; hath it not been told thee from the beginning; hast thou not the testimony of apostles, of martyrs, of reformers, of my faithful followers in every preceding generation, that the everlasting God, the Lord fainteth not, neither is weary; that he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he encreaseth strength;" and thousands from their own experience can attest the truth of these promises. "Out of weakness they have often become" sensibly "strong:" When they have ascended the pulpit, or gone abroad "in their labors of love," tottering through bodily frailty, or trembling through a consciousness of inward insufficiency, strength has been almost miraculously imparted; they have been enabled to perform the service in a manner most honorable to themselves, and acceptable and edifying to others. Read, *ye ministers of our God*, read in the hour of dispondency the golden legend of those who have gone before us in the labors of the gospel, and their triumphs in all difficulty by strength communicated from Jesus Jehovah their Living Head; Read the history "of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthæ; of David also, of Samuel, and of the prophets; who

through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens." Are we occasionally discouraged from an impression that imperfection attends our best services; that we neither study, nor pray, nor preach with an earnestness and solemnity becoming our sacred function? Jesus, by whom we are called to the office, is "Jehovah our righteousness and advocate;" his blood is everlastingly meritorious for the remission of all our failures, and he ever lives, ever intercedes to make the application of these merits: Does joy frequently depart from our hearts, and sleep from our eyes through the melancholy apprehension that "Israel is not gathered" by our means; "that we are laboring in vain, and spending our strength for nought and in vain?" Jesus, in whose service we are employed, is a "most merciful and faithful High Priest:" He knows by experience the bitterness of "laboring in vain," and is infinitely compassionate to sympathise in all our sorrows: Our tears may not soften the obdurate hearts of our hearers, yet they are carefully numbered by Him, and "laid up in his bottle:" The sighs which often heave our bosoms may not produce in them one pang of remorse, one emotion of sorrow; yet they enter the ears of our divinely compassionate Lord: Our most pointed admonitions, and affection-

ate entreaties may rebound back like arrows from the wall of adamant, yet "they are graven as with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond" in his heart forever.

2. We may derive encouragement from the assurance of success to accompany our labors. Rarely, perhaps never, is the upright, faithful servant of the sanctuary left without some fruits of his ministry, either in one period of his life or another. Every particle of grain, which the natural husbandman deposits in the earth, may not spring up, and bear fruit, and sometimes the whole field may be apparently blasted ; yet these instances are rare, and out of the ordinary course. The husbandman who is industrious and prudent is usually prosperous. He who is careful to prepare the soil ; who endeavors to put in the best seed in the best season is, for the most part, rewarded with a liberal harvest. As it is with the natural, it is usually with the spiritual husbandman. The servant of Jesus, who is *in labours more abundant* ; most diligent in his studies, trying to find out the most seasonable truths, and the most acceptable words for conveying them ; most circumspect in his private walk *that the ministry be not blamed* ; most vigilant in promoting the spiritual interests of his flock, *watching* over each family and individual as one who expects to *give account* ; most importunate in prayer to the Holy Ghost for his blessing on every administration, is ordinarily the most abundant in success. *The word of the Lord*, thus honestly

dispensed “rarely returns altogether void,” but is accompanied with some happy effect either for conversion or edification. Perhaps our labours are much more successful than we generally apprehend. Our message is probably effectual for imparting light to those who complain of spiritual darkness; for animating some who endure a *fiery conflict* with their own corruptions; for ministering consolation to some broken, disconsolate hearer; for supporting the weak and establishing the wavering, in a thousand instances of which we shall receive no intimation until it is told us in the region of glory. So intimate is the connexion between appropriate means and the end, that the establishment of a faithful ministry in a congregation is a certain pledge that there are souls to be saved there. The Apostles were thus enjoined to remain in Corinth, *for, saith Jehovah, I have much people in this city.*

3. We may derive encouragement from the prospect of an unutterable, eternal reward in the world to come. Our condescending Lord, who knows the difficulty of our work, and the numerous discouragements to which we are exposed, animates us to persevere by the promise of “glory, a weight of glory, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory: a glory” to be enhanced by all the toil, and poverty, and suffering which we now endure *for his sake.* Although he has promised a heaven of blessedness to all his followers; a crown to every “soldier who overcomes, and an inheritance”

for all who are heirs by adopting grace, yet he reserves a brighter crown, and a larger inheritance for those who disinterestedly serve him in the work of the gospel. While "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the STARS forever and ever."

