

## TO THE READER.

READER,

THE embryo of this book was but one Sermon, preached a little before the ending of my public ministry, upon the text of the third Treatise, (upon the occasion intimated in the Epistle to that truly Honourable Lady). Being obliged to communicate the Notes, and unavoidably guilty of some delays, I made a compensation by enlargement; and (having reasons for the publication of them, with which I shall not trouble you,) to make them more suitable to the designed end, I prefixed the two former Treatises: The first I had preached to my ancient flock: of the second I had preached but one sermon. If many of the materials in the second be the same as in the first, you must understand that my design required that it should be so: they being the same attributes of God, which the first part endeavoureth to imprint upon the mind; and which the second and third endeavour to improve into a constant course of holy affection and conversation. As it is the same food which the first concoction chylieth, which the perfecting concoctions do work over again, and turn into blood, and spirits, and flesh: so far am I in such points from gratifying thy sickly desire of variety, and avoiding the displeasing of thee by the rehearsals of the same, that it is my very business with thee to persuade thee, to live continually upon these same attributes and relations of God, as upon thy daily air and bread; and to forsake that lean, consuming company, who feed on the shells of hard and barren controversies, or on the froth of compliments and affected shows, and run after novelty instead of substantial solid nutriment: And to tell thee, that the primitive, pure, simple Christianity, consisted in the daily serious use of the great materials of the *Creed*, *Lord's Prayer*, and *Ten Commandments*, contracted in the

last will "give up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in all; and the Son himself shall be subject to this end." (1 Cor. xv. 24. 28.) The end of Christ's sacrifice and intercession is to reconcile God and man. The end of his doctrine is to teach us to know God. The end of his government is to reduce us to the perfect obedience of our Maker. It is therefore the greatest duty of a Christian to know God as revealed by his Son; and it is such a duty about our ultimate end as is also our greatest mercy and felicity. Therefore doth the Lord Jesus here in the text describe that life eternal which he was to give to those whom the Father had given him, to consist in "knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent." My purpose is in this treatise to speak only of the first part of the text, 'The knowledge of God.' And first I shall very briefly explain the text.

**THIS**—That is, This which I am describing.

**LIFE**—Life is taken sometimes for the soul's abode in the body, which is the natural life of man: or the soul's continuation in its separated state, which is the natural life of the soul: and sometimes for the perfections of natural life. And that either its natural perfection, that is, its health and vivacity; or its moral perfection or rectitude; and that is either in the cause, and so God is our life, Christ is our life, the Holy Spirit is our life; or in itself; and so holiness is our life in the principle, seed or habit. Sometimes life is taken for the work, employment and exercise of life; and so a holy conversation, is our moral, spiritual or holy life. And sometimes it is taken for the felicity of the living: and so it containeth all the former in their highest perfection, that is, both natural life, and moral spiritual life, and the holy exercise thereof, together with the full attainment and fruition of God in glory, the End of all.

**ETERNAL**—That is, simply eternal, objectively, as to God the principal object: and Eternal 'ex parte post,' subjectively; that is, Everlasting.

**THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL**—Not natural life in itself considered, as the devils and wicked men shall have it. But 1. It is the same moral spiritual life which shall have no end, but endure to eternity. It is a living to God in love; but only initial, and very imperfect here, in comparison of what it will be in heaven. 2. It is the eternal felicity, (1.) Se-

minally; for grace is as it were the seed of glory. (2.) As it is the necessary way or means of attaining it; and that preparation which infallibly procureth it. The perfect holiness of the saints in heaven, will be one part of their perfect happiness: and this holiness imperfect they have here in this life. It is the same God that we know and love, here and there; and with a knowledge and love that is of the same nature seminally: as the egg is of the nature of the bird. (Whether it may be properly said to be formally and specifically the same ‘quoad actum,’ as well as ‘quoad objectum;’ yea, whether the ‘objectum clare visum,’ and the ‘objectum in speculo vel ænigmate visum,’ make not the act specifically differ, I shall not trouble you to dispute.) And this imperfect holiness hath the promise of perfect holiness and happiness in the full fruition of God hereafter. So it is the seed, and prognostic of life eternal.

TO KNOW—‘Non semper et ubique eodem modo vel gradu;’ Not to know God here and hereafter in the same manner or degree. But to know him here as in a glass, and hereafter in his glory, as face to face. To know him by an affective, practical knowledge: there is no text of Scripture of which the rule is more clearly true and necessary than of this, that words of knowledge do imply affection. It is the closure of the whole soul with God, which is here called the knowing of God. And because it is not meet to name every particular act of the soul, whenever this duty is mentioned, it is all denominated from knowledge, as the first act, which inferreth all the rest. 1. Knowledge of God in the habit, is spiritual life, as a principle. 2. Knowledge of God in the exercise, is spiritual life, as an employment. 3. The knowledge of God in perfection, with its effects, is life eternal, as it signifieth full felicity. What it containeth, I shall further shew anon.

THEE—That is, the Father, called by some divines, ‘Fons vel fundamentum Trinitatis:’ The fountain, or foundation of the Trinity: and oft used in the same sense as the word *God*, to signify the pure Deity.

THE ONLY—He that believeth that there is more gods than one, believeth not in any. For though he may give many the name, yet the description of the true God can agree to none of them. He is not God indeed, if he be not one only.

This doth not at all exclude Jesus Christ, as the second person in Trinity ; but only distinguisheth the pure Deity, or the only true God, as such, from Jesus Christ, as Mediator between God and man.

TRUE—There are many that falsely and metaphorically are called gods. If we think of God but as one of these, it is not to know him, but deny him.

GOD—The word *God* doth not only signify the Divine perfections in himself but also his relation to the creatures. To be a God to us, is to be one to whom we must ascribe all that we are or have ; and one whom we must love, and obey, and honour, with all the powers of soul and body : and one on whom we totally depend, and from whom we expect our judgment and reward, in whom alone we can be perfectly blessed.

AND JESUS CHRIST—That is, as Mediator, in his natures (God and man), and in his office and grace.

WHOM THOU HAST SENT—That is, whom thy love and wisdom designed and commissioned to this undertaking and performance.

The knowledge of the Holy Ghost seemeth here left out, as if it were no part of life eternal. But 1. At that time the Holy Ghost in that eminent sort, as sent by the Father and Son on the apostles, after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, was not yet so manifested as afterwards, and therefore not so necessarily to be distinctly known and believed in as after. The having of the Spirit being of more necessity than the distinct knowledge of him. Certain it is that the disciples were at first very dark in this article of faith : and Scripture more fully revealeth the necessity to salvation of believing in the Father and Son, than in the Holy Ghost distinctly ; yet telling us, that “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.” (Rom. viii. 9.) 2. But presently after, when the Spirit was to be sent, the necessity of believing in him is expressed ; especially in the apostle’s commission to baptize all nations (that were made disciples) in “the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

*Doct.* ‘The knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ the Mediator, is the life of grace, and the necessary way to the life of glory.’

As James distinguisheth between such a dead faith as devils and wicked men had, and such a living and working faith as was proper to the justified ; so must we here of the knowledge of God. " Many profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate." (Titus i. 16.) There is a form of knowledge which the unbelievers had, (Rom. ii. 22,) and a knowledge which puffeth up, and is void of love, which hypocrites have. (1 Cor. viii. 1. 13.) But no man (spiritually) knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit. And they that rightly " know his name will put their trust in him." (Psal. ix. 10.) Thus he giveth the regenerate " a heart to know him;" (Jer. xxiv. 7;) and the new creature " is renewed in knowledge." (Col. iii. 10.) And " vengeance shall be poured out on them that know not God." (2 Thess. i. 8.)

This saving knowledge of God which is eternal life, containeth and implieth in it all these acts : 1. The understanding's apprehension of God according to the necessary articles of faith. 2. A belief of the truth of these articles : that God is, and is such as he is therein described. 3. An high estimation of God accordingly. 4. A volition, complacency, or love to him as God, the chiefest good. 5. A desiring after him. 6. A choosing him, with the rejection of all competitors. 7. A consent that he be our God, and a giving up ourselves to him as his people. 8. An intending him as our ultimate end in the use of means, in the course of our conversations. 9. A seeking him in the choice and use of means. 10. An obeying him as our Sovereign Governor. 11. An honouring, and praising him as God. 12. And an enjoying him and delighting in him (in some small foretaste here, as he is seen by faith ; but perfectly hereafter, as beheld in glory). The effective practical knowing of God, which is life eternal, containeth or implieth all these parts.

And every Christian that hath any of this knowledge, desireth more : it is his great desire to know more of God, and to know him with a more affecting powerful knowledge. He that groweth in grace, doth accordingly grow in this knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ. The vigour and alacrity of our souls liveth in it : the rectitude of our actions, and the holiness of them, floweth from it : God is the excellency of our hearts and lives : our advancement and

our joy is here only to be found. All other knowledge is so far desirable, as it conduceth to the knowledge of God, or to the several duties which that knowledge doth require. All knowledge of words or things, of causes and effects, of any creatures, actions, customs, laws, or whatsoever may be known, is so far valuable as it is useful; and so far useful as it is holy, subserving the knowledge of God in Christ. What the sun is to all men's eyes, that God is to their souls, and more. It is to know him that we have understandings given us; and our understandings enjoy him but so far as they know him; as the eye enjoyeth the light of the sun, by seeing it. The ignorance of God, is the blindness and part of the atheism of the soul, and inferreth the rest. They that know him not, desire not heartily to know him; nor can they love him, trust him, fear him, serve him, or call upon him, whom they do not know. "How shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. The heart of the ungodly saith to God, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: What is the Almighty, that we should serve him; and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?" (Job xxi. 14, 15. xxii. 17.) All wickedness hath admission into that heart or land where the knowledge of God is not the watch to keep it out. Abraham inferred that the men of Gerar would kill him for his wife, when he saw that "the fear of God was not in that place." (Gen. xx. 11.) It was "God's controversy with Israel, because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; but by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, they brake out, and blood touched blood." (Hosea iv. 1, 2.) They are called by God, "a foolish people, sottish children, of no understanding, that knew not God; though they were wise to do evil." (Jer. iv. 22.) He will "pour out his fury upon the heathen that know him not, and the families that call not on his name." (Jer. x. 25.) As the day differeth from the night, by the light of the sun, so the church differeth from the world, by the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ; "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel: in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Sion." (Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2.) The love, and unity, and peace, which shall succeed persecution and malice in the blessed times, shall be "because the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. xi. 6—9.) Hypo-

crises shall know him superficially and uneffectually: and his holy ones shall know him so as to love him, fear him, trust him and obey him; with a knowledge effectual upon heart and life: and he will "continue his loving kindness to them that know him." (Psal. xxxvi. 10.)

He is the best Christian that hath the fullest impression made upon his soul by the knowledge of God in all his attributes. Thus it is our life eternal to know God in Christ. It is to reveal the Father that the Son was sent; and it is to reveal the Father and the Son, that the Holy Spirit is sent; God is the light, and the life, and the felicity of the soul. The work of its salvation is but the restoring it to him, and putting it in possession of him. The beginning of this is regeneration and reconciliation; the perfection of it is glorification, beatifical vision and fruition. The mind that hath least of God is the darkest and most deluded mind: and the mind that hath most of him is the most lucid, pure and serene. And how is God in the mind, but as the light and other visible objects are in the eye; and as pleasant melody is in the ear; and as delightful meats and drinks are in the taste? but that God maketh a more deep and durable impress on the soul, and such as is suitable to its spiritual, immaterial nature.

As your seal is to make a full impression on the wax, of the whole figure that is upon itself, so hath God been pleased in divers seals to engrave his image, and these must make their impress upon us. 1. There is the seal of the Creation; for the world hath much of the image of God: It is engraven also on the seal of Providential Disposals (though there we are incapable of reading it yet, so fully as in the rest). 2. It is engraven on the seal of the Holy Scriptures. 3. And on the Person of Jesus Christ, who is the purest, clearest image of the Father, as also on the holy example of his life. 4. And by the means of all these applied to the soul, in our sober Consideration, by the working of the Holy Ghost, the image of God is made upon us.

Here note, 1. That *all* the revealed image of God must be made on the soul, and not a *part only*: and all is wrought where any is truly wrought. 2. That to the completeness of his image on us, it is necessary that each part of God's description be orderly made, and orderly make the impress on us, and that each part keep its proper place: for it is a

monster that hath feet where the head should be, or the backpart forward, or where there is any gross misplacing of the parts. 3. Note also, that all the three forementioned seals contain all God's image on them; but yet not all alike; but the first part is more clearly engraven upon the first of them, and the second part upon the second of them, and the third part most clearly on the third and last.

To open this more plainly to you; unity in trinity, and trinity in unity, is the sum of our holy faith. In the Deity there is revealed to us, one God in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the essence is but one; the subsistences are three. And as we must conceive and speak of the Divine Nature according to its image, while we see it but in a glass; so we must say, that in this blessed Deity in the unity of essence, there is a trinity of essential properties and attributes; that is, power, wisdom and goodness, life, light and love: the measure of which is to have no measure, but to be infinite. And therefore this Being is eternal, and not measured by time, being without beginning or end: He is immense, as being not measured by place, but containeth all places, and is contained in none: he is perfect, as not measured by parts or by degrees, but quite above degrees and parts. This infiniteness of his being doth communicate itself, or also consist in the infiniteness of his essential properties. His power is omnipotency, that is, infinite power; his knowledge or wisdom is omniscience, that is, infinite wisdom: his goodness is felicity itself, or infinite goodness.

The first seal (to our cognizance) on which he engraved this his image, was the Creation, that is, 1. The whole world in general. 2. The Intellectual Nature or Man in special.

In the Being of the Creation and every particular creature, his Infinite Being is revealed; so wretched a fool is the atheist, that by denying God, he denieth all things! Could he prove that there is no God, I would quickly prove that there is no world, no man, no creature. If he know that he is himself or that the world or any creature is, he may know that God is: for God is the Original Being; and all being that is not eternal, must have some original: and that which hath no original is God, being eternal, infinite and without cause.

The Power of God is revealed in the being and powers of the creation. His wisdom is revealed in their nature,

order, offices, effects, &c. His goodness is revealed in the creature's goodness, its beauty, usefulness, accomplishments. But though all his image thus appear upon the creation, yet is it his omnipotency that principally there appears. The beholding and consideration of the wonderful greatness, activity and excellency of the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, and other creatures, doth first and chiefly possess us with apprehensions of the infinite greatness or power of the Creator.

In the Holy Word or Laws of God, which is the second glass or seal (more clear and legible to us than the former), there appeareth also all his image; his power in the narratives, predictions, &c.; his wisdom in the prophecies, precepts, and in all: his goodness in the promises and institutions, in a special manner. But yet it is his second property, his wisdom, that most eminently appeareth on this second seal, and is seen in the glass of the holy law. The discovery of such mysteries; the revelation of so many truths: the suitableness of all the instituted means; and the admirable fitness of all the holy contrivances of God, and all his precepts, promises and threatenings, for the government of mankind, and carrying him on for the attainment of his end, in a way agreeable to his nature; these shew that wisdom that is most eminently here revealed, though power and goodness be revealed with it; so in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the third and most perfect seal and glass; there is the image of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Godhead: but yet it is the love or goodness of the Father that is most eminently revealed in the Son: his power appeared in the incarnation, the conquests over Satan and the world, the miracles, the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. His wisdom appeareth in the admirable mystery of redemption, and in all the parts of the office, works and laws of Christ, and in the means appointed in subordination to him; but love and goodness shineth most clearly and amiably through the whole; it being the very end of Christ in this blessed work, to reveal God to man in the riches of his love, as giving us the greatest mercies, by the most precious means, in the meekest season and manner for our good; reconciling us to himself, and treating us as children, with fatherly compas-

sions, and bringing us nearer to him, and opening to us the everlasting treasure, having brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel.

God being thus revealed to man from without, in the three glasses or seals of the Creation, Law, and Son himself, he is also revealed to us in ourselves, man being, as it were, a little world.

In the nature of man is revealed, as in a seal or glass, the nature of the blessed God, in some measure. In unity of essence, we have a trinity of faculties of soul, even the vegetative, sensitive and rational, as our bodies have both parts and spirits, natural, vital and animal; the rational power in unity, hath also its trinity of faculties, even power for execution, understanding for direction, and will for command: the measure of power is naturally sufficient to its use and end; the understanding is a faculty to reason, discern, and discourse; the will hath that freedom which becometh an undetermined, self-determining creature here in the way.

Besides this physical image of God, that is inseparable from our nature, we have also his law written in our hearts, and are ourselves objectively part of the law of nature; that is, the signifiers of the will of God. Had we not by sin obliterated somewhat of this image, it would have shewed itself more clearly, and we should have been more capable of understanding it.

And then when we are regenerate and renewed by the grace and Spirit of Christ, and planted into him, as living members of his body, we have then the third impression upon our souls, and are made like our Head in wisdom, holiness, and in effectual strength.

Considered as creatures endued with power, understanding and will, we have the impress of all the aforesaid attributes of God; but eminently of his power.

Considered as we were at first possessed with the light and law of works or nature, (of which we yet retain some part,) so we have the impress of all these attributes of God; but most eminently of his wisdom.

Considered as regenerate by the Spirit, and planted into Christ, so we have the impress of all his said attributes; but most eminently of his love and goodness, shining in the moral accomplishments or graces of the soul.