*Fathers and Brethren*, are we occasionally borne down by the pressure of arduous, and complicated duties; do we feel "much study to prove a weariness to the flesh," and become impatient under this part of ministerial labour? Is our love often rewarded with ingratitude, and are we ready to relax our diligence *in well doing*? Doomed perhaps to poverty of outward condition, or embarrassed unavoidably with the cares of life are we tempted to behold with an envious eye others living in ease, and rolling in all the affluence of the world. Amidst these trying discouraging circumstances lift up your eyes, and contemplate those glories which shall hereafter be revealed; realize that public, honorable testimony which will be given to all your fidelity and zeal in the hour of retribution. Inviting you to a station on his right hand, the judge will mention *openly* all the fatigue to which you now submit, and the efforts which you now make for the advancement of his interest; after he has taken a minute survey of all your prayers, your tears, your anxieties, your exertions for the spread of his gospel, and the promotion of his glory; after he has related

these to his Father, and attending angels, he will announce with an air of affection neither to be described, nor conceived at present, "Well done, good and faithful servants: Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, I appoint unto you a kingdom as my father hath appointed unto me." Who would not run for such a *prize*? Who would not *strive for such a mastery*? Who would not become "in labours more abundant" for the acquisition of such a *palm, a throne, a crown, a kingdom*? Be encouraged therefore, "holy brethren, to feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind," in the anticipation "that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Your own imaginations have probably suggested the most suitable application of this doctrine.

1. May we not infer from this subject that in the ministerial office there is no room for sloth or carnal indulgence? Some have been induced to assume this awful station from the prospect of temporal ease, and gratification. Too indolent to perform the duties of any other calling they have sought in the service of the altar a retreat from difficulty and toil. From such *apostles and pastors* may the Lord God, in tender mercy, preserve his church; men who have not deliberately *counted the cost* and who are not therefore prepared *to spend and be spent* in the arduous, interesting work.

I say from such *apostles and pastors* may the Lord in mercy preserve his church, because an indolent, unqualified, unconscientious ministry should be deprecated as her greatest curse ; It almost necessarily diffuses the contagion of spiritual disease and death wherever its influence extends. Besides, the very nature of this office ; the variety of duties enjoined on those who embark in it, and the names by which they are uniformly distinguished in scripture all unite in exposing the presumptuousness, and infatuation of such imposters. Are they not called *Stewards*, to shew that they should be always ready to wait "upon the household of God," imparting "milk to the spiritual babe, and strong meat to those who have attained to the stature of men?" Are they not designated "laborers, and laborers even in harvest," a season in which the most ardent, unremitting industry, is expected? Are they not denominated *workmen*, yea, *workers together with God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps*? Are they not characterised *overseers and watchmen*, to instruct us that their eyes should be always open, their attention ever awake to the spiritual interests of the flock committed to their care? Are they not exhibited in scripture under the emblem of *stars*, to intimate that they should be always revolving in their orbits, and still shining as they roll along? What is the history of a Paul, a Peter, and the other Apostles but a history of their "travels, their watchings, their fastings, their perils by sea and by land,"



their zeal in public instructing the multitude, or their fervor in secret wrestling with the Holy Ghost for his blessing on their labours? "The minister of the sanctuary," if actuated by the spirit of his office, may find employment for every moment of his time in discharging the different duties of his calling. No vigor of body is more than sufficient to bear up under those exertions which he is occasionally called to make. No learning can be too various, too profound for understanding and illustrating, in all its connections, the vast scheme of revelation; that which first dawned in paradise; which shone with increasing lustre during the age of patriarchs and prophets; which bursted forth with still greater glory at the birth and death, more especially at the resurrection and ascension of our blessed Lord; which will be receiving additional evidence from every movement of divine providence until "the mystery of God is fully finished" at the consummation of all things: No application to study can be too patient, too persevering for bringing out of the sacred *treasure*, from Sabbath to Sabbath, *things new and old* for the use of the spiritual family. How explicit, therefore, how awful is the admonition of Paul to Timothy his son? "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom: Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist."

2. Are we not reprov'd by this example of the great apostle, for our own indolence and unprofitableness as "labourers in the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts?" When we realise the solemnity of our station; when we consider the duties which we ought to have performed, and which, by a becoming diligence in our callings, we might have performed, must we not acknowledge that we fall infinitely short? Have we *laboured* in our closets, and endeavored by reading and meditation to acquire that knowledge which is requisite for the responsible and profitable discharge of our ministry? Have we diligently cultivated our graces; aspiring after higher attainments in faith, in love, in humility, in hope, in tenderness for the souls of men, and in zeal for our Master's glory? Have not many hours been unnecessarily spent in conversation with our families; or in the society of our friends, which we might have usefully employed, examining our own hearts, or pleading with the Divine Spirit for wisdom to deal successfully with the hearts of others, or in searching the sacred oracles to learn, by a comparison of scripture with scripture, "how to divide aright the word of truth, and give to all their portion of meat in due season?" Have we proceeded from the *labours* of the closet to the pulpit "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, regardless of every other consideration than the salvation of our hearers? Have we, as leisure was afforded, gone abroad from settlement to settlement, dispen-

sing *the bread of life* to those who were languishing with spiritual hunger? Ah, brethren, it may be our shame now, and if sorrow could mingle with the joys of paradise, it must be our sorrow there, that we are so indifferent in performing the duties of a station the most interesting and responsible in which mortals can be placed. Men are not inactive or unconcerned in the other occupations of life. The patriot does not slumber when the rights of his country are invaded: He rises "from his bed of ivory," he girds on his armour, he sacrifices his own ease, he hazards his own life in avenging her wrongs. What oceans have not been navigated; what countries have not been explored; what toil has not been endured; what dangers have not been encountered by "the children of this world" in the pursuit of their favorite objects! Now, we see them burning beneath a southern sun, again, shivering in the frozen regions of the north for the acquisition of the bubble of earthly honour or gain; a bubble which vanishes as it is grasped, and eludes their fond expectations; and yet can we be indolent or indifferent in a cause in which the honour of our Master, the salvation of our brethren by nature, and our own felicity and glory for eternity are immediately involved? Methinks I see the condescending Saviour pointing to the *manger* where he lay, shut out from the abodes of men, "to the wilderness where he was an hungered, to the garden" where he bled, *to the cross* on which he expired, and

then asking, "is such your kindness to your Friend? Do you thus requite your compassionate, dying Lord? Do you believe that *you were redeemed* from eternal wrath, and rendered heirs of eternal glory, "not by silver or gold, but by my precious blood," and yet are you slothful in my service?" For my own part, I never survey the months and years of my life that are past without the most profound humiliation and regret: How much might I have done for my own soul, and for the souls of others, in moments which have been wasted in idleness, or in pursuits not immediately connected with my office as a servant of Jesus Christ.

*Men, Brethren, and Fathers*—"The night is far spent;" by all, therefore, that is solemn in our ministerial vocation; by all that is interesting in the glory of that Jesus which we are appointed to promote; by all that is precious in the souls of fellow-immortals which we are set apart as the instruments of saving; by all that is august and elevating in those rewards of blessedness and honor which await *the faithful servant* of the cross; by all that is awful in the anticipation of being rejected as "unprofitable stewards," and having the "blood of others required at our hands," let us this day be admonished "to lay aside every weight," whatever might embarrass in the discharge of duty, and aim at imitating the illustrious example which the text presents to our view. "By the grace of God this great apostle was what he was," and the same grace

is as *plenteous* in our day, as it was in his : it is no less free for us, than for him. “ He was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person, but he obtained mercy” for himself, and was employed for bringing others to a participation of the same mercy, why then may not we ask and receive from the same unexhausted treasure ? Like him “ let us live by the faith of the Son of God, receiving” from his mediatorial “ fulness” the necessary “ supply of every grace,” and like him let us consecrate all our talents to the advantage of the “ spiritual household.” Our ministerial gifts will be always expanding and improving as they are employed. “ To every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly.” He who faithfully occupies the talent, already possessed, shall have his talent increased. It is almost incredible to what a pre-eminence of usefulness many have attained in the christian church, whose bodily constitutions were slender, whose intellectual powers were by no means extraordinary, and whose local situation was rather unfavorable for the cultivation of these powers. They have reached an elevation of rank, among the followers of the Lamb, little inferior to that of reformers and martyrs. When we contemplate the active services of many in modern times, the labors of a Baxter, a Boston, a Brown, a Doddridge, an Edwards, an Elliot in visiting the sick, in “ exhorting from house to house, in preaching the gospel through the week, and on the Sabbath, we are ready

to conjecture that they were rarely in their studies, and when we take a review of the books which they have written, their number and excellence, we are ready to conclude that they were rarely out of them. All this pre-eminence of respectability and usefulness they attained by frugally collecting every fragment of their time, and humbly depending on the Holy Ghost for his influences to enlighten and sanctify and support. These illustrious personages, *although dead, yet speak* by their example, and could they address us this day from their mansions in glory they would expostulate with us to shake off our lethargy, "to gird on the armour of light," and become more "valiant for the Lord God of hosts, and for our generation."