Man being thus made at first the natural and sapiential image of God, (with much of the image of his love,) the Lord did presently, by necessary resultancy and voluntary consent, stand related to us in such variety of relations as answer the aforesaid properties and attributes. And these relations of God to us, are next to be known, as flowing from his attributes and works.

1. As we have our derived being from God, who is the primitive Eternal Being; so from our being given by creation, God is related to us as our Maker; from this relation of a Creator in unity, there ariseth a trinity of relations: this trinity is in that unity, and that unity in this trinity. First, God having made us of nothing, necessarily related to us as our Lord; by a Lord we mean strictly a proprietary or owner, as you are the owner of your goods, or any thing that is your own.

Secondly, He is related to us as our Ruler, our Governor or King. This riseth from our nature, made to be ruled in order to our end; being rational, voluntary agents; and also from the dominion and blessed nature of God, who only hath right to the government of the world, and only is fit and capable of ruling it.

Thirdly, He is related also to us as our Benefactor or Father; freely and of his bounty giving us all the good that we do receive.

His first relation in this trinity, answereth his first property in the trinity: he is our Almighty Creator, and therefore is our Owner or our Lord.

The second of these relations answereth the second property of God. He is most wise, and made an impress of his wisdom on the rational creature, and therefore is our Governor.

The third relation answereth the third property of God. As he is most good, so is he our Benefactor; "Thou art good, and dost good." (Psal. cxix. 68.) Man's nature and disposition is known by his works, though he be a free agent; for "the tree is known by its fruit." (Matt. vii. 17.) And so God's nature is known by his works (as far as is fit for us here to know), though he be a free agent.

In each of these relations, God hath other special attributes, which are denominated from his relations, or his following works:

As he is our Lord or Owner, his proper attribute is to be Absolute, having so full a title to us that he may do with us what he list. (Matt. xx. 15; Rom. ix. 21.)

As he is our Ruler, his proper attribute is to be our Sovereign or Supreme; there being none above him, nor co-ordinate with him, nor any power of government but what is derived from him.

As he is our Benefactor, it is his prerogative to be our Chief, or All; the Alpha and Omega; the Fountain, or first efficient cause of all that we receive or hope for; and the End, or ultimate final cause that can make us happy by fruition, and that we must still intend.

As these are the attributes of God in these his great relations, so in respect to the works of these relations, he hath other subordinate attributes. As he is our Owner, it is his work to dispose of us; and his proper attribute to be most Free. As he is our Ruler, it is his work to govern us; which is, first, by making laws for us, and then by teaching and persuading us to keep them, and lastly by executing them; which is by judging, rewarding, and punishing. In respect to all these, his principal attribute is to be Just or Righteous; in which is comprehended his Truth or Faithfulness, his Holiness, his Mercy, and his terrible Dreadfulness. As his attributes appear in the assertions of his word, he is True (his veracity being nothing but his power, wisdom and goodness, expressing themselves in his Word or Revelations). For he that is able to do what he will, and so wise as to know all things, and so good as to will nothing but what is good, cannot possibly lie; for every lie is either for want of power, or knowledge, or goodness; he that is most able and knowing, need not deceive by lying; and he that is most good, will not do it without need. As his first properties appear in the word of promise, he is called Faithful, which is his truth in making good a word of grace. As he commandeth holy duties, and condemneth sin as the most detestable thing, by a pure, righteous law, so he is called Holy; and also as the fountain of this law, and the grace which sanctifieth his people. As he fulfilleth his promises, and rewardeth, and defendeth men according to his word, so he is called Merciful and Gracious, as a governor (where his mercy is considered as limited or ordained by his laws.) As he fulfilleth his threatenings, he is called, angry, wrath-

ful, terrible, dreadful, holy, jealous, &c. But he is Just in all.

And as these are his attributes as our Sovereign Ruler ; so as our Benefactor, his special attribute is to be Gracious, or Bountiful, or Benign ; or to be loving and inclined to do good. These are the attributes of God resulting from his nature as appearing in his image in the creation, laws, and the person of his Son ; and resulting from his relations and the works of those relations ; even as he is our Creator, in unity ; and our Lord or Owner, our Ruler and Benefactor, in trinity.

Were it not my purpose to confine myself to this short discovery of the nature, attributes, and works of God, but to run deeper into the rest of the body of divinity, I should come down to the fall, and work of redemption, and shew you in the Gospel and all the ordinances, &c. the footsteps of this method of trinity in unity, which I have here begun ; but that were to digress.

Besides what is said, we might name you many attributes of God, that are commonly called negative, and do but distinguish him from the imperfect creature, by setting him above us infinitely in his perfections. Man hath a body ; but God is not a body, but a spirit : man is mutable, but God is immutable : man is mortal, but God immortal, &c. And now as I have shewed you these properties, relations, and attributes of God, so I must next tell you that we also stand in answerable counter-relations to him ; and must have the qualities, and do the works that answer those relations.

1. As God is our Almighty Creator, so we are his creatures, impotent and insufficient for ourselves. We owe him therefore all that a creature that hath but our receivings, can owe his Maker. 2. In this relation is contained a trinity of relations. 1. We are his own, as he is our Lord. 2. We are his subjects, as he is our Ruler. 3. We are his children, as he is our Father ; or his obliged beneficiaries, as he is our Benefactor. And now having opened to your observation the image of God, and the extrinsic seals, I have ripened the discourse so far, that I may more fitly shew you how the impression of this image of God is to be made upon the soul of the believer.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Knowledge of God's Being.*

1. "He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi. 6.) The first thing to be imprinted on the soul is, that there is a God; that he is a real most transcendent Being. As sure as the sun that shineth hath a being, and the earth that beareth us hath a being, so sure hath God that made them a being infinitely more excellent than theirs. As sure as the streams come from the fountain, and as sure as earth, and stones, and beasts, and men did never make themselves, nor do uphold themselves, or continue the course of nature in themselves and others, nor govern the world, so sure is there an Infinite Eternal Being that doth this. Every atheist that is not mad, must confess that there is an Eternal Being, that had no beginning or cause; the question is only, Which this is? Which ever it is, it is this that is the true God. What now would the atheist have it to be? Certainly it is that Being that hath being itself from none, that is the first cause of all other beings: and if it causeth them, it must necessarily be every way more excellent than they, and contain all the good that it hath caused; for none can give that which he hath not to give; nor make that which is better than itself; that Being that hath made so glorious a creature as the sun, must needs itself be much more glorious. It could not have put strength and power into the creatures, if it had not itself more strength and power. It could not have put wisdom and goodness into the creature, if it had not more wisdom and goodness than all they. Whatever it is therefore that hath more power, wisdom and goodness than all the world besides, that is it which we call God. That cause that hath communicated to all things else, the being, power, and all perfections which they have, is the God whom we acknowledge and adore; if Democritists will ascribe all this to atoms, and think that the motes did make the sun; or if others will think that the sun is God, because it participateth of so much of his excellency, let them be mad awhile, till judgment shall convince them. So clear beyond all question to my soul, is the Being of the Godhead, that the devil hath much lost the rest of his more subtle temptations, when he hath foolishly and maliciously

adjoined this, to draw me to question the Being of my God; which is more than to question, whether there be a sun in the firmament.

But what is the impress that the Being of God must make upon the soul?

I answer, From hence the holy soul discerneth that the beginning and the end of his religion, the substance of his hope, is the Being of Beings, and not a shadow; and that his faith is not a fancy. The object is as it were the matter of the act. If our faith, and hope, and love, and fear, be exercised in a delusory work; God is to the atheist but an empty name; he feels no life or being in him; and accordingly he offereth him a shadow of devotion, and a nominal service. But to the holy soul there is nothing that hath life and being but God, and that which doth receive a being from him, and leadeth to him. This real object putteth a reality into all the devotions of a holy soul. They look upon the vanities of the world as nothing; and therefore they look on worldly men as on idle dreamers that are doing nothing. This puts a seriousness and life into the faith and holy affections of the believer. He knows whom he trusteth. (2 Tim. i. 12.) He knows whom he loveth, and in whom he hopeth. Atheists, and all ungodly men, do practically judge of God, as the true believer judgeth of the world. The atheist takes the pleasures of the world to be the only substance; and God to be but as a shadow, a notion, or a dream. The godly take the world to be as nothing, and know it is but a fancy and dream, and shadow of pleasures, and honour, and profit, and felicity, that men talk of and seek so eagerly below; but that God is the substantial object and portion of the soul. If you put into the mouth of a hungry man, a little froth, or breath, or air, and bid him eat it, and feed upon it, he will tell you, he finds no substance in it; so judgeth the graceless soul of God, and so judgeth the gracious soul of the creature, as separate from God.

Let this be the impression on thy soul, from the consideration of God's transcendent being! O look upon thyself and all things as nothing without him! and as nothing in comparison of him! and therefore let thy love to them be as nothing, and thy desires after them, and care for them, as nothing! But let the being of thy love, desire, and en-

deavours, be let out upon the transcendent Being. The creature hath its kind of being; but if it would be to us instead of God, it will be as nothing. The air hath its being, but we cannot dwell in it, nor rest upon it to support us as the earth doth. The water hath its being, but it will not bear us if we would walk upon it. The name of the great Jehovah is "I AM." (Exod. iii. 14.) Try any creature in thy need, and it will say, as Jacob to Rachel, "Am I in God's stead, that hath withheld thy desire from thee?" (Gen. xxx. 2.) Send to it and it will say as John Baptist, that confessed, "I am not the Christ." (John i. 20.) Let none of all the affections of thy soul, have so much life and being in them, as those that are exercised upon God. Worms and moths are not regarded in comparison with mountains; a drop is not regarded in comparison of the ocean. Let the Being of God take up thy soul, and draw off thy observation from deluding vanities, as if there were no such things before thee. When thou rememberest that there is a God, kings and nobles, riches and honours, and all the world, should be forgotten in comparison of him; and thou shouldst live as if there were no such things, if God appear not to thee in them. - See them as if thou didst not see them, as thou seest a candle before the sun; or a pile of grass, or single dust, in comparison with the earth. Hear them as if thou didst not hear them; as thou hearest the leaves of the shaken tree, at the same time with a clap of thunder. As greatest things obscure the least, so let the Being of the Infinite God so take up all the powers of thy soul, as if there were nothing else but he, when any thing would draw thee from him. O! if the Being of this God were seen by thee, thy seducing friend would scarce be seen, thy tempting baits would scarce be seen, thy riches and honours would be forgotten; all things would be as nothing to thee in comparison of him.

### CHAP. III.

2. As the Being of God should make this impression on thee, so the attributes that speak the perfection of that Being, must each one have their work; as his Unity or Indivisibility, his Immensity, and Eternity.

And first, the thought of God's unity should contract and unite thy straggling affections, and call them home from

multifarious vanity. It should possess thy mind with deep apprehensions of the excellency of holy unity in the soul, and in the church; and of the evil of division, and misery of distracting multiplicity. "The Lord our God is one God." (1 Cor. viii. 6.) Perfection hath unity and simplicity. We fell into divisions and miserable distraction when we departed from God unto the creatures, for the creatures are many, and of contrary qualities, dispositions and affections; and the heart that is set on such an object, must needs be a divided heart; and the heart that is divided among so many and contrary or discordant objects, must needs be a distracted heart. The confusions of the world confound the heart that is set upon the world. He that maketh the world his God, hath so many Gods; and so discordant, that he will never please them all; and all of them together will never fully content and please him. And who would have a God that can neither please us, nor be pleased? He that maketh himself his God, hath a compounded God (and now corrupted) of multifarious, and now of contrary desires, as hard to please as any without us. There is no rest or happiness but in unity. And therefore none in ourselves or any other creature; but in God the only centre of the soul. The further from the centre, the further from unity. It is only in God that differing minds can well be united. Therefore is the world so divided, because it is departed so far from God. Therefore have we so many minds and ways, and such diversity of opinions, and contrariety of affections, because men forsake the centre of unity. There is no uniting in any worldly, carnal, self-devised principles or practices. When holiness brings these distracted, scattered souls to God, in him they will be one. While they bark at holiness, and cry up unity, they shew themselves distracted men. For holiness is the only way to unity, because it is the closure of the soul with God. All countries, and persons, cannot meet in any one interest or creature, but each hath a several interest of his own; but they might all meet in God. If the pope were God, and had his perfections, he would be fit for all the church to centre in; but being man, and yet pretending to this prerogative of God, he is the grand divider and distracter of the church. The proverb is too true, 'So many men, so many minds;' because that every man will be a god to himself, having a self-mind, and self-will, and

all men will not yield to be one in God. God is the common interest of the saints; and thereof all that are truly saints, are truly united in him. And if all the visible church, and all the world, would heartily make him their common interest, we should quickly have a common unity and peace, and the temple of double-faced Janus would be shut up. They that sincerely have one God, have also one Lord (and Saviour), one faith, one spirit, one baptism (or holy covenant with God), even because they have "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all." And therefore they must "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. iv. 3—6.) Though yet they have different degrees of gifts, (ver. 7.) and therefore differences of opinion about abundance of inferior things. The further we go from the trunk or stock, the more numerous and small we shall find the branches. They are one in God, that are divided in many doubtful controversies. The weakest therefore in the faith must be received into this union and communion of the church; but not to doubtful disputations. (Rom. xiv. 1.) As the ancient baptism, contained no more but our engagement to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, so the ancient profession of saving faith, was of the same extent. God is sufficient for the church to unite in. An union in other articles of faith is so far necessary to the unity of the church, as it is necessary to prove our faith and unity in God, and the sincerity of this ancient, simple belief in God the Father, Son and Spirit.

The Unity of God is the attribute to be first handled, and imprinted on the mind, even next unto his essence; "The Lord our God is one Lord;" (Deut. vi. 4;) and the unity of the church is its excellency and attribute, that is first and most to be esteemed and preserved next unto its essence, If it be not a church, it cannot be one church; and if we be not saints, we cannot be united saints. If we be not members, we cannot make one body. But when once we have the essence of saints and of a church, we must next be solicitous for its unity; nothing below an essential point of faith will allow us to depart from the catholic unity; love, and peace that is due to saints; and because such essentials are never wanting in the catholic church, or any true member of it, therefore we are never allowed to divide from the catholic church, or any true and visible member. It is first

necessary that the church be a church, that is, a people separated from the world to Christ; and that the Christian be a Christian in covenant with the Lord. But the next point of necessity is that the church be one, and Christians be one. And he that for the sake of lower points, how true soever, will break this holy bond of unity, shall find at last, to his shame and sorrow, that he understood not the excellency or necessity of unity. The prayer of Christ for the perfection of his saints is, "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me: and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Here it appeareth that the unity of the church or saints is necessary, to convince the world of the truth of Christianity, and of the love of God to his people, and necessary to the glory and perfection of the saints. The nearer any churches, or members, are to the divine perfections, and the more strictly conformable to the mind of God, the more they are one, and replenished with catholic love to all saints, and desirous of unity and communion with them. It is a most lamentable delusion of some Christians that think their ascending to higher degrees of holiness doth partly consist in their withdrawing from the catholic church, or from the communion of most of the saints on earth, upon the account of some smaller differing opinions; and they think that they should become more loose and leave their strictness, if they should hold a catholic communion, and leave their state of separation and division! Is there any strictness amiable or desirable, except a strict conformity to God? Surely a strict way of sin and wickedness is not desirable to a saint. And is not God one, and his church one, and hath he not commanded all his servants to be one, and is not love the new and great commandment, by which they must be known to all men to be his disciples. Which then is the stricter servant of the Lord; he that loveth much, or he that loveth little; he that loveth all Christians, or he that loveth but a few, with the special love; he that loveth a Christian as a Christian, or he that loveth him but as one of his party or opinion; he

that is one in the catholic body, or he that disowneth communion with the far greatest part of the body? Will you say that Christ was loose, and Pharisees strict, because Christ eat and drank with publicans and sinners, and the Pharisees condemned him for it? It was Christ that was more strict in holiness than they; for he abounded more in love and good works: but they were stricter than he in a proud, self-conceited morosity and separation. Certainly he that is highest in love, is highest in grace, and not he that confineth his love to few. Was it not in the weak Christian that was most strict in point of meats, and drinks, and days? (Rom. xiv. xv.) But the stronger that were censured by them, did more strictly keep the commandment of God.

Christian reader, let the unity of God have this effect upon thy soul: 1. To draw thee from the distracting multitude of creatures, and make thee long to be all in God; that thy soul may be still working toward him, till thou find nothing but God alone within thee. In the multitude of thy thoughts within thee, let his comforts delight thy soul. (Psal. xciv. 19.) The multitude distracteth thee; retire into unity, that thy soul may be composed, quieted and delighted.

2. And let it make thee long for the unity of saints, and endeavour it to the utmost of thy power, that the church in unity may be more like the Head.

3. And let it cause thee to admire the happiness of the saints, that are freed from the bondage of the distracting creature, and have but one to love, and fear, and trust, and serve, and seek, and know; one thing is needful, which should be chosen, but it is many that we are troubled about. (Luke xi. 42.)