Brethren, the period in which we live is peculiarly eventful; but although the movements of divine providence are ominous, and, in some respects, awful, yet a thousand considerations rush upon our minds, animating us to a holy zeal in the *labours of the gospel*. Antient predictions are receiving a rapid and glorious accomplishment in the enlargement of Messiah's kingdom. Look around, and behold how *the desert has blossomed* within our own recollection, and under our own eyes; and *the wilderness*, lately barren and dreary, is now waving with a profusion of golden fruit! New congregations are frequently formed in almost every direction; and, by a liberal supply of the spirit of our ascended Lord, many of them are furnished

with an evangelic, enlightened, laborious ministry. Do I not speak in moderation when I mention, that in a thousand instances in the northern and western parts of this state, and of a neighboring state, the very places where stood the hut of the Indian, are now consecrated by temples to the living God, temples crowded with peaceful, spiritual worshippers, and the howl of savage beasts, and the war-hoop of more savage men are succeeded by "songs of salvation, even praises to our God?" How rapidly is divine grace multiplying her trophies in other parts of the globe? While the Lord God, in a manner unusually awful, "is shaking the nations, the Desire of all nations is visibly coming" in the wider extension of his kingdom, and the more luminous displays of his glory. Scarcely does a week revolve without bringing the intelligence of some other missionary field explored, and some other society organized for conveying "the testimony of Jesus" to nations which have neither "heard his fame, nor seen his glory." Lo! *the angel*, foretold by the lip of antient prophecy, has reached "the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to every—kindred, and tongue, and people," and I see the apparently impenetrable gloom which had long enveloped the nations gradually breaking, and receding before its celestial light: I see the abject African, who had been formerly the sport of oppression, now swelling beyond the chain which galled him, and leaping, and exulting "in the glorious li-

berty of the sons of God :” I see the forlorn, cheerless Icelander, remote in the regions of the north, almost a stranger to the heat of the natural sun, now basking beneath the more genial, fostering rays of “ the sun of righteousness :” I see the ruthless, wandering Arab arrested by the messenger of peace, and refreshed, on his burning sands, “ with that river which makes glad the city of God,” those living “ streams of which they who” participate “ shall thirst no more :” I see the stupid, sottish Hindoo, although a stranger to all the learning and refinements of this world, “ made wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ,” and preparing “ to shine as the brightness of the firmament for ever and ever :” I see some rude idolater of almost every clime, rising from his fancied god which he had ignorantly worshipped, and doing homage to Jehovah the only Creator and Lord : I see, in the conversion of a Sabat and Abdallah, *the first fruits* of the long deluded votaries of Mahomed to *Jesus of Nazareth*, the true Prophet and Saviour of the world, and in the “ martyred blood” of the latter I realise a seed for the christian church more numerous than the stars of heaven : I see, in the anxiety of the Eastern Jews, their eager research into antient prophesy, a precious presage that, while the Gentiles “ from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South are pressing into the kingdom of God,” the period is at hand “ when all Israel shall also be saved : Sing unto the Lord a new song, and



his praise from the end of the earth ; the isles and the inhabitants thereof : Let the wilderness, and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit ; let the inhabitant of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. For behold, The Lord hath made bare his holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." What eye does not sparkle with joy at the elevating scene ! What bosom does not kindle with an ardor inextinguishable to aid in carrying on the important work ! Whose gold and whose silver will not flow in the execution of any scheme, the result of which may probably be another source of glory to God, of exultation to angels, and salvation to millions of mankind who are yet unborn ? " Ye servants of the Most High God," who are now invading the empire of darkness in different and distant nations, *all hail*. Although " we are absent from you in body, we are present in spirit," and at every step that " the ark of the covenant," advances through your exertions we unite our acclamation with yours, **HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED.** We accompany you with our prayers night and day, that the Redeeming Angel may protect your persons, may give efficacy to your administrations, may cheer you, in the hour of conflict and peril, with his rich consolations, and enable you ultimately to " overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of your testimony : " With a he-

roism worthy of the Captain whom you serve, and the cause in which you are embarked, go on, in the sacred warfare, "conquering and to conquer, until you have borne the standard of the cross in triumph around the globe: With the angel's extacy reiterate in every region under heaven the message announced by the angel to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto ALL PEOPLE; For unto you is born in the city of David, a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST THE LORD. Publish to the most rude, the most remote inhabitant of the earth, the reviving *record*, that "Jesus of Nazareth is a PROPITIATION.—for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD."

When I look around this vast assembly: hundreds of whom I never saw before, and whom it may be, I shall never see on earth again, *my spirit is moved* with the most tender solicitude about their eternal destiny. I am irresistibly borne forward in imagination to that occasion, when we must stand together at the *judgment-seat* of our common Lord and I feel anxious for the station which each of you shall occupy in that dreadful, decisive hour. Dare I entertain, shall I entertain the pleasing hope of beholding you all placed on the right hand of the judge, clothed in the flowing robes of his righteousness, shining in the beauties of holiness, carrying "palms in your hands," wearing "crowns upon your heads," and invited with angels and arch-an-

gels to the possession "of his everlasting kingdom." Ah! are there not some; have we not reason to apprehend that there are many present who "have neither part nor lot" in that inheritance! Who have never undergone that change of heart, "that washing of regeneration, that renewing of the Holy Ghost, without which no man can see the Lord?" Although the influences of the Divine Spirit have recently descended in liberal showers on various towns around, and apparently on many in this town, *they* have not descended on them. *Would to God*, that their eyes were opened to behold that sword of indignation which hangs unsheathed over their heads, and the horrors of that wrath to which they are exposed by transgression. *Would to God*, that they were enabled by faith to discover *that city of refuge* which is revealed in the gospel, and which all who enter are eternally safe. Most willingly I embrace this opportunity "of espousing them all to one Husband," even Jesus the infinite Surety, that hereafter they may stand before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Behold, I bring near his righteousness, and offer it for your immediate, unconditional reception, and as you consult your eternal welfare, put on without delay, put on with all affection "*this garment of salvation.*" Clothed with this immaculate, infinitely precious robe you shall be accepted now, and saved forever. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." How truly gracious the term, *believing on the*

*Son*, embracing his righteousness, submitting to his sceptre, relying on his atoning sacrifice for the remission of all offences, trusting to his covenant faithfulness, for the accomplishment of every promise ; “ He who thus believeth on the Son hath eternal life ; ” he receives the title in his immediate adoption ; he is constituted, in the very moment of *his believing*, he is constituted *an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus* the Mediator to all the blessings of grace and glory. As your brother by nature, your fellow-sinner by departing from the Living God, let me expostulate with you to acquiesce in this plan of redemption. Do you expect, can you ask salvation by any scheme more eligible ; a scheme more acceptable to the Father who ordained it, to the Son who accomplished it, to the Spirit of grace who applies it, or more appropriate to your own circumstances as sinners who have forfeited every claim to the mercy of God ? *Choose you this day* on what terms you will transact with a Holy, Righteous, offended Sovereign. Will you throw down the weapons of your hostilities, and accept of Jesus in whom *Jehovah is reconciled* ; or consulting the damning suggestions of proud, impious, infatuated reason *will you* carry on the warfare, and *rush* deliberately “ on the thick bosses of his buckler ? We are ambassadors for Christ,” and wait to know the issue of our embassy : We wait to know whether the terms of negociation are acceptable : Whether the overtures of grace proposed on the part of

heaven are acceded to, and ratified on your part. Were all the strangers to the covenant who are present ; were twenty ; was only one persuaded to accept of Jesus Christ for *righteousness and salvation*, how joyful would be this occasion ! Some attending angel would speedily convey the intelligence to the hosts above : Then all the Angels of God would clap their wings, and they in concert with *the spirits of just men* before the throne burst forth in one universal, rapturous acclamation, let us *make merry and be glad : For such a sinner in yonder sanctuary was dead, and is alive again ; and was lost and is found.*

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting ; and let all the people say, AMEN, Praise ye the Lord.*