#### CHAP. IV.

3. The Immensity of God (which is the next attribute to be considered) must have this effect upon thy soul: 1. The infinite God that is every where, comprehending all places and things, and comprehended by none, must raise admiring, reverent thoughts in the soul of the believer. We wonder at the magnitude of the sun, and the heavens, and the whole creation; but when we begin to think what is beyond the heavens, and all created being, we are at a kind of loss. Why

it is God that is in all, and above all, and beyond all, and beneath all; and where there is no place, because no creature, there is God: and if thy thoughts should imagine millions of millions of miles beyond all place and measure, all is but God; and go as far as thou canst in thy thoughts and thou canst not go beyond him. Reverently admire the immensity of God. The world and all the creatures in it, are not to God so much as a sand or atom is to all the world. The point of a needle is more to all the world, than the world to God. For between that which is finite, and that which is infinite, there is no comparison. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?—Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing,—All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." (Isa. xl. 12. 15. 17.)

2. From this greatness and immensity of God also thy soul must reverently stay all its busy, bold inquiries, and know that God is to us, and to every creature, incomprehensible. If thou couldst fathom or measure him, and know his greatness by a comprehensive knowledge, he were not God. A creature can comprehend nothing but a creature. You may know God, but not comprehend him; as your foot treadeth on the earth, but doth not cover all the earth. The sea is not the sea, if you can hold it in a spoon. Thou canst not comprehend the sun which thou seest, and by which thou seest all things else, nor the sea, or earth, nor a worm, or pile of grass: thy understanding knoweth not all that God hath put into any the least of these; thou art a stranger to thyself, and to somewhat in every part of thyself, both body and soul. And thinkest thou to comprehend God, that perfectly comprehendest nothing! Stop then thy over bold inquiries, and remember that thou art a shallow, finite worm, and God is infinite. First reach to comprehend the heaven and earth and whole creation, before thou think of comprehending Him, to whom the world is nothing, or vanity; or so small a dust, or drop, or point. Saith Elihu, "At this my heart trembleth, and is moved out of its place: hear attentively the noise of his voice,—God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doth he which we

cannot comprehend." (Job xxxvii. 1. 5.) How then should we comprehend himself! When God pleadeth his cause with Job himself, what doth he but convince him of his infiniteness and absoluteness, even from the greatness of his works which are beyond our reach and yet are as nothing to himself! Should he take the busy inquirer in hand, but as he did begin with Job, (xxxviii. 1, 2, &c.,) "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me," &c. alas, how soon would he nonplus and confound us, and make us say with Job, (xl. 4,) "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth: once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further." Indeed there is mentioned Ephes. iii. 11, the saints comprehending the dimensions of the love of Christ; but as the next verse saith, it passeth knowledge; so *comprehending* there, signifieth no more, but a knowing according to our measure; an attainment of what we are capable to attain; nay, nor all that neither, but such a prevalent knowledge of the love of Christ as is common to all the saints; as there is nothing more visible than the sun, and yet no visible being less comprehended by the sight; so is there nothing more intelligible than God (for he is all in all things), and yet nothing so incomprehensible to the mind that knoweth him. It satisfieth me not to be ignorant of God, nor to know so little as I know, nor to be short of the measure that I am capable of; but it satisfieth me to be incapable of comprehending him: or else I must be unsatisfied because I am not God. O the presumptuous arrogancy of those men, if I may call them men, that dare prate about the infinite God such things as never were revealed to them in his works or word! and dare pretend to measure him by their shallow understandings, and question, if not deny and censure, that of God which they cannot reach! and sooner suspect the word that doth reveal him than their own muddy brains, that should better conceive of him! Saith Elihu, "Behold God is great, and we know him not; neither can the number of his years be searched out." (Job xxxvi. 26.) Though the knowledge of him be our life eternal, yet we know him not by any full and adequate conception. We know an infinite God, and therefore with an excellent knowledge objectively

considered ; but with a poor degree and kind of knowledge next to none, as to the act ; and it is a thousand thousandfold that we know not of him, than that we know : for indeed there is no comparison to be here made.

3. The immensity of God, as it proveth him incomprehensible, so it containeth his omnipresence, and therefore should continually affect us, as men that believe that God stands by them. As we would compose our thoughts, and minds, and passions, if we saw (were it possible) the Lord stand over us, so should we now labour to compose them. As we would restrain and use our tongues, and order our behaviour, if we saw his Majesty, so should we do now, when we know that he is with us. An eye-servant will work hard in his master's presence, whatever he doth behind his back. Bestir thee then, Christian, for God stands by ; "In him we live and move and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.) Loiter not till thou canst truly say that God is gone, or absent from thee ; sin not by wilfulness or negligence, till thou canst say, thou art behind his back. Alas, that we should have no more awakened, serious souls, and no more fervent, lively prayers, and no more serious, holy speech, and no more careful, heavenly lives, when we stand before the living God, and do all in his sight, and speak all in his hearing ! O why should sense so much affect us, and faith, and knowledge work no more ? We can be awed with the presence of a man, and would not do before a prince, what most men do before the Lord. Yea other things affect us when we see them not ; and shall not God ? But of this more anon.

4. The immensity of God assureth us much of his all-sufficiency. He that is every where, is easily able to hear all prayers, to help us in all straits, to supply all wants, to punish all sins. A blasphemous conceit of God as finite, and as absent from us, is one of the causes of our distrust. He that doth distrust an absent friend, as thinking he may forget him, or neglect him, will trust him when he is with him ; cannot he hear thee, and pity thee, and help thee, that is still with thee ? O what an awe is this to the careless ! what a support to faith ! what a quickener to duty ! what a comfort to the afflicted, troubled soul ! God is in thy poor cottage, Christian, and well acquainted with thy wants : God is at thy bedside when thou art sick, and nearer thee

than the nearest of thy friends. What wouldst thou do in want or pain if God stood by ! Wouldst thou not pray and trust him if thou sawest him ! So do though thou see him not, for he is surely there.

5. The immensity and infinite greatness of God assureth us of this particular providence. Some blasphemous infidels imagine that he hath only a general providence, and hath left all to some inferior powers, and meddleth not with particular things himself. They think that as he hath left it to the sun to illuminate the world, so hath he left all other inferior things and events to nature or inferior causes ; and that he doth not himself regard, observe, reward, or punish the thoughts, and words, and ways of men. And all this is, because they consider not the immensity or infinite greatness of the Lord. It is true, that God hath framed the nature of all things, and delighteth to maintain and use the frame of second causes which he hath made ; and will not easily and ordinarily work against or without this order of causes : but it is as true and certain, both that sometimes he maketh use of miracles, and that in the very course of natural causes he is able to exercise a particular providence, as well as without them, by himself alone. The creature doth nothing but by him. All things move as he first moveth them, in their natural agency. His wisdom guideth, his will intendeth, and commandeth ; his power moveth and disposeth all. The sun would not shine, if he were not the light of it ; and he is no less himself the light of the world, than if he did illuminate it without a sun. God is never the further off, because the creatures are near us ; nor ever the less in the effect, because he useth a second cause, than if there were no second cause at all. What influence second causes have upon the souls of men, he hath for the most part kept unknown to us ; but that himself disposeth of us and all things after the counsel of his own will, is beyond all question. Can he that is most nearly present with thy thoughts, be regardless of them ? Can he be regardless of thy words and ways that is with thee, and seeth and heareth all ? If thou believe not that he is verily with thee as thou art there thyself, thou art then an atheist. If thou believe him not to be infinite, thou believest him not to be God. It is not God that can be absent, limited, or finite. And if thou

be not such a senseless atheist, but knowest that God is every where, how is it possible thou shouldst doubt of his care or observance, or particular providence about every thing? No child is scarce so foolish that will think his father cares not what he saith or doth, when he stands before him. Wouldst thou doubt of God's particular providence, whether he regard thy heart, and talk, and practice, if thou didst see him with thee? Sure it is scarce possible. Why then dost thou question it when thou knowest that he is with thee? If thou be an atheist and knowest not, look about thee on the world, and bethink thee whether stones, and trees, and earth; whether beasts, or birds, or men do make themselves; if they do, thou wert best uphold thyself, and be not sick, and do not die. If thou madest thyself, thou canst sure preserve thyself; but if any thing else made thee and all these lower things, either it was somewhat greater or less than they; either something better or worse than they. If less, or worse, how could it make them greater or better than itself? Can any thing give that which it hath not? If it must needs be greater and better than the creatures, then as it must be wiser than they, and more holy, gracious, and just than they, so must it be more comprehensive than all they. Whoever made this earth, is certainly greater than the earth, or else he should give it more than he had to give. And if he be greater, he must be present. If thou shouldst be so vain as to account any other higher thing the maker of this world, that is not God, thou must ascribe also a sufficiency to that maker, to exercise a particular providence, and moreover be put to consider who did make that maker. Nothing therefore is more certain even to reason itself, than that the Maker of the world must be greater than the world, and therefore present with all the world; and therefore must observe and regard all the world. When thou canst find out a thought, or word, or deed that was not done in the presence of God, or any creature that is not in his presence, then believe and spare not that he seeth it not, or regardeth it not; yea, and that it hath no being. O blind atheists! you see the sun before your eyes, which enlighteneth all the upper part of the earth at once; even millions of millions see all by his light; and yet do you doubt whether God beholds and regards

and provides for all at once ! Tell me, if God had never a creature to look to in all the world but thee, wouldst thou believe that he would regard thy heart, and words, and ways, or not ? If he would, why not now as well as then ! Is he not as sufficient for thee, and as really present with thee, as if he had no other creature else ? If all men in the world were dead save one, would the sun any more illuminate that one than now it doth ? Mayst thou not see as well by the light of it now, as if it had never another to enlighten ? And dost thou see a creature do so much, and wilt thou not believe as much of the Creator ? If thou think us worms too low for God so exactly to observe, thou mayst as well think that we are too low for him to create, or preserve ; and then who made us and preserveth us ? Doth not the sun enlighten the smallest bird, and crawling vermin, as well as the greatest prince on earth ? Doth it withhold its light from any creature that can see, and say, I will not shine on things so base ? And wilt thou more restrain the infinite God that is the Maker, Light, and Life of all ? It is he that " filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 23.) " The heaven of heavens cannot contain him ;" (1 Kings viii. 27 ; ) and is he absent from thee ? " He doth beset thee before and behind, and layeth his hand upon thee ; whither wilt thou go from his Spirit, or whither wilt thou fly from his presence ? If thou ascend up into heaven, he is there ; if thou make thy bed in hell, thou wilt feel him there ; if thou take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shalt thou find him to be to thee as thou art." (Psal. cxxxix. 5. 7—10.) Thou mayst think with sinful Adam and Eve, (Gen. iii. 8,) to hide thyself from the presence of the Lord : but thou wilt quickly find that he observeth thee ; and " be sure thy sin will find thee out." (Numb. xxxii. 23.) Thou mayst with Cain be turned out of the " gracious presence of God," (Gen. iv. 16,) and cast out of his church and mercy ; and with the damned thou mayst be turned out of the presence of his blessedness and glory : but thou shalt never be out of his essential presence, nor so escape the presence of his justice. (Job i. 12 ; ii. 7.) It is the presence of his grace where the upright are promised here to dwell, (Psal. cxl. 13,) and out of which they fear lest they be cast. " Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Psal. li.

11.) And it is the "presence where is fullness of joy," which they aspire after. (Psal. xvi. 11.) But there is also a presence that the "earth shall tremble at," (Psal. cxiv. 7,) and that the "wicked shall perish at;" (Psal. lxviii. 2;) so that a particular providence must be remembered by them that believe and remember the immensity of God.

## CHAP. V.

4. The Eternity of God is the next attribute to be known, which also must have its work upon the soul. And, 1. This also sheweth us that God is incomprehensible; for man cannot comprehend eternity. When we go about to think of that which hath no beginning nor end, it is to our mind, as a place a thousand miles off is to our eye; even beyond our reach; we cannot say there is no such place, yea, we know there is; but we cannot see it: so we know there is an Eternal Being; but our knowledge of his eternity is not intuitive, or comprehensive. Eternity therefore is the object of our faith, and reverence, and admiration, but forbids our busy, bold inquiries. O the arrogance of those ignorantly-learned, and foolishly-wise disputing men, that have so long perplexed, if not torn in pieces the church, about the priority and posteriority of the knowledge and decrees of God, when they confess them all to be eternal! As if they knew not that terms of priority and presentiality, and posteriority, have not that significance in or about eternity, as they have with us!

2. The eternity of God must draw the soul from transitory to eternal things. It is an everlasting blessedness, even the eternal God, that our souls are made for; the brutes are made for a mortal happiness; the immortal soul cannot be fully content with any thing that will have an end. As a capacity of this endless blessedness doth difference man from the beasts that perish; so the disposition to it doth difference saints from the ungodly; and the fruition of it doth difference the glorified from the damned. Alas, what a silly thing were man, if he were capable of nothing but these transitory things! What were our lives worth, and what were our time worth, and what were all our mercies worth, or what were all the world worth to us, or what were we worth ourselves? I would not undervalue the works of God; but truly if man had no other life to live

but this, I should esteem him a very contemptible creature. If you say there is some excellency in the brutes, I answer, true; but their usefulness is their chiefest excellency; and what is their use but to be a glass in which we may see the Lord, and to be serviceable to man in his passage to eternity? They are not capable of knowing, or loving, or enjoying God themselves: but they are useful to man that is capable of this; and so they have an everlasting end, and this is their excellency. And therefore the atheist that denieth an everlasting life to man, doth bring himself into a far baser state than the brutes are in; for the brutes have an everlasting end, in promoting the happiness of man: but if man have no everlasting end himself, there is no other whose everlasting happiness he can promote. The unbeliever therefore doth debase his own soul, and the whole creation: and faith and holiness advance the soul and all things with it, that are useful to our advancement. The true believer honoureth his horse, his dog, his food and raiment, and the earth he treadeth on, and every creature, incomparably more than the infidel doth honour his own or any other's soul, or than he honoureth the greatest prince on earth. For the believer useth all things, even the vilest, in reference to eternity; but the infidel useth his life and soul but to a transitory end; and takes the greatest prince on earth to be but for a transitory use. And as eternity is invaluable in comparison of time, so the use and excellency that a believer doth ascribe to a bit of bread, or the basest creature, in the sanctified improvement of it, is ten thousand times, even unspeakably above the use and excellency that an unbeliever ascribeth to his soul or his prince. He that stampeth the image of a dog or a toad upon gold, instead of the image of the prince, and would have ten thousand pounds worth go but for a farthing, doth not by a thousand degrees so much debase the gold, as the infidel doth debase his soul and all things. Infidelity is guilty of the destruction of all souls, and the destruction of all mercies, and the destruction of all divine revelations, of all graces, of all ordinances, and means, and of the destruction of the whole creation that was made for man: for he that destroyeth the end, destroyeth all the means: but the infidel destroyeth and denieth the end of every one of these, and holiness only doth give them up, and use them to their ends.

1. He is guilty of the destruction of all souls : For as much as in him lies they are destroyed, while they are all made useless to the end for which they were created. If there be no other life and happiness everlasting, what are souls good for? What is the reasonable creature good for? Is it to be happy here? In what? Here is no happiness. Is it in eating, and drinking, and sleeping? Why these are to strengthen us for our service which tendeth to our end, and therefore cannot be themselves our end. Is it not better be without either meat, or drink, or sleep, in point of happiness, so be it we also were without the need of them, than to need them and have them for our need, especially with the care and trouble which they cost us? I had an hundred times rather for my part, if it were lawful to desire it, never have meat, or drink, or sleep, and be without the need of them, as I had rather be without a sore, than to have a plaister that will ease it, and be every day at the pains to dress it. Brutes have some advantage in these above men, in that they have not the care, and fear, and sorrow of mind as we have, in the getting or keeping what they have or need. If you go downward, and say that men are made to govern brutes, then what are brutes made for, unless to dung the earth? And so the basest shall be the end of the noblest, and God may be as wisely said to be for man, because he is to govern him. Truly if there were no everlasting life, but man were a mere terrestrial animal, I had rather never have been born, or should wish I had never been a man : I knew not what to do with myself, nor how to employ the faculties of my soul or body, but they would all seem to me as useless things. What should I do with my reason, if I had no higher an end than beasts? What should I do with a mind that knoweth that there is a God, and another world, and that is capable of desiring him, seeking and enjoying him, if it must be frustrated of all? What should I do with a heart that is capable of the love of God, and delighting in his love, if I have no God to love and delight in, when this life is ended? Why have I a heart that so desireth him, in fuller vision and fruition, if I be capable of no such thing? What then should I do with my time and life? Verily I know not, if I were fully of this sad opinion, whether I should turn brute in my life agreeably to my judgment, or whether I should make an end of

my life to be eased of a useless burden ; but confident I am I should not know what to do with myself : I should be like a cashiered soldier, or like one turned out of his service, that knew not where to have work and wages : and if you found me standing " all day idle," I must give you the reason, " because no man hath hired me." What do those wretches do with their lives, that think they have no God to serve and seek, or future happiness to attain ? As men use to say of naughty ministers, so may I say of all mankind according to the doctrine of the infidels : A sorry tailor may make a botcher, or a bad shoemaker may make a cobbler, and a broken mercer may be a pedler ; but a naughty priest is good for nothing (and it is true of him as such). And as Christ himself saith, (Matt. v. 13, 14,) " Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel." So I say of the reasonable creature. The grass is useful for the beasts : the beasts are serviceable unto man : a swine that cannot serve you living, is useful being dead. But if there were no God to seek and serve, and no life but this for us to hope for, for aught I know man were good for nothing. What were light good for, if there were no eyes ? or eyes, if there were no light to see by ? What is a watch good for, but to tell the hour of the day ? All the curious parts and workmanship of it, is worth no more than the metal is worth, if it be not useful to its proper end. And what reason, and will, and affections in man are good for I know not, if not to seek, to please and to enjoy the Lord ! Take off this poise, and all the wheels of my soul must stand still, or else do worse.

2. The infidel and ungodly man that looks not after an eternal end, destroyeth all the mercies of God, and makes them as no mercies at all. Creation and our being is a mercy ; but it is in order to our eternal end. Redemption by Christ is an unspeakable mercy ; but it is denied by the infidel, and rejected by the ungodly. What is Christ worth, and all his mediation, if there be no life for man but this ? Peace and liberty, health and life, friends and neighbours, food and raiment, are all mercies to us, as a ship and sails

are to the mariner, or a fair way, or horse, or inn to a traveller: but if by denying our eternal end, you make our voyage or our journey vain, these mercies then are little worth: no more than a ship on the land, or a plough in the sea, or a horse to him that hath no use for him. And O! what an ungrateful wretch is that, who will deny all the mercies of God to himself, and to all others! For, once deny the use and the eternal end, and you deny the mercy.

3. He that believeth not, or seeks not after an eternal end, destroyeth all the doctrine, law and government of God: for all is but to lead us to this end. All the holy Scriptures, the precepts of Christ, and his holy example, the covenant of grace, the gifts and miracles of the Holy Ghost, the light and law of nature itself, are all to bring us to our eternal end: and therefore he that denieth that end, doth cancel them all, and cast them by as useless things.

4. And he denieth all the graces of the Spirit: For what use is there for faith, if the object of it be a falsehood? What use for hope, if there be no life to be hoped for? What use for holy desires and love, if God be not to be enjoyed? Grace is but the delusion and deformity of the soul, if the infidel and ungodly be in the right.

5. They destroy also all the means of our salvation, if they deny salvation, which is the end. To what purpose should men study, or read, or hear, or pray, or use either sacraments or any other means, for an end that is not to be had? To what end should men obey or suffer, for any such end that is not attainable?

6. Yea, they do let loose the soul to sin, and take off all effectual restraint. If there be no eternal end, and no reward or punishment but here, what can effectually hinder the men of this opinion from stealing, whoredom, or any villany, when it may be done with secrecy? What should hinder the revengeful man from poisoning or secretly murdering his enemy, or setting his house on fire in the night? If I know a man or woman that believes no life to come, I take it for granted they are revengeful, thieves, deceivers, fornicators, or any thing that is bad, if they have but temptation, and secret opportunity. For what hath he to seek but the pleasing of his flesh, that thinks he hath no God to seek or please, or no future reward or punishment to expect? He that confesseth himself an infidel, to me, doth

confess himself to be in all things else as bad as ever he can or dare. Honesty is renounced by that man or woman that profess themselves to be atheists or infidels : methinks in congruency with their profession they should take it for a wrong to be called or reputed honest ! If you tell me that heathens had a kind of honesty ; I must tell you again, that most heathens believed the immortality of the soul, and that kind of seeming honesty which they had was only in those of them that thus expected a life to come. But those that believe not another life where man is to have his punishment and reward, have nothing like to honesty in them, but live like greedy, ravenous beasts, where they are from under the laws and government of them that look for another life. The cannibals that eat men's flesh, and some such savages as they, are the nations that expect no life but this. It is believed so commonly by all the civil infidels and Turks, as shews it to be a principle that nature doth reveal.

7. Yea, the whole creation that is within the sight of man, is destroyed opinionatively by the infidels that look for no immortal life : for all things were made to further our salvation : the "heavens to declare the glory of God, and the firmament to shew his handy work," and all creatures to be our glass in which we must behold the Lord, and our book in which we must read and learn his nature and his will. The sun is to light us, and maintain our life, and the life of other lower creatures, while we prepare for immortality : the earth is to bear us, and to bear fruit for us ; and the trees and plants, and every creature, to accommodate and serve us, while we serve the Lord and pass on to eternity. And therefore the atheist that denieth us our eternity, denieth the usefulness of all the world. What were all the creatures here good for, if there were no men ? The earth would be a wilderness, and the beasts would for the most part perish for want of sustenance, and all would be like a forsaken cottage that no man dwelleth in, and doth no good ; and if man be not the heir of immortality, they can do him no good. All creatures are but our provision in the way to this eternity : and therefore if there were no eternity, what should we do with them ? What should we do with ways, and pavements, or with inns for travellers ; or with horses or other provision for our journey, if there were

no travelling that way? And who will travel to a place that is not, or a city that is no where but in his brains, besides a madman? It is evident therefore that as all the tools in a workman's shop, are made useless to him if he be forbidden to use his trade, and all the books in my library are useless, if I may not read them to get knowledge; so all creatures under heaven are made useless and destroyed doctrinally by the atheist, that thinks there is no eternal life for which they should be used. I must seriously profess, if I believed this (being in other things of the mind I am), I knew not what to do with any thing. What should I do with my books, but to learn the way to this eternity? What should I do with my money, if there be no treasure to be laid up in heaven, nor friends to be made with the mammon abused commonly to unrighteousness? What should I do with my tongue, my hands, my time, my life, myself, or any thing, if there were no eternity? I think I should dig my grave, and lay me down in it and die, and perish, to escape the sorrows of a longer life that must be my companions.

Remember then, Christians, and still remember it, that Eternity is the matter of your faith and hope! Eternity is your portion and felicity! Eternity is the end of all your desires, and labours, and distresses! Eternity is your religion, and the life of all your holy motions; and as without the capacity of it, you would be but beasts, so without the love and desire of it, and title to it, you would be but wicked and miserable men. Set not your hearts on transitory things, while you stand near unto eternity. How can you have room for so many thoughts on fading things, when you have an eternity to think on? What light can you see in the candles or glow-worms of this world, in the sunshine of eternity? Oh, remember when you are tempted to please your eyes, your taste, and sensual desires, that these are not eternal pleasures! Remember when you are tempted for wealth or honour to wrong your souls, that these are not the eternal riches! Houses and lands are not eternal! Meats and drinks are not eternal! Sports and pastimes, and jocund sinful company are not eternal! Alas, how short! how soon do they vanish into nothing! But it is God, and our dear Redeemer that are eternal! The flower of beauty withereth with age, or by the nipping blast

of a short disease; the honours of the world are but a dream; your graves will bury all its glory. Down comes the prince, the lord, the gallant, and suddenly takes his lodgings in the dust. The corpse that was pampered and adorned yesterday, is a clod to-day. The body that was bowed to, attended and applauded but the other day, is now interred in the vault of darkness, with worms and moles. To-day it is corruption and a most loathsome thing, that lately was dreaming of an earthly happiness. One day he is striving for riches and pre-eminences, or glorying and rejoicing in them, that the next day may be snatched away to hell. O fix not your minds on fading things, that perish in the using, and by their vanishing mock you that set your hearts upon them. You will not fix your eye and mind upon every bird that flyeth by you, as you will on the houses that you must dwell in: nor will you mind every passenger, as you will do your friends that still live with you. And shall transitory vanity be minded by you above eternity?

3. It is Eternity that must direct you in your estimate of all things. It is this that sheweth you the excellency of man above the beasts: it is this that tells you the worth of grace, and the weight of sin, the preciousness of holy ordinances and helps, and the evil of hindrances and temptations; the wisdom of the choice and diligence of the saints, and the folly of the choice, and negligent, sinful lives of the ungodly; the worth of God's favour, and the vanity of man's; and the difference between the godly and the unsanctified world, in point of happiness.

Were not grace the egg, the seed, the earnest of an eternal glory, it were not so glorious a thing. But O how precious are all those thoughts, desires, delights and breathings of the soul, that bring us on to a sweet eternity! Even those sorrows, and groans, and tears are precious that lead to an eternal joy! Who would not willingly obey the holy motions of the Holy Spirit, that is but hatching and preparing us for eternity! This is it that makes a Bible, a sermon, a holy book, to be of greater value than lands and lordships. It is eternity that makes the illuminated soul so fearful of sinning, so diligent in holy duties, so cheerful and resolved in suffering, because he believeth it is all for an eternity. A Christian in the holy assemblies, and in his

reading, learning, prayer, conference, is laying up for everlasting, when the worldling in the market, in the field or shop, is making provision for a few days or hours. Thou gloriest in thy riches and pre-eminence now, but how long wilt thou do so? To-day that house, that land is thine; but canst thou say, it shall be thine to-morrow? Thou canst not: but the believer can truly say, My God, my Christ, is mine to-day, and will be mine to all eternity! O death! thou canst take my friends from me, and my worldly riches from me, and my time, and strength, and life from me! but take my God, my Christ, my heaven, my portion from me, if thou canst! My sin is all thy sting and strength! But where is thy sting when sin is gone? and where is thy strength when Christ hath conquered thee? Is it a great matter that thou deprivest me of my sinful, weak, and troublesome friends, when against thy will thou bringest me to my perfect blessed friends with whom I must abide for ever! Thou dost indeed bereave me of these riches; but it is that I may possess the invaluable eternal riches! Thou endest my time, that I may have eternity! Thou castest me down, that I may be exalted! Thou takest away my strength of life, that I may enter into life eternal! And is this the worst that death can do? And shall I be afraid of this? I willingly lay by my clothes at night, that I may take my rest, and I am not loath to put off the old when I must put on new. The bird that is hatched is not grieved because he must leave the broken shell. Nor is it the grief of man or beast that he hath left the womb! Death doth but open the womb of time and let us into eternity, and is the second birth-day of the soul. Regeneration brings us into the kingdom of grace; and death into the kingdom of glory. Blessed are they that have their part in the new birth of grace and the first resurrection from the death of sin; for to such the natural death will be gain; and they shall have their part in the second resurrection, and on them the everlasting death shall have no power. O sirs, it is Eternity that telleth you what you should mind, and be, and do! and that turneth the scales in all things where it is concerned. Can you sleep in sin so near eternity! Can you play and laugh before you are prepared for eternity! Can you think him wise that selleth his eternal joy, for the ease, the mirth, the pleasure of a moment! and triflETH away the

time in which he must win or lose eternity! If these men be wise, there are no fools! nor any but wise men in *bedlam*! Dare thy tongue report, or thy heart imagine, that any holy work is needless, or a heavenly life too much ado, or any suffering too dear, that is for an eternity! O happy souls that win eternity with the loss of all the world! O bless that Christ, that Spirit, that Light, that Word, that Messenger of God, that drew thy heart to choose eternity before all transitory things! That was the day when thou began to be wise, and indeed to shew thyself a man! Thy wealth, thy honour, thy pleasure will be thine when the sensual world hath nothing to shew, but sin and hell, of all they laboured for. Their pleasures, honours, and all die, when they die; but thine will then begin their perfection! The hopes of the ungodly are like an addle egg that when it is broken sends forth nothing but an odious stink, when another sends forth the living bird. O all you worldlings, rich and poor, you dream, you play, you trifle, because you labour not for eternity! Even worldly princes, and nobles of the earth, your glory is but a squib, a flash, a nothing, in comparison of the eternal glory which you lose; you are doing nothing when you are striving for the world; you are trifling and befooling your immortal souls while you are grasping a shadow, the uncertain riches. It is the believer whom you despise, that seeks for something, that loseth not his labour, that shews himself a man of reason, who is caring, and studying, and labouring, and praying, and watching, and suffering for eternity. Why is a day in the courts of God, so much better than a thousand in the tents or palaces of wickedness, but because it is the exchange where we have news of heaven, and trade for an eternity? And why is it better to be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to flourish in the prosperity of sinners, but because God's house is the porch or entrance of an eternity of delights, and the lowest room among the saints affords us a better prospect into heaven, than the highest state of worldly dignity! The ungodly are near to cutting down when they flourish in their greatest glory. (Psal. xxxvii. 2. 20.) Stay but a little, and he that flourisheth will be withered and cast into the fire, and the righteous shall see it when he is cut off, and shall seek him, but he is not to be found. (verse 34—36. 38.) For the enemies of God, and all

that are far from him shall perish ; (Psal. xcii. 9 ; xiii. 27 ;) their desire shall perish ; (Psal. cxii. 10 ;) their hope shall perish ; (Prov. xi. 7 ; Job viii. 13 ;) their way shall perish ; (Psal. i. 6 ;) and themselves and all that they sought, and loved, and delighted in, shall perish. (Job xx. 7 ; 2 Pet. ii. 12 ; Rom. ii. 12 ; Heb. i. 11.) Even the visible heavens and earth, which they abused, shall be consumed with fire. " Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking towards and waiting for the coming and appearance of our Lord ! " (2 Pet. iii. 11.) Shall any man be accounted wise, that is not wise for eternal happiness ? Shall any man be counted happy, that must be most miserable to eternity ? In the name of God, Christian, I charge thee to hold on, and look to thy soul, thy words, thy ways, for it is for eternity ! O play not, loiter not, do nothing by the halves in the way to eternity ! Let the careless world do what they will ; they despise, and know not what they do despise ; they neglect, and know not what they do neglect ; but thou that seekest, and labourest, and waitest, knowest what thou seekest, and labourest, and waitest for. They sin and know not what they do. They know not what they are treasuring up for an eternity. But thou knowest why thou hatest and avoidest sin.

Sinners, be awakened by the call of God ; do you know where you are, and what you do ? You are every man of you stepping into eternity ! Will you sin away, will you loiter away, will you sell for nothing, an eternal glory ? Is thy sinful lust, and gain, and mirth, and gluttony, and excess of drink, a price to set upon eternity ? If heaven be no more worth to thee, art thou not as bad as Judas, that for thirty pieces of silver would sell his Lord ? O eternity, eternity ! what hearts have they that can so forget thee, neglect thee, and disesteem thee, when they stand so near thee ! O sleepy souls ! do you never use to rub your eyes, and look before you towards eternity ? and doth it not amaze you to see whither it is that you are going ? Merrily you run down the hill ; but where is the bottom ! If you look but down from the top of a steeple, it may occasion an amazing fear ; what then should it cause in you to look down into hell, which is your eternity ? No good can possibly be small that is eternal ; and no hurt or pain can be called lit-

tle, that is eternal: an eternal tooth-ache, or an eternal gout, or stone, or fever, were a misery unspeakable. But O! what are these to an eternal loss of heaven, and to an eternal sense of the burning wrath of God Almighty! To be out of heaven a day, and in hell that day, is a misery now unknown to sinners; but if it were as many thousand years as the earth hath sands, it were a greater misery; but to be there for ever, doth make the misery past all hope, and all conceiving. O methinks the very name of Eternity, should frighten the drunkard out of the alehouse, and the sleepy sinner out of his security, and the lustful, sportful, voluptuous sinner out of his sensual delights! Methinks the very name of Eternity should call off the worldling to seek betime a more enduring treasure, and should take down the gallant's pride, and bring men to look after other matters than the most do look after! Methinks to hear the name of Eternity should with men of any faith and reason, even blast all the beauty, and blur the glory, and sadden the delights, and weaken the temptations of the world, and make all its pleasure, pomp, and splendour, to be to our apprehensions as a smoke, a shadow, as the dirt that we tread upon! Methinks to hear the name of Eternity should lay so odious a reproach on sin, and so nakedly open the folly, and shame, and misery of the ungodly, and so lively shew the need, and worth of faith and holiness, that men should be soon resolved in their choice, and soon be at the end of an ungodly course, and need no more words to make them the resolved servants of the Lord, before to-morrow! O methinks, that a thought of eternity should, with a believer, answer all temptations, and put life into all his prayers and endeavours! If we were never so cold, or dull, or sleepy, one would think a serious thought of eternity should warm us, quicken us, and awake us! O Christians, shall we hear carelessly, or speak carelessly of eternity? Shall we pray coldly, or labour negligently for eternity! O what an ocean of joy will eternity be unto the sanctified! It hath neither banks nor bottom. O what a gulf of misery and woe, will eternity be to the ungodly! Wonderful! that on their dying beds they quake not with the horror, and that they cry not out with greatest lamentation; to think what a bottomless gulf of misery their departing souls must be cast into! To be for ever, ever, ever, under the most heavy wrath of God!

This is the appointed wages of ungodliness ; this is the end of wicked ways ; this is it that sinners chose, because they would not live to God ! this they preferred, or ventured on, before a holy, heavenly life ! and this is it that believers are labouring to escape in all their holy care and diligence ! It is an infinite value that is put upon the blood of Christ, the promises of God, the ordinances and means of grace, and grace itself, and the poorest duties of the poorest saints, because they are for an infinite, eternal glory. No mercy is small that tastes of heaven (as all doth or should do to the believer). No action is low that aims at heaven. And O how lively should the resolutions and courage of those men be, that are travelling, fighting, and watching for eternity ! How full should be their comforts, that are fetched from the foresight of infinite eternal comforts ! As all things will presently be swallowed up in eternity, so methinks the present apprehension of eternity should now swallow up all things else in the soul.

*Object.* ' But (saith the unbeliever) if God have made man for eternity, it is a wonder that there are no more lively impressions of so infinite a thing upon the souls of all ! Our sense of it is so small, that it makes me doubt whether we are made for it.'

*Ans.* Consider, 1. That benumbedness, and sleep, and death, is the very state of an unholy soul ! Hast thou cast thyself into a sleepy, senseless disease, and wilt thou argue thence against eternity ? This is as if the blind should conclude that there is no sun, or that the eye of man was not made to see it, because he hath no sight himself ! or as if you should think that man hath not any life or feeling, because your palsied limbs do not feel ! or that the stomach was not made for meat, because the stomachs of the sick abhor it !

2. And for believers, 1. You may see by their lives that they have some apprehensions of eternity : why else do they differ from you, and deny themselves, and displease the world and the flesh itself ? Why do they set their hearts above, if they have not lively thoughts of an eternity ?

2. But if you ask me, Why their apprehensions are not a thousand times more lively about so infinite a thing ; I answer, 1. Their apprehensions must be suitable to their state. Our state here is a state of imperfection ; and so

will our apprehensions be ; but a perfect state will have perfect apprehensions. It is no proof that the infant in the womb is not made to come into this world, and see the sun, and converse with men, because he hath no apprehensions of it. Our state here is a conjunction of the soul to a frail distempered body ; and so near a conjunction that the actions of the soul must have great dependance on the body ; and therefore our apprehensions are limited by its frailty ; and the soul can go no higher than the capacity of the body will allow : 2. And our apprehensions now are fitted to our use and benefit : we are now believers, and must live by faith ; and therefore must be beholders, and live by sense. If eternity were open to men's natural sight, or we had here as clear and lively apprehensions of it, as those have that are there, then it were no thanks, no praise to us to be believers, or to obey, and live as saints ! And then God should not govern man, as man, here in the way, by a law, but as a beast by sense, or as the glorified that have possession. Where there are perfect apprehensions of God and glory, there will be also perfect love, and joy, and praise, and consequently perfect happiness ; and this were to make earth and heaven, the way and the end, to be all one. Perfect apprehensions are kept for a perfect state of happiness. But here it is well if we have such apprehensions as are fitted to the use of travellers and soldiers, as will carry us on, and prevail against the difficulties of our course. If you had never been in London, you could not have any such clear apprehensions of the place, as those that see it have ; and yet your imperfect apprehensions might be sufficient to make you take a journey thither, and you may come as safely and certainly to it, as if you had seen it. Moreover, the body, the brain, which the soul in apprehending now makes use of, cannot bear such apprehensions as are suitable to the thousandth part of the greatness of the object, without distraction. The smallest eye may see the sun ; but the greatest cannot endure to gaze upon its glory ; much less if it were at the nearest approach. It is a mercy of mercies to give us such apprehensions of eternity, as are meet for passengers to bring us thither ; and it is part of our mercy that those apprehensions are not so great as to distract and overwhelm us.

4. Lastly, The eternity of God must teach the soul con-

tentedness and patience under all labours, changes, sufferings and dangers that are here below. Believing soul, draw near; look seriously on eternity, and try whether it will not make such impressions as these upon thee. Art thou weary of labours, either of the mind or body? Is not eternity long enough for thy rest? Canst thou not afford to work out the daylight of this life, when thou must rest with Christ to all eternity? Canst thou not run with patience so short a race, when thou lookest to so long a rest? Canst thou not watch one hour with Christ, that must reign with him to all eternity? Dost thou begin to shrink at sufferings for Christ, when thou must be in glory with him for ever? How short is the suffering? how long is the reward? Dost thou begin to think hardly of the dealing of the Lord, because his people are here afflicted, and made the scorn and by-word of the world? Why, is not eternity long enough for God to shew his love and bounty to his people in? Is not the day at hand, when Lazarus and the rich worldling both must hear, "But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented?" (Luke xvi. 25.) Did not that *now* come time enough which was the entrance of eternity? "Even Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God! Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. xii. 2, 3.) Dost thou grudge at the prosperity of the wicked, and prevalency of the church's enemies? Look then unto eternity, and bethink thee whether that be not long enough, for the saints to reign, and the wicked to be tormented. Wouldst thou have them in hell before their time? Dost thou begin to doubt of the coming of Christ, or the truth of his promises, because he doth so long delay? O what is a thousand years to eternity! Is there not yet time enough before thee, for Christ to make good all his promises in? Were not those disciples sharply but justly rebuked as "fools and slow of heart to believe," that when their Lord had been but two days dead, were unbelievingly saying, "We hoped this had been he that should have redeemed Israel?" O remember, Christian, in all thy darkness and ignorance of the difficult passages of Scrip-

ture, or of Providence, that the things that are chained to eternity, cannot be perfectly understood by him that standeth in an inch of time: but when eternity comes, thou shalt understand them. Remember when things seem crooked in this world, and the best are lowest, and the worst are highest, that eternity is long enough to set all straight. Remember when sinners crow and triumph, that eternity is long enough for their complaints. In thy poverty, and pain, and longest afflictions, remember that eternity is long enough for thy relief. If thy sorrow be long, and thy comforts short, remember that eternity is long enough for thy joys. Cannot we be content to take up short in this life, when we believe eternity? Dost thou stagger at the length or strength of thy temptations? and art thou ready to draw back and venture upon sin? Why, what temptation can there be, that should not be lighter than a feather, if eternity be put against it in the scales? In a word, if there be any man that escapeth the foolish seductions of this world, and useth it as not abusing it, and hath all his worldly accommodations as if he had none, it is he that fixeth his eye upon eternity, and seeth that the fashion of these lower things doth pass away. (1 Cor. vii. 29—31.) No man can be ignorant of the necessity and worth of a holy life, that discerneth that the eternal God is the end of it. The right apprehensions of God's eternity (supposing him our end, which is further to be manifested in its place), is a most powerful antidote against all sin, and a most powerful composer of a distempered mind, and a most powerful means to keep up all the powers of the soul in a resolute, vigorous, cheerful motion to the eternal God, for whom and by whom it was created.

#### CHAP. VI.

5. The next attribute of God, that is to make its impress on us, is, that he is a Spirit. In this one are these three especially comprehended: 1. That he is simple, and not material or compounded as bodies are: 2. That he is invisible, and not to be seen as bodies are: 3. That he is immortal and incorruptible, and not subject to death or change, as bodies are.

1. As Simplicity signifieth unity, in opposition to multiplicity, we have spoken of it before. As it is opposite to

all materiality, mixture or composition, we are now to speak of it: And the believing thoughts of God's immateriality and simplicity, should have these three effects upon the soul. 1. It should do much to win the heart to God, and cause it to close with him as its felicity; because as he hath no matter or mixture, so he hath nothing but pure and perfect goodness, and therefore there is nothing in him to discourage the soul. The creatures have evil in them with their good, and by contrary qualities do hurt us when they help us, and displease us when they please us; but in God there is nothing but infinite goodness. And should not the soul adhere to him, where it is sure to find nothing but simple, pure, and unmixed good? The creatures are all liable to some exceptions: in one thing they help us, but in another they hinder us; in one thing they are suitable to us, and in another thing unsuitable! But God is liable to no exceptions. This will for ever confound the ungodly that give not up themselves unto him: they did even for a thing of naught forsake that God that was purely and simply good, and against whom they had no exceptions. Had there been any thing in God to discourage the soul, or which his most malicious enemy could blame, the ungodly soul had some excuse. But this will stop all the mouths of the condemned, that they had nothing to say against the Lord; and yet they had no mind to him, no hearts for him, in comparison of the vain, vexatious creatures.

2. The Simplicity of God should make us know the imperfection and vanity of all the creatures that are compounded things; and so should help to alienate us from them. Our friends have in them perhaps much holiness, but mixed with much sin. They may have much knowledge; but mixed with much ignorance. Their humility is mixed with pride; their meekness with some passions, their love with selfishness, and a small matter will cause them to distaste us: they may be much for God; but withal they may do much against him. They help the church; but through their weakness they may lamentably detract or wrong it: they are able to help us but in part; and willing but in part; and they have usually interests of their own, that are inconsistent with ours. We have no commodity, but hath its discommodity: our houses, our families, our neighbours, our callings, our cattle, our land, our countries,

churches, ministers, magistrates, laws and judgments, yea, even health, and plenty, and peace itself, all have their mixture of bitterness or danger, and those the most dangerous commonly that have least bitterness. But in God there is none of all this mixture, but pure uncompounded good. "He is light, and with him is no darkness." (1 John i. 5.) Indeed there is somewhat in God that an ungodly man distasteth, and that seemeth in the state that he is in to be against him, and hurtful to him: as is his justice, holiness, truth, &c. But justice is not evil, because it doth condemn a thief or murderer: meat is not bad, because the sick distaste it. It is the cross position of the sinful soul, or his enmity to the Lord that makes the Lord to use him as an enemy. Let him but become a subject fit for sweeter dealing from God, and he is sure to find it. Leave then the compounded, self-contradicting creature, and adhere to the pure, simple Deity.

3. God's Simplicity must draw the soul to a holy simplicity, that it may be like to God. We that serve a pure, simple God, must do it with simple, pure affections, and not with hypocrisy, or a double heart. His interest in us should be maintained with a holy jealousy, that no other interest mix itself therewith. The soul should attain to a holy simplicity by closing with the simple, infinite God, and suffering nothing to be a sharer with him in our superlative affections. All creatures must keep their places in our hearts, and that is only in a due subordination and subserviency to the Lord: but nothing should take up the least of that estimation, those affections, or endeavours that are his own peculiar. God will not accept of half a heart: A double-minded, double-hearted, double-faced, or double-tongued person, is contrary to the holy simplicity of a saint. As we would not bow the knee to any gods but one, so neither should we bow the heart or life to them. We should know what is God's prerogative, and that we should keep entirely for him. A subordinate esteem, and love, and desire the creature may have, as it revealeth God to us, or leadeth to him, or helpeth us in his work: but it should not have the least of his part in our esteem, or love, or desire. This is the chastity, the purity, the integrity of the soul. It is the mixture, impurity, corruption and confusion of our souls, when any thing is taken

in with God. See therefore, Christian, that in thy heart thou have no God but ONE, and that he have all thy heart, and soul, and strength, as far as thou canst attain it. And because there will be still in imperfect souls, some sinful mixture of the creature's interest with God's, let it be the work of thy life to be watching against it, and casting it out, and cleansing thy heart of it, as thou wouldst do thy food if it fall into the dirt. For whatever is added to God in thy affections, doth make no better an increase there, than the adding of earth unto thy gold, or of dung unto thy meat, or of corrupted humours and sickness to thy body. Mixture will make no better work.

It may be thy rejoicing, if thou have "the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, thou hast had thy conversation in the world." (2 Cor. i. 12.) It is the state of hypocrisy, when one God is openly professed and worshipped, and yet the creature lieth deepest and nearest to the heart.

2. The Invisibility of God also must have its due effects upon us. And, 1. It must warn us, that we picture not God to our eyesight, or in our fancies in any bodily shape. Saith the prophet, "To whom will you liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" (Isa. xl. 18. 25.) "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of his Father, he hath declared him," (John i. 18,) and therefore we must conceive of him but as he is declared, "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." (John vi. 46.)

If you ask me, How then you should conceive of God, if not in any bodily shape? I answer, Get all these attributes, and relations of God to make their proper impress upon thy soul, as now I am teaching you, and then you will have the true conceiving of God. This question therefore is to be answered at the end of this discourse, when you have seen all the attributes of God together, and heard what impression they must make upon you.

2. This must teach us, to think most highly of the things that are invisible, and more meanly of these visible things. Let it be the property of a beast, and not of a man, to know nothing but what he seeth or hath seen: Let it be

the mark of the brutish infidels, and not of Christians, to doubt of the invisible things, because they are invisible ; or to think that things visible are more excellent or sure. As the senses are more ignoble than the intellect, (a beast having as perfect senses as a man, and yet no reasonable understanding) so the objects of sense must proportionably be below the objects of the understanding, as such. The grossest and most palpable objects are the basest. It is the subtile part that is called the spirits ; which being drawn out of plants or other vegetables, is most powerful and excellent, and valued, when the earthly dregs are cast away as little worth. It is that subtile part in our blood that is called the spirits, that hath more of the virtue of life, and doth more of the works than the feculent, gross and earthly part. The air and wind have as true a being as the earth, and a more excellent nature, though it be more gross and they invisible. The body is not so excellent as the invisible soul. Invisible things are as real as visible, and as suitable to our more noble, invisible part, as visible things to our fleshly, baser part.

3. The Invisibility of God must teach us to live a life of faith, and to get above a sensual life : and it must teach us to value the faith of the saints, as knowing its excellency and necessity. Invisible objects have the most perfect excellent reality ; and therefore faith hath the pre-eminence above sense. Natural reason can live upon things not seen, if they have been seen, or can be known by natural evidence (subjects obey a prince that they see not : and fear a punishment which they see not : and the nature of man is afraid of the devils, though we see them not). But faith liveth upon such invisible things, as mortal eye did never see, nor natural ordinary evidence demonstrate, but are revealed only by the word of God : though about many of its invisible objects, faith hath the consent of reason for its encouragement. Value not sight and sense too much. think not all to be mere uncertainties and notions that are not the objects of sense. We should not have heard that God is a spirit, if corporal substances had not a baser kind of being than spirits : Intellection is a more noble operation than sense. If there be any thing properly called sense in heaven, it will be as far below the pure intellectual intuition of the Lord, as the glorified body will be below the

glorified soul. But what that difference will be, we cannot now understand. Fix not your minds on sensible things. Remember that your God, your home, your portion, are unseen : and therefore live in hearty affections to them, and serious prosecution of them, as if you saw them. Pray, as if you saw God, and heaven, and hell. Hear, as if you saw him that sends his messenger to speak to you. Resist all the temptations to lust, and sensuality, and every sin, as you would do if you saw God stand by. Love him, and fear him, and trust him, and serve him, as you would do if you beheld him. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) Believing must be to you instead of seeing ; and make you as serious about things unseen, as sensual men are about things sensible. In every thing that you see, remember it is he that is unseen that appeareth in them. He lighteth you by the sun ; he warmeth you by the fire ; he beareth you by the earth. See him in all these by the eye of faith.

3. The Immortality, Incorruptibility and Immutability of God, must, 1. Teach the soul to rise up from these mortal, corruptible, mutable things, and to fix upon that God who is the immortal, incorruptible portion of his saints.

2. It must comfort and encourage all believers in the consideration of their felicity ; and support them under the failings of all mortal, corruptible things. Our parents, and children, and friends, are mortal : they are ours to-day, and dead to-morrow : they are our delight to-day, and our sorrow and horror to-morrow : but our God is immortal. Our houses may be burned ; our goods may be consumed or stolen ; our clothes will be worn out ; our treasure here may be corrupted. But our God is unchangeable, the same for ever. Our laws and customs may be changed ; our governors and privileges changed ; our company, and employments, and habitation changed ; but our God is never changed. Our estates may change from riches to poverty ; and our names that were honoured, may incur disgrace. Our health may quickly turn to sickness, and our ease to pain : but still our God is unchangeable for ever. Our friends are inconstant and may turn our enemies : our peace may be changed into war ; and our liberty into slavery : but our God doth never change. Time will change customs, families, and all things here ; but it changeth not

our God. The creatures are all but earthen metal, and quickly dashed in pieces: Our comforts are changeable; ourselves are changeable and mortal: but so is not our God.

3. And it should teach us to draw as near to God as we are capable, by unchangeable, fixed resolutions, and constancy of endeavours; and to be still the same as we are at the best.

4. It should move us also to be more desirous of passing into the state of immortality, and to long for our unchangeable habitation, and our immortal, incorruptible bodies, and to possess the "kingdom that cannot be moved." (Heb. xii. 28.) And let not the mutability of things below much trouble us, while our Rock, our Portion, is unmoveable. God waxeth not old; heaven doth not decay by duration: the glory of the blessed shall not wither, nor their sun set upon them, nor their day have any night; nor any mutations or commotions disturb their quiet possessions. O love and long for immortality and incorruption!

#### CHAP. VII.

6. Having spoken of the effects of the attributes of God's essence as such, we must next speak of the effects of his three great attributes which some call *subsistentia*, that is, his omnipotency, understanding, and will; or his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness: by which it hath been the way of the schoolmen and other divines to denominate the three persons, not without some countenance from Scripture phrase. The Father they call the infinite power of the Godhead; and the Son, the wisdom and word of God, and of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the love and goodness of God, of the Father, and Son. But, that these attributes, of power, understanding, and will, or power, wisdom, and goodness, are of the same importance with the terms of personality, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we presume not to affirm. It sufficeth us, 1. That God hath assumed these attributes to himself in Scripture. 2. And that man who beareth the natural image of God, hath power, understanding and will; and as he beareth the holy moral image of God, he hath a power to execute that which is good, and wisdom to direct, and goodness of will to determine for the execution: and so while God is seen of us in this glass of

man, we must conceive of him after the image that in man appeareth to us, and speak of him in the language of man, as he doth of himself.

And first, The Almightiness of God must make these impressions on our souls. 1. It must possess the soul with very awful, reverent thoughts of God ; and fill us continually with his holy fear. Infinite Greatness and Power, must have no common, careless thoughts, lest we blaspheme him in our minds, and be guilty of contempt. The dread of the heavenly Majesty should be still upon us ; and we must "be in his fear all the day long." (Prov. xxiii. 17.) Not under that slavish fear that is void of love, as men fear an enemy, or hurtful creature, or that which is evil : for we have not such a Spirit from the Lord, nor stand in a relation of enmity and bondage to him : but reverence is necessary ; and from thence a fear of sinning and displeasing so great a God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. i. 7 ; ix. 10 ; Psal. cxi. 10.) "By it men depart from evil." (Prov. xvi. 6.) Sin is for want of the fear of God. (Luke xxiii. 40 ; Prov. iii. 7 ; Jer. v. 24 ; Lev. xxv. 36.) The fear of God is often put for the whole new man, or all the work of grace within us, even the principle of new life. (Jer. ii. 19 ; xxxii. 40.) And it is often put for the whole work of religion, or service of God. (Psal. xxxiv. 11 ; Prov. i. 29 ; Psal. cxxx. 4 ; xxxiv. 9.) And therefore the godly are usually denominated, such as fear God. (Psal. xv. 4 ; xxii. 23 ; cxv. 11. 13 ; cxxxv. 20 ; xxiv. 7. 9, &c.) The godly are "devoted to the fear of God." (Psal. cxix. 38.) It is our "sanctifying the Lord in our hearts, that he be our fear and dread." (Isa. viii. 13.) If we fear him not, we take him not for our master. (Mal. i. 6.) Evangelical grace excludeth not this fear. (Luke xii. 5.) Though we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, yet must our acceptable service of God, be with reverence and godly fear. (Heb. xii. 28.) With fear and trembling we must work out our salvation. (Phil. ii. 12.) In fear we must pass the time of sojourning here. (1 Pet. i. 17.) In it we must converse together. (Eph. v. 4.) Yea, holiness is to be perfected in the fear of God ; (2 Cor. vii. 1 ; ) and that because we have the promises. The most prosperous churches walk in this fear. (Acts ix. 31.) It is a necessary means of preventing destruction ; (Heb. xi. 7 ; ) and of attaining salva-

tion when we have the promises. (Heb. i. 7.) God puts this fear in the hearts of those that shall not depart from him. (Jer. xxxii. 40.) See therefore that the greatness of the Almighty God possess thy soul continually with his fear.

2. God's Almightyness should also possess us with holy admiration of him, and cause us in heart and voice to magnify him. O what a power is that which made the world of nothing! which upholdeth the earth without any foundation but his will! which placed and maintaineth all things in their order in heaven and earth! which causeth so great and glorious a creature as the sun, that is so much bigger than all the earth, to move so many thousand miles in a few moments, and constantly to keep its time and course! that giveth its instinct to every brute, and causeth every part of nature to do its office! By his power it is that every motion of the creature is performed, and that order is kept in the kingdoms of the world. "He made the heaven and the earth by his great power and stretched out arm, and nothing is too hard for him: The great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts is his name; great in counsel, and mighty in works." (Jer. xxxii. 17—19.) "The great, the mighty, the terrible God." (Neh. ix. 32.) To him therefore that alone doth great wonders we must give the greatest praise. (Psal. cxxxvi. 4.) "O how great are his works, and his thoughts are very deep." (Psal. xcii. 5.) "Great is our Lord and of great power." (Psal. cxlvii. 5.) And therefore in Zion must he be great. (Psal. xcix. 2.) And his great and terrible name must be praised.

3. In the church where he is known, must his name be great. (Psal. lxxvi. 1.) "For we know that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods." (Psal. cxxxv. 3.) His saints delight to praise his greatness. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honour and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain, who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind, who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flame of fire," &c. (Psal. civ. 1—4.) From Almightyness all things have their being, and therefore must honour the Almighty "Alpha and Omega, the begin-

ning and the ending; saith the Lord; which is and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8.) They that magnify the Lord with the song of Moses and of the Lamb say, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of Saints." (Rev. xv. 2.)

3. The Almightyness of God must imprint upon our souls a strong and steadfast confidence in him, according to the tenor of his covenant and promises. Nothing more certain than that impotency and insufficiency will never cause him to fail us, or to break his word. O what an encouragement is it to the saints, that they are built on such an impregnable rock, and that Omnipotency is engaged for them! and O, what a shame is this to our unbelief, that ever we should distrust Omnipotency!

If God be Almighty, 1. Remember in thy greatest wants, that there is no want but he can easily and abundantly supply.

2. Remember in thy greatest sufferings, pains, or dangers, that no pain is so great which he cannot mitigate and remove, and no danger so great from which he is not able to deliver thee. The servants of Christ dare venture on the flames, because they trust upon the Almighty. (Dan. iii. 16—18.) In confidence on Omnipotency they dare stand against the threatenings of the greatest upon earth. "We are not careful (said those three believers to the king) to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us," &c. He that is afraid to stand upon a slender bow, or upon the unstable waters, is not afraid to stand upon the earth; and he that is afraid of robbers when he is alone, is bolder in a conquering army; what will man trust, if he distrust Omnipotency? Where can we be safe, if not in the love, the covenant, the hands of the Almighty God? When storms and winds had frightened the disciples, lest they should be drowned when Christ was in the ship, their sin was aggravated by the presence of their powerful Lord, whose mighty works they had often seen; "Why fear ye, (saith he) O ye of little faith!" (Matt. viii. 26.) Cannot he rebuke our winds and waves! and will not all obey the rebukes of the Almighty? When thou hast a want that God cannot supply, or a sickness that he cannot cure, or a

danger that he cannot prevent, then be thou fearful, and distrust him and spare not.

3. Remember also in thy lowest state, and in the church's greatest sufferings or dangers, that the Almighty is able to raise up his church or thee even in a moment.

If you say, that it is true God can do it, but we know not whether he will; I answer, 1. I shall shew you in due place, how far he hath revealed his will for such deliverances. In sum, we have his promise, "that all things shall work together for our good," (Rom. viii. 28,) and what would we have more! Would you have that which is evil for you?

2. At present, see that Omnipotency do establish thy confidence so far as it is concerned in the cause. As 1. Be sure that no work is too hard for the Almighty; do not so much as in the thoughts of thy heart, make question of his power, and say with those unbelievers, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? can he give bread also? can he provide flesh?" (Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20.) If really thou distrust not the power of God, believe then the most difficult or improbable things, as well as the easiest and most probable, if God reveal or promise them. The resurrection seemeth improbable to impotent man; but God hath promised it; and nothing is difficult to Omnipotency. The calling of the Jews; the ruin of the Turk; the downfall of the Pope; the unity of Christians, do all seem to us unlikely things; but all things to God are not only possible but easy. He is at no more labour to make a world, than to make a straw, or make a fly. "Whatsoever pleased the Lord, that did he in heaven and earth, in the sea and in the depths." (Psal. cxxxv. 6.) Dost thou think it improbable that ever all thy sins should be conquered; and that ever thy soul should live with Christ among the holy saints and angels; and that ever thy body, that must first be dust, should shine as the stars in the firmament of God? And why doth it seem to thee improbable? Is it not as easy to God as to cause the earth to stand on nothing, and the sun to run its daily course? If God had promised thee to live a day longer, or any small and common things, thou couldst then believe him; and is it not as easy to him to advance thee to everlasting glory, as to cause thee to live another hour, or to keep a hair of thy head from perishing? Sin is too

strong for thee to overcome, but not for God. Death is too strong for thee to conquer, but not for Christ. Heaven is too high for thee to reach by thy own strength; but he that is there, and prepared it for thee, can take thee thither. Trust God or trust nothing; he that cannot trust in him shall despair for ever; for all other confidence will deceive him. "They that know his name, will put their trust in him; for the Lord hath not forsaken them that seek him." (Psal. ix. 10.) All those that trust in him shall rejoice, and ever shout for joy, because he defendeth them. (Psal. v. 11.) "Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies." (Psal. xl. 4.) "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." (Prov. xxix. 25.) O what hath Almightyness done in the world; and what for the church; and what for thee; and yet wilt thou distrust him? "O how great is the goodness that he hath laid up for them that fear him; which he hath wrought for them that trust in him before the sons of men!" (Psal. xxxi. 19.) "The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." (Psal. xxxiv. 22.) Are thy straits too great; thy work too hard? "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also to him and he shall bring it to pass." (Psal. xxxvii. 5.) In thy lowest state look up to the Almighty, and say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee: In God have I put my trust; I will not fear, what man can do unto me." (Psal. lvi. 3, 4.) "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God; my strength; in whom I will put my trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." (Psal. xviii. 2.) He is a buckler to all that trust in him. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." (Psal. xx. 7.) Trust not in the creature; that is, in vanity and infirmity. There is not almighty in man, or any other creature: "It is better therefore to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man: it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes." (Psal. cxviii. 7, 8.) What a working passage is that, Jer. xvii. 5—7, "Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord! for he shall be like the heath in the deserts, and shall not see when good

cometh. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh——.”

2. Trust also in God, as one that is assured that no enemy is too strong for the Almighty: Alas, what is an army of dust to Omnipotency! If the Lord do but arise, his enemies will be scattered, and they that hate him will flee before him; as smoke is driven away, and as wax melteth before the fire, the wicked shall perish at the presence of the Lord. (Psal. lxxviii. 1, 2.) While the Lord of Hosts is for us, we need not fear if hosts come against us; at worst they can but kill our bodies; and “greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world.” (1 John iv. 4.) O what a match have the miserable enemies of the church! what a work do they undertake? what a desperate attempt do they enterprise? to strive against Heaven, and overcome Omnipotency!

3. Trust in the Lord, as one that believeth that no means or instruments are too small or weak for Almightyness successfully to use. No matter who the instrument be, how mean, and weak, and despicable, if it be but an Almighty hand that uses it. A few poor fishermen and despised people, shall pull down Satan’s kingdom in the world, and conquer the greatest, and bring in the nations to the faith, if Omnipotency be with them.

4. The Almightyness of God must fill our hearts with courage and resolution in his cause, and make us go on with the greatest alacrity in his work. Though we must be doves and lambs for innocence and meekness; yet must we be soldiers for valour and stability. Shall we flag or shrink, that have Omnipotency on our side! Whoever scorneth thee, hateth thee, threateneth thee, imprisoneth thee, is not the Almighty enough to set against them all, for thy encouragement?

5. The Almightyness of God must be the comfort of all that have interest in him. O, did the blind world but see him that his Omnipotent, or know the strength that is engaged for the weakest saint, they would soon see which is the strongest side, and which to cleave to for their security: O blessed people, that have the Almighty on their side, and

engaged with them against their enemies, and to do their works, and answer their desires! How can any of them perish when the Almighty is engaged for their salvation! "The Father is greater than all, and none shall take them out of his hands." (John x. 29.) How glad would men be in the beginning of a war, to know which side will prove the stronger, that they may join with that. Can the side that God is on be conquered? If you are wise, observe what cause is his, and let that be yours. "It is hard to kick against the pricks." Woe to those souls that the Almighty is against, and that dash themselves on the Rock that they should build on.

### CHAP. VIII.

7. The next attribute that must work upon us, is the Infinite Wisdom or Omniscience of God. "His understanding is infinite." (Psal. cxlvii. 5.) And the impressions that this should make upon our souls, are these:

1. Delight in wisdom, that you may in your places be like to God. The new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col. iii. 10.) If God be infinitely wise, those then are the most excellent that are the wisest. Ignorance is the soul's blindness, and the privation of the image of God on the understanding. "Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness." (Eccles. ii. 13.) To desire, as Adam did, any of that knowledge that God hath reserved to himself, or is unnecessary for us, is not indeed to be wise in our desires: unnecessary knowledge is but a trouble. But to know the Lord, and his revealed will, and the way of life, is the light and glory of our minds. He that hath lost his eyesight, hath lost his principal natural delight, and is as one out of the world while he is in it. And the ignorant souls that are void of the heavenly illumination, must needs be void of the delights of grace; and though they live in the visible church, where the beauty of holiness is the excellency of the saints, yet they do not see this beauty; but are like the infidels that are out of the church, while they are in it. The blind are in continual danger; they know not where they set their feet; and they know not when to be confident, nor when to fear: sometimes they are afraid where there is no cause, because there may be cause for ought they know; and

sometimes they are fearless at the very brink of death, and little think of the evil that they are near. Why do our poor deluded people so boldly live in an unconverted state, but because they know not where they are? Why do they so carelessly lie down and rise in an unsanctified condition, unpardoned, unready for death and judgment, and under the condemnation of the law, but because they know not the misery or danger in which they stand? Why do they go on so carelessly and wilfully in sin, and despise the counsel of their teachers, and of the Lord, and take a holy life as needless, but because they know not what they do? Men could not go so quietly or merrily to hell, with their eyes open, as they do when they are shut by ignorance. Whence is it, that such multitudes are still ungodly, under all the teachings and warnings of the Lord; but because "they have their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, by the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and therefore many being past feeling, have given them over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." (Ephes. iv. 18, 19.) Sin is the fruit of folly, and the greatest folly: they are "fools that make a jest of it." (Prov. xiv. 9.) And it is for "want of wisdom that they die." (Prov. x. 21; i. 32.) The ignorant are prisoners to the prince of darkness. (Ephes. vi. 12; v. 8.) "Knowledge is despised by none but fools." (Prov. i. 7. 22.) The conquest of so many subtle enemies, the performance of so many spiritual duties, which we must go through, if we will be saved, are works too hard for fools to do. The saving of a man's soul, is a work that requireth the greatest wisdom, and therefore the illumination of the mind is God's first work in the conversion of a sinner. (Acts xxvi. 18; Ephes. i. 18.) If Infinite Wisdom communicate to you but the smallest beam of heavenly light, it will change your minds, and make you other men than before, and set you on another course; wisdom will be your guide, and keep you in safe paths; it will cause you to refuse the evil, and to choose the good: it will shew you true happiness, and the way to obtain it; it will cause you to foresee the evil, and escape it, when fools go on and are destroyed. (Prov. xxii. 3.) Wisdom will teach you to know the season, and redeem your time, and walk exactly, when folly will leave you to too late repentance. (Ephes. v. 15.) There is not a soul in hell but was

brought thither by sinful folly ; nor is there a soul in heaven (of them at age) but by heavenly wisdom was conducted thither. In worldly matters the wicked may seem wisest ; and many a saint may be very ignorant ; but when you see the end, you will confess that those were the wise men that had wisdom to repel temptations, and to refuse the enticing baits of sin, and to make sure of everlasting joys.

O therefore apply your hearts to wisdom ! Go to Christ for it, who is “ the wisdom of God ;” (1 Cor. i. 24 ;) and is appointed by him to be “ our wisdom.” (1 Cor. i. 30.) He will teach it you, who is the best Master in the world, so you will but keep in his school, that is, his church, and will humbly learn as little children, and apply yourselves submissively to his Spirit, word and ministers. “ Ask wisdom of God, that giveth liberally and upbraideth not” with former ignorance. (James i. 5.) Think not any pains in holy means too much to get it. “ If thou wilt receive the words of God, and hide his commandments with thee, and incline thy heart to wisdom, and apply it to understanding ; yea if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God ; for the Lord giveth wisdom ; out of his mouth is knowledge and understanding.” (Prov. ii. 1—5.) And fear not being a loser by thy cost or labour. For “ Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding ; for the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than of fine gold : she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared to her ; her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” (Prov. iii. 13—18.)

2. The Infinite Wisdom of God, must resolve you to take him for your principal Teacher, Counsellor and Director, in all your undertakings. Who would go seek the advice of a fool, when he may have Infallible Wisdom to direct him ! In a work of so great difficulty and concernment, a work that hell, and earth, and flesh, opposeth ; a work that our everlasting state dependeth on ; I think it behoveth us to take the best advice that we can get. And who knoweth the will of God, like God ! or who knoweth the

certain means of salvation, like him that is the Author and Giver of Salvation! Would you know whether it be best to live a mortified holy life; who shall be your counsellor? If you advise with the flesh, you know that it would be pleased. If you advise with the world of wicked men, you know that they would be imitated, and judge as they are; and are not like to be wise for you, that are so foolish for themselves, as to part with heaven for a merry dream. If you advise with the devil, you know he would be obeyed, and have company in his misery. You can advise with none but God, but such as are your enemies: And will you ask an enemy, a deadly enemy, what course you should take to make you happy? Will you ask the devil how you may be saved? Or, will you ask the blind, ungodly world, what course you should take to please the Lord? Or, will you ask the flesh, by what means you may subdue it and become spiritual? If you take advice of Scripture, of the Spirit, of a holy, well-informed minister or Christian, or of a renewed well-informed conscience, I take this for your advising with the Lord; but besides these that are his mouth, you can ask advice of none but enemies. But if they were never so much your friends, and wanted wisdom, they could but ignorantly seduce you. And do you think that any of them all, is as wise as God? It is the constant course of a worldly man to advise with the world, and of carnal men to advise with the flesh; and therefore it is that they are hurried to perdition. The flesh is brutish, and will lead you to a brutish life; and "if you live after it," undoubtedly "you shall die;" (Rom. viii. 13;) and "if you sow to it, you shall but reap corruption." (Gal. vi. 6, 7.) If you are tempted to lust, will you ask the flesh that tempteth you, whether you should yield? If the cup of excess be offered to you, or flesh-pleasing feasts prepared for you, will you ask the flesh whether you should take them or refuse them? You may easily know what counsel it will give you. The counsel of God, and of your flesh, are contrary; and therefore the lives of the carnal and spiritual man are contrary. And will you venture on the advice of a brutish appetite, and refuse the counsel of the all-knowing God! Such as is your guide and counsellor such will be your end. Never man miscarried by obeying God; and never man sped well

by obeying the flesh : God leadeth no man to perdition, and the flesh leadeth no man to his salvation. God's motions are all for our eternal good, though they seem to be for our temporal hurt : The motions of the flesh are for our eternal hurt, though at present they seem to be for our corporal benefit. If at any time you be at a loss ; and your carnal friends, or your commodity, or pleasure adviseth you one way, and the word of God, and his faithful ministers advise you another way ; use but your reason well, and consider whether God or those that contradict him be the wiser, and accordingly suit your practice. Alas, man, thy friend is ignorant, and knows not what is good for himself. Thy flesh is ignorant, and knows not what is good for thy soul ! But God knoweth all things. Your flesh and friends do feel what pleaseth them at present, and judge accordingly : but what will be hereafter they understand not, or consider not : But God knoweth as well what will be, as what is : he counselleth you as one that knoweth how your actions will appear at last, and what it is that will save you or undo you, to all eternity. If you be but sick, it is two to one but the counsel of your physician and of your appetite will differ. And if you obey your physician before your appetite, for your health or life, should you not obey God before it, for your salvation ? Do you think in your consciences that any that persuade you to a careless, worldly, fleshly life, are as wise as God that persuadeth you to the contrary ? You dare not say so with your tongues ! and yet the most dare say so with their lives. O how justly do the ungodly perish, that deliberately choose a brutish appetite, a malignant world, and a malicious devil, as a wiser or fitter conductor than the Lord ! But " blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight is in the law of the Lord ;" (Psal. i. 1, 2 ;) and woe to the ungodly, that reject and set at nought the counsel of the Lord, (Prov. i. 25. 30 ; Luke vii. 30,) and will have none of it ; that wait not for his counsel ; (Psal. cvi. 13 ;) that " rebel against the words of God, and condemn the counsel of the Most High." (Psal. cvii. 11.) And woe to them " that take counsel against the Lord and his Christ, that they may break asunder his bonds, and cast away his obligations." (Psal. ii. 1—3.) And woe to them that are given up to the lusts of their own hearts, and to walk in their own counsels. (Psal. lxxxi. 12.) For by their

own counsels shall they fall. (Psal. v. 10.) But had they hearkened to the Lord, and walked in his way, with the fullness of his blessing would he have satisfied them. (Psal. lxxxi. 13. 16.) Resolve therefore, whatever the flesh or the world say, that the testimonies of God shall be your counsellors; (Psal. cxix. 24;) and bless the Lord that giveth thee counsel; (Psal. xvi. 7;) for his counsel is infallible; having guided thee by his counsel, he will bring thee to his glory. (Psal. lxxiii. 24.)

3. The Infinite Wisdom of God, must resolve the soul to rest in his determinations. We are most certain that God is not deceived. Though all men seem liars to you, let God be true: for it is impossible for him to lie. (Heb. vi. 18.) If our reason be to seek, so is not God. When we are saying with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" God knows how: and it is enough for us to know that they are so. If Infinite Wisdom say the word, believe it, though all the world contradict it. Though proud unbelievers say, that the words of God are improbable, let them know that God is not at a loss when men's dark understandings are at a loss. The sun is not taken out of the firmament, whenever a man closeth or loseth his eyes. What! will those cavillers puzzle the Almighty! will they pose Omniscience? Doth it follow that the course of the planets, and the heavens, and all the creatures are out of order, if these silly moles understand not the order of them? No more will it follow that any word of God is false, or any rule of God is crooked, because they see not its truth and rectitude. Shall dust and ashes judge the Lord? "Who hath been his counsellor," and with whom hath he advised for the making, redeeming, or governing of the world? There is no rest to an inquisitive soul, but in the infinite wisdom of the Lord. Find once that it is his word, and inquire no further. It is madness to demand a further proof. As all goodness is comprised in his will and love; so all truth is comprised in his wisdom and revelations. There are no arguments but what are lower and subordinate to this. And therefore if thy reason be at a loss, as to the cause or manner, yet hast thou the greatest reason to believe that all is just and true that proceedeth from the wisdom of the Lord. If flesh and blood, and all the world gainsay it, yet rest in the word of God.

4. And that is the next effect that God's Omniscience should have upon our minds. Take all the sayings of men as folly, that are against the Lord. Let them be high or low, learned or unlearned, if they contradict the God of infinite wisdom, take it but as the words of a distracted man. Did you ever meet with any man of them, that durst say he was wiser than God himself? Herod, that was eaten to death by vermin, was applauded by the flattering crowd, but with this acclamation, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." (Acts xii. 22.) And will you say of any man that he is wiser than God? If you dare not say so, how dare you hear them and believe them against the word of God; how dare you be drawn from a holy life, or from a self-denying duty, or from the truth of God, by the words of a man, yea, perhaps, of a very sot, that speaks against the word of God! "To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. viii. 20.)

5. The Infinite Wisdom of God, should establish our confidence concerning the fulfilling of all his word. He will not fail for want of knowledge: When he spoke that prophecy, that promise, or that threatening, he perfectly knew all things that would come to pass, to all eternity. He knew therefore what he said when he gave out his word, and therefore will fulfil it. Heaven and earth may pass away, but one iota or tittle of his word shall not pass away till all be accomplished. (Matt. v. 18.)

6. And from the Infinite Wisdom of God, the church must be encouraged in its greatest straits, and against all the cunning and subtlety of their enemies. Are we ever in such straits that God knows not how to bring us out? When we see no way for our deliverance, doth it follow that he sees none? If cunning serpents are too subtle for us, do we think that they can overwit the Lord? What had become of us long ago, if God had not known whatever is plotted at Rome, or Spain, or hell, against us; if he knoweth not of all the consultations of the conclave, and of all the contrivances of Jesuits and Friars; and of all the jugglings of the masked emissaries; if God had not known of Faux and his powder mine, it might have blown up all our hopes. But while we know that God is in their councils, and heareth every word they say, and knoweth every secret

of their hearts, and every mischief which they enterprise, let us do our duty, and rest in the wisdom of our great Protector, who will prove all his adversaries to have played the fool. For as sure as his omnipotency shall be glorified by overtopping all opposing powers, so sure shall his infinite wisdom be glorified, by conquering and befooling the wisdom that is against him.

7. Lastly, if God be infinite in knowledge, it must resolve us all to live accordingly. O remember whatever thou thinkest, that God is acquainted with all thy thoughts. And wilt thou feed on lustful, or covetous, or malicious, or unbelieving thoughts, in the eye of God? Remember in thy prayers and every duty, that he knows the very frame of all thy affections, and the manner as well as the matter of thy services. And wilt thou be cold and careless in the sight of God? O remember in thy most secret sins, and thy works of darkness, that nothing is unknown to God; and that before him thou art in the open light: and fearest thou not the face of the Almighty? Wilt thou do that when he knoweth it, that thou wouldst not do if man did know? He knows whether thou deceive thy neighbour, or deal uprightly! Defraud not therefore, for the Lord is the avenger. (1 Thess. iv. 6.) Do nothing that thou wouldst not have God to know; for certainly he knoweth all things. Shall he not see, that made and illuminateth the eye; and shall he not hear that made both tongue and ears; and shall he not know that giveth us understanding, and by whom we know? (Psal. xciv. 8—10.)

And let this be thy comfort in thy secret duties. He that knoweth thy heart, will not overlook the desires of thy heart, though thou hadst not words as thou desirest to express them. And he that knoweth thy uprightness, will justify thee, if all the world condemn thee. He that seeth thee in thy secret alms, or prayers, or tears, will openly reward thee. (Matt. vi. 4. 6.) Let this also comfort thee under all the slanders of malicious or misinformed men: He that must be thy judge and theirs, is acquainted with the truth; who will certainly "bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day." (Psal. xxxvii. 6.) O how many souls are justified with the Omniscient God, that are condemned by the malignant world. And how many blots will be wiped off before the world at the

day of judgment, that here did lie upon the names of faithful, upright men ! O how many hypocrites shall be then disclosed ! And what a cutting thought should it be to the dissembler, that his secret falsehood is known to God ; and when he hath the reputation that he sought with men, “ he hath his reward ! ” (Matt. vi. 2.) For it is a sadder reward that God will give him.

### CHAP. IX.

8. The next of God’s attributes that must make its impress on the soul, is his Infinite Goodness. The denomination of goodness (as all other his attributes) is fetched from, and suited to the capacity or affections of the soul of man. That which is truly amiable is called good. Not as if there were no goodness but what is a means to man’s felicity, as some most sottishly have affirmed ; for our end and felicity itself, and God as he is perfect and excellent in himself, is more amiable than all means.

In three respects therefore it is that God is called good or amiable to man. 1. In that he is infinitely excellent and perfect in himself. For the love of friendship is a higher love than that of desire ; and the most perfect sort of love is that which wholly carrieth the lover from himself to the perfect object of his love. The soul delighteth to contemplate excellency, when the excellency itself and not the delight, is the ultimate end of that desire and contemplation.

2. God is called good, as he is the pattern and fountain of all moral good ; as he maketh us righteous, holy laws, commanding moral good, and forbidding and condemning evil. And thus his goodness is his holiness and righteousness, his faithfulness and truth.

3. God is called good, as he is the fountain of all the creature’s happiness, and as he is bountiful and gracious, and ready to do good, and as he is the felicitating end and object of the soul.

And this Infinite Goodness must have these effects upon us. 1. It must possess us with a superlative love to God. This blessed attribute it is that makes us saints indeed, and maketh that impression on us, which is as the heart of the new creature. It is goodness that produceth love. And love is that grace that closeth with God as our happiness and end, and is the felicitating enjoying grace. Without it we

are but "as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbals," whatever our gifts and parts may be. (1 Cor. xiii.) Love is the very excellency of the soul, as it closeth with the infinite excellency of God. It is the very felicity of the soul, as it enjoyeth him that is our felicity. Most certainly the prevailing love of God, is the surest evidence of true sanctification. He that hath most love hath most grace, and is the best and strongest Christian; and he that hath least love, is the worst or weakest. Knowledge and faith are but to work our hearts to love; and when love is perfect, they have done their work. (1 Cor. xii. 31; xiii. 8—10. 13.) Teaching and distant revelations will not be for ever; and therefore such knowledge and faith as we have now, will not be for ever. But God will be for ever amiable to us, and therefore love will endure for ever. The goodness of God is called love, and as God is love, so "he that dwelleth in love doth dwell in God, and God in him." (1 John iv. 16.) The knowledge of divine goodness makes us good, because it maketh us love him that is good. It is love that acteth most purely for God. Fear is selfish, and hath somewhat of aversation. Though there be no evil in God for us to fear, yet is there such good in him that will bring the evil of punishment upon the evil; and this they fear. But love doth resign the soul to God, and that in the most congruous, acceptable manner. Make it therefore your daily work to possess your souls with the love of God. Love him once, and all that he saith and doth will be more acceptable to you; and all that you say or do in love will be more acceptable unto him. Love him and you will be loath to offend him; you will be desirous to please him; you will be satisfied in his love. Love him and you may be sure that he loveth you. "Love is the fulfilling of his law." (Rom. xiii. 10.) And that you may love him, this must be your work, to believe and contemplate his goodness. Consider daily of the infinite goodness or amiableness of his nature, and of his excellency appearing in his works, and of the perfect holiness of his laws. But especially see him in the face of Christ, and behold his love in the design of our redemption, in the person of the Redeemer, and in the promises of grace, and in all the benefits of redemption. Yea look by faith to heaven itself, and think how you must for ever live in the perfect, blessed love of infinite enjoyed Goodness. As it is the knowledge and

sight of gold, or beauty, or any other earthly vanity, that kindleth the love of them in the minds of men; so is it the knowledge and serious contemplation of the goodness of God that must make us love him, if ever we will love him.

The Goodness of God must also encourage the soul to trust him. For Infinite Good will not deceive us. Nor can we fear any hurt from him, but what we wilfully bring upon ourselves. If I knew but which were the best and most loving man in the world, I could trust him above all men; and I should not fear any injury from him. How many friends have I that I dare trust with my estate and life, because I know that they have love and goodness in their low degree! And shall I not trust the blessed God, that is love itself, and infinitely good? whatever he will be in justice to the ungodly, I am sure he “delighteth not in the death of sinners, but rather that they turn and live;” and that he will not cast off the soul that loveth him, and would fain be fully conformed to his will. It cannot be that he should spurn at them that are humbled at his feet, and long, and pray, and seek, and mourn after nothing more than his grace and love! Think not of God as if he had less of love and goodness, than the creature has: If you have high and confident thoughts of the goodness and fidelity of any man on earth, and dare quietly trust him with your life and all; see that you have much higher thoughts of God, and trust him with greater confidence, lest you set him below the silly creature in the attributes of his goodness, which his glory and your happiness require you to know.

3. The Infinite Goodness of God, must call off our hearts from the inordinate love of all created good whatever. Who would stoop so low as earth, that may converse with God? And who would feed on such poor delights, that hath tasted the graciousness of the Lord? Nothing more sure than that the love of God doth not reign in that soul, where the love of the world, or of fleshly lust, or pleasure reigneth. (1 John ii. 15.) Had worldlings, or sensual, or ambitious men, but truly known the goodness of the Lord, they could never have so fallen in love with those deceitful vanities. If we could but open their eyes to see the loveliness of their Redeemer, they would soon be weaned from other loves. Would you conquer the love of riches, or honour, or any thing else that corrupteth your affections; O try this sure

and powerful way ! Draw nigh to God, and take the fullest view thou canst, in thy most serious meditation of his infinite goodness, and all things else will be vile in thy esteem, and thy heart will soon condemn them and forget them, and thou wilt never dote upon them more.

4. The Infinite Goodness of God, should increase repentance, and win the soul to a more resolute, cheerful service of the Lord. O what a heart is that which can offend, and wilfully offend, so good a God ! This is the odiousness of sin, that it is an abuse of an Infinite Good. This is the most heinous, damning aggravation of it, that Infinite Goodness could not prevail with wretched souls against the empty, flattering world ! but that they suffered a dream and shadow, to weigh down Infinite Goodness in their esteem. And is it possible for worse than this to be found in man ? He that had rather the sun were out of the firmament, than a hair were taken off his head, were unworthy to see the light of the sun. And surely he that will turn away from God himself, to enjoy the pleasures of his flesh, is unworthy to enjoy the Lord. It is bad enough that Augustine in one of his Epistles saith of sottish worldly men, that 'they had rather there were two stars fewer in the firmament, than one cow fewer in their pastures, or one tree fewer in their woods or grounds ;' but it is ten thousand times a greater evil that every wicked man is guilty of, that will rather forsake the living God, and lose his part in Infinite Goodness, than he will let go his filthy and unprofitable sins. O sinners, as you love your souls, "despise not the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering of the Lord ; but know that his goodness should lead you to repentance." (Rom. ii. 4.) Would you spit at the sun ? Would you revile the stars ? Would you curse the holy angels ? If not, O do not ten thousandfold worse, by your wilful sinning against the Infinite Goodness itself.

But for you Christians, that have seen the amiableness of the Lord, and tasted of his perfect goodness, let this be enough to melt your hearts, that ever you have wilfully sinned against him : O what a good did you condemn in the days of your unregeneracy, and in the hour of your sin ! Be not so ungrateful and disingenuous as to do so again. Remember whenever a temptation comes, that it would entice you from the Infinite Good. Ask the tempter, man or

devil, whether he hath more than an Infinite Good to offer you ; and whether he can outbid the Lord for your affection ?

And now for the time that is before you, how cheerfully should you address yourselves unto his service ! and how delightfully should you follow it on from day to day ! What manner of persons should the servants of this God be, that are called to nothing but what is good ! How good a Master ! how good a work ! and how good company, encouragements and helps ! and how good an end ! All is good, because it is the Infinite Good, that we serve and seek. And shall we be loitering, unprofitable servants !

5. Moreover, this Infinite Goodness should be the matter of our daily praises. He that cannot cheerfully magnify this attribute of God, so suitable to the nature of the will, is surely a stranger to the praises of the Lord. The goodness of God should be a daily feast to a gracious soul, and should continually feed our cheerful praises, as the spring or cistern fills the pipes. I know no sweeter work on earth, nay, I am sure there is no sweeter, than for faithful sanctified souls, rejoicingly to magnify the goodness of the Lord, and join together in his cheerful praises. O Christians, if you would taste the joys of saints, and live like the redeemed of the Lord indeed, be much in the exercise of this heavenly work, and with holy David, make it your employment, and say " O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee !" (Psal. xxxi. 19.) " The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord !" (Psal. xxxiii. 5.) What then are the heavens ? " Thy congregation hath dwelt therein : thou O Lord hast prepared thy goodness for the poor." " O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men ! for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." (Psal. cvii. 8, 9.) " The goodness of God endureth continually." (Psal. lii. 1.) " Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." (Psal. lxxiii. 1.) " O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him." (Psal. xxxiv. 8.) " The Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, his truth endureth from generation to generation." (Psal. c. 5.) " The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." (Psal. cxlv. 9.) " O praise the Lord, for the Lord is good ; sing

praises to his name, for it is pleasant." (Psal. cxxxv. 3.) Call him as David, "My Goodness, and my Fortress, my High Tower, and my Deliverer, and my Shield, and he in whom I trust." (Psal. cxliv. 2.) "Let men therefore speak of the glorious honour of his Majesty and of his wondrous works: let them abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness." (Psal. cxlv. 5. 7.) If there be a thought that is truly sweet to the soul, it is the thought of the Infinite Goodness of the Lord. If there be a pleasant word for man to speak, it is the mention of the Infinite Goodness of the Lord. And if there be a pleasant hour for man on earth to spend, and a delightful work for man to do, it is to meditate on, and with the saints to praise the Infinite Goodness of the Lord. What was the glory that God shewed unto Moses, and the taste of heaven that he gave him upon earth, but this, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy?" (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) And his proclaimed name was, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." (Exod. xxxiv. 6.) These were the holy praises that Solomon did consecrate the temple with, "Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in Goodness." (2 Chron. vi. 41; see Isa. lxiii.) O Christians, if you would have joy indeed, let this be your employment! Draw near to God, and have no low undervaluing thoughts of his Infinite Goodness; for, "How great is his goodness and how great is his beauty?" (Zech. ix. 17.) Why is it that Divine consolations are so strange to us, but because Divine Goodness is so lightly thought upon! As those that think little of God at all, have little of God upon their hearts; so they that think but little of his goodness in particular, have little love, or joy, or praise."

6. Moreover, the Goodness of God, must possess us with desire to be conformed to his goodness in our measure. The holy perfection of his will, must make us desire to have our wills conformed to the will of God; we are not called to imitate him in his works of power, nor so much in the paths of his omniscience, as we are in his goodness, which, as

manifested in his work and word, is the pattern and standard of moral goodness in the sons of men. The impress of his goodness within us, is the chief part of his image on us; and the fruits of it in our lives is their holiness and virtue. As he "is good and doth good;" (Psal. cxix. 68;) so it must be our greatest care to be as good, and do as much good as possibly we can. Any thing within us that is sinful and contrary to the goodness of God, should be to our souls as griping poison to our bodies, which nature is excited to strive against with all its strength, and can have no safety or rest till it be cast out. And for doing good, it must be the very study and trade of our lives. As worldlings study and labour for the world, and the pleasing of their flesh; so must the Christian study and labour to improve his Master's talents to his use, and to do as much good as he is able, and to please the Lord. "The desire of the righteous (as such) is only good." (Prov. xi. 23.) "To depart from evil and do good," is the care of the just. (Psal. xxxiv. 14.) We must "please our neighbours for good to their edification." (Rom. xv. 2.) "While we have time we must do good to all men (as we are able) but especially to them of the household of faith." (Gal. vi. 10.) Not only to them that "do good to us," but to "our enemies." (Luke vi. 33—34; Matt. v. 44.) This is it we must "not forget;" (Heb. xiii. 16;) and which by ministers we must be "put in mind of;" (1 Tim. vi. 18;) which all that "love life and would inherit the blessing" must devote themselves to. (1 Peter iii. 10—12.) In this we must be "like our heavenly Father," and approve ourselves his children. (Matt. v. 45, 46.)

7. From the perfect Infinite Goodness of God, we must learn to judge of good and evil, in all the creatures. To this must all be reduced as the standard, and by this must they be tried. It is a most wretched absurdity of sensual men, to try the will, or word, or ways of God, by themselves, and by their own interests or wills; and to judge all to be evil in God that is against them. And yet, alas, how common is this case! Every man is naturally loath to be miserable: suffering he abhors: and therefore that which causeth his suffering he calleth evil. And so when he hath deserved it himself by his sin, he thinks that the law is evil for threatening it, and that God himself is evil for inflicting it, so that Infinite Goodness must be tried and judged by the vicious

creature, and the rule and standard must be reduced to the crooked line of human actions or dispositions; and if God will please the worldling, the sensualist, the proud, the negligent, who should please him, then he shall be good, and he shall be God; if not, say these judges, he shall be evil, and unmerciful, and no God. They will not believe that he is good that punisheth them. And thus if the thief or murderer had the choice of kings and judges, you may know what persons he would choose; no one should be a judge, or accounted a good man, that would condemn and hang him.

But I beseech you consider, what is fit to be the rule and standard, if not perfection of Goodness itself. Do you think that the will of ignorant, fleshly, sinful man, is fitter to be the rule of goodness, than the will of God? We are sure that God is not deceived, and sure that there is no iniquity with him; but we know that all men are liable to deceit, and have private interests, and corrupted minds, and wills that have some vicious inclinations. O what blasphemy is in the heart of that man, that will sooner condemn the holy will and law of God, than his own will, or the wills of any men, be they never so seemingly wise or great! The will of God is revealed in his laws, concerning the necessity of a holy life; and the will of foolish wicked men is by their scornful speeches and sinful lives revealed to be against it. And which of these do you follow; which is it that prescribeth you the better course; the will of God that is infinitely good, or the will of man that is miserably evil? If thou know any better than God, follow him before God. But if none be greater and more powerful than he, if none be wiser or of more knowledge, it is as sure that none is better. Much less are those ignorant wicked men, that despise the Scripture and a holy life, and would persuade you that they can tell you of a better way. Let me speak it to the terror of the ungodly soul, that by the deceits or scorns of any sort of men, is drawn away from Christ and holiness; it shall stand on record against thee until judgment, and it shall stick everlastingly as a dagger in thy heart, that thou didst prefer the reason and the will of man, yea perhaps of a sottish drunkard or a worldling, before the word or will of God. And though thy tongue durst not speak it, thy life did speak it, that thou thoughtest the word and

will of man to be better than the word and will of God: Yea more, that thou tookest the way of the devil to be better than God's ways, who is infinitely good: for surely thou choosest that which thou takest to best for thee. And therefore if that man deserve damnation that sets up a man, or a horse, or an image, and saith, 'This is greater and wiser than God, and therefore this shall be my God,' then dost thou deserve the same damnation, that settest up the words and will of man, even of wicked men, and sayest by thy practice, 'These are better than God, and his word, or will, and therefore I will choose or follow them.' For God is full as jealous of the honour of his goodness, as of his power or wisdom.

Well, Christians, let flesh and blood say what it will, and let the world say what they will, judge that best that is most agreeable to the will of God; for good and evil must be measured by this will. That event is best which he determineth of, and that action is best which he commandeth. And all is naught, and will prove so in the end, that is against this will of God, what policy or good soever may be pretended for it.

8. And if the will of God be infinitely good, we must all labour both to understand it, and perform it. Many say, "Who will shew us any good?" (Psal. iv. 6.) Would you not know what is best, that you may choose and seek it? As the inordinate desire of knowing natural good and evil did cause our misery, so the holy rectified desires of knowing spiritual good, must recover us: Search the Scriptures then, and study and inquire; for it more concerns you to know the will of God, than to know the will of your princes or benefactors, or know of any treasures of the world. The riches of grace are given to us, by God's making known the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself. (Ephes. i. 7. 9.) And our desire to know the good will of God, must be that we may do it; for this must we pray, "That we may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work;" (Col. i. 9, 10;) that we may "be made perfect in every good work to do his will, and have that wrought in us which is pleasing in his sight;" (Heb. xiii. 21;) that we may not only know his will

and approve the things that are excellent, (Rom. ii. 18,) but may prepare ourselves to do according to his will, lest we be punished the more. (Luke xii. 47.) See that the will of no man be preferred before God's will; seek not your own wills, nor set them up against the Lord's. If Christ, whose will was pure and holy, profess that he sought not his own will, but his Father's; (John v. 30;) and that he came not to do his own will, but his that sent him; (John vi. 38;) should it not be our resolution, whose wills are so misguided and corrupt?

9. If God's will be infinitely good, we must rest in his will; when his ways are dark, or grievous to our flesh; when his word seems difficult; when we know not what he is doing with us; remember it is the Will that is infinitely good that is disposing of us. Only let us see that we stand not cross to the greater good of his church and honour; and then we may be sure that he will not be against our good. We that can rest in the will of a dear and faithful friend, should much more rest in the will of God. Do your duty, and be "not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" for you to do, (Ephes. v. 17,) and then distract not your minds with distrustful fears about his will that is infinitely good, but say, "The will of the Lord be done." (Acts xxi. 14.)

10. The Infinite Goodness of God, should draw out our hearts to desire communion with him, and to long after the blessed fruition of him in the life to come. O how glad should we be to tread his courts! to draw near him in his holy worship, to meditate on him, and secretly open our hearts before him, and to converse with those gracious souls that love to be speaking honourably of his name! What will draw the heart of man, if goodness and Infinite Goodness will not? When the drunkard saith, in the alehouse, 'It is good to be here;' and the covetous man among his gains, and the sensual man among his recreations and merry companions, 'It is good to be here;' the Christian that can get nigh to God, or have any prospect of his love in his ordinances, concludeth that of all places upon earth, "It is good to be here," and that "a day in his courts is better than a thousand." (Psal. lxxxiv. 10.) But O, "to depart and be with Christ, is far better." (Phil. i. 23.) With Infinite Goodness we shall find no evil, no emptiness, or defect; when we perfectly enjoy the Perfect Good, what more can be added, but for ever to enjoy it! O, therefore think on this, Chris

tians, when death is dreadful to you, and you would fain stay here, as being afraid to come before the Lord, or loath to leaye the things which you here possess, shall Goodness itself be distrusted by you, or seem no more desirable to you? Are you afraid of Goodness; even of your Father; of your happiness itself? Are you better here than you shall be with God? Are your houses, or lands, or friends, or pleasures, or any thing better than Infinite Goodness? O meditate on this blessed attribute of God, till you distaste the world, till you are angry with your withdrawing murmuring flesh, till you are ashamed of your unwillingness to be with God, and till you can calmly look in the face of death, and contentedly hear the message that is posting towards you, that you must presently come away to God. Your natural birthday brought you into a better place than the womb; and your gracious birthday brought you into a far better state than your former sinful miserable captivity; and will not your glorious birthday put you into a better habitation than this world? O know, and choose, and seek, and live to the Infinite Good, and then it may be your greatest joy when you are called to him.

#### CHAP. X.

9. Having spoken of these three great Attributes of God, I must needs speak of those three great Relations of God to man, and of those three works in which they are founded, which have flowed from these attributes.

This one God in three persons, hath created man and all things, which before were not; hath redeemed man when he was lost by sin; and sanctifieth those that shall be saved by redemption. Though the external works of the Trinity are undivided, yet not indistinct, as to the order of working, and a special interest that each person hath in each of these works. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost did create the world; and they also did redeem us, and do sanctify us. But so as that creation is in a special sort ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit; not only because of the order of operation, agreeable to the order of subsisting; for then the Father would be as properly said to be incarnate, or to die for us, or mediate, as the Son to create us; (which is not to be

said;) for he created the world by his Word, or Son and Spirit; (John i. 3; Psal. xxxiii. 6;) and he redeemed it by his Son; and sanctifieth it by his Spirit. But Scripture assureth us that the Son alone was incarnate for us, and died and rose again, and not the Father, or the Spirit; and so that the human nature is peculiarly united to the second person in glory; and so that each person hath a peculiar interest in these several works, the reason of which is much above our reach.

The first of these Relations of God to man, which we are to consider of, is, that he is our Creator: it is he that giveth being to us and all things; and that giveth us all our faculties or powers. Under this, for brevity, we shall speak of him also as he is our Preserver; because preservation is but a kind of continued creation, or a continuance of the beings which God hath caused. God then is the first efficient cause of all the creatures, from the greatest to the least; (Gen. i;) and easily did he make them, for he spake but the word and they were created: They are the products of his power, wisdom and goodness. (Psal. xxxiii. 6; John i. 3.) "He commanded and they were created." (Psal. cxlviii. 5.) He still produceth all things that in the course of nature are brought forth. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: thou renewest the face of the earth." (Psal. civ. 30.) And from hence these following impressions must be made upon the considering soul.

1. If all things be from God as the Creator and Preserver, then we must be deeply possessed with this truth, that all things are for God as their ultimate end; for he that is the beginning and first cause of all things, must needs be the end of all. His will produced them, and the pleasure of his will is the end for which he did produce them. "I have created him for my glory." (Isa. xliii. 7.) "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.) I think the Chaldee paraphrase, the Syriac and Arabic give us the true meaning of this, who concordantly translate it, 'The wicked is kept for the day of evil,' as Job hath it, (xxi. 30.) "The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath;" and 2 Peter ii. 9, "To reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished." God

made not the wicked as wicked, or to be wicked ; but he that gave them their being and continueth it, will not be a loser by his creation or preservation, but will have the glory of his justice by them in the day of wrath or evil, for which he keeps them, and till which he beareth with them, because they would not obediently give him the glory of his holiness and mercy. So it is said of Christ, Col. i. 16, 17, " For by him are all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible—all things were created by him and for him." If they are by him, they must needs be for him. So Rev. iv. 11, " Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." This pleasure of God's will is the end of all things : and therefore it is certain that he will see that all things shall accomplish that end, and his will shall be pleased. Romans xi. 26, we have all in few words, " For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, and to whom be glory for ever, Amen." Of him, as the first efficient that giveth them their beings : and through him, as the preserver, disposer and conductor of them to their end : and to him, as the ultimate end.

If you say, ' But how is the pleasure of God's will attained from the wicked that break his laws, and displease his will ?'

I answer : Understand but how his will is crossed or accomplished, pleased or displeased, and you will see, that his will is always done and pleased, even by them that displease him in violating his will. For God's will hath two sorts of objects or products, which must be still distinguished : 1. He willeth what shall be due from us to him, and from him to us. 2. He willeth entities and events, or what shall actually be, or come to pass. Strictly both these acts of God's will, perform the things willed, and so are not without their proper effect. God, as the cause and disposer of all things, attaineth his will concerning events : all things shall come to pass which he absolutely willeth shall come to pass. He is not frustrated of his will herein, being neither unwise, nor impotent, nor unhappy. " Whatsoever pleased the Lord, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in the depths." (Psal. cxxxv. 6.) " Our God is in heaven, he hath done whatsoever he pleased."

(Psal. cxv. 3.) And as God, as our Governor, doth by his laws oblige man to his duty, his will hath its effect: A command doth but make the thing commanded to be our duty; and our duty it is: and so this act of the will of God is not in vain. Thus far he hath his will. By his promises he maketh the reward to be due to all, on condition they perform the duty, on which he hath suspended it, and to be actually due to those only that perform the condition: and all this is accomplished. Heaven is conditionally given to all, and actually to the faithful only. So that what God willeth to be due as a Lawgiver, is accordingly due; and what he actually willeth shall come to pass, shall come to pass according to his will.

But perhaps you will say, 'He doth not will that all men shall eventually obey his laws, but only that it shall be their duty.'

I answer, Our speeches of God being borrowed from man, (who is one of the glasses in which he is here seen by us; especially the manhood of Jesus Christ,) we must accordingly conceive and say (acknowledging still the improprieties and imperfections of our conceptions and expressions), that as man doth simply and most properly will the event of some things, which he absolutely desireth should come to pass, and doth not simply will some other things, but only 'in tantum;' he so far willeth them, that he willeth and resolveth to do such and such things as have a tendency thereto, and to go no farther, and do no more for the attaining of them, though he could; so God doth simply and properly will some things, that is, the things which he decreeth shall come to pass: but we must after our manner conceive and say, that there are other things which he willeth but 'in tantum,' so far as to make it man's duty to perform it, and persuade him to the doing of that duty, and give him such a measure of help, as leaveth him without any just excuse, if he do it not; and so far he willeth the salvation of such, as to promise or offer it them on such terms: and no further doth he will the obedience or salvation which never comes to pass, but leaveth it here to the will of man. For if he simply willed that every duty should be eventually done, it would be done: and if he simply willed that all men should be actually saved, they would be saved. And that he simply willeth their duty or

obligation, and 'in tantum,' so far, doth will the event of their obedience and salvation, as this comes to, as aforesaid, is certain, and in this we are all agreed; and I am not so well skilled in dividing, as to understand where the real difference lieth between the parties that here most contend: But about the bare name I know they differ, some thinking that this last is not to be named an act of God's will, or a willing of man's obedience or salvation, and some thinking that it is so to be named: who doubtless are in the right; nor is there room for controversies, while we confess the impropriety of this and all our speeches of God, as speaking after the manner of men; and while Scripture, that must teach us how to speak of God, doth frequently so speak before us.

2. God being the maker and first cause of all things, that is of all substantial beings, commonly called creatures, we must conclude that sin is no such being, because it is most certain that he is not the creator or cause of it. Scripture assureth us, and all Christians are agreed, that God is not the cause or author of sin. How odious then should that be to us, that is so bad as not to come from God? If God disclaim it, let us disclaim it. Let us abhor that it should come from us, seeing God abhorreth that it should come from him. Own not that which hath nothing of God upon it.

If you say, 'That it is an accident though not a substance, and therefore it must needs come from God; because even accidents have their being.'

I answer, That among the most subtle disputers it is granted, that it hath no created being, or no being that is caused by God; of this they are agreed. It is granted by all Christians that sin hath no other kind of being, but what the will of man can cause. And if that be so, the philosophical trifling controversy, whether it be only a privation, or a relation, or 'modus entis,' which the will thus causeth, must be handled as philosophical, and valued but as it deserveth: for this is all the controversy that here remains. If the form be relative, and the foundation be but a mere privation, (the disconformity being founded in a defect) then the case is soon resolved, as to the rest. He that erreth, understandeth amiss: that he understandeth, is of God: that he erreth, that is, is defective, and so false in his

understanding, is of himself: That he willeth when he chooseth sin, is of God the universal cause: but that he willeth a forbidden object, rather than the contrary, and faileth in his understanding and his will, this is not of God, but of himself. If others say, that the very 'fundamentum' of that disconformity which is the form of sin, is sometimes an act, they must also say that it is not an act as such, but this act comparatively considered, or as circumstantiated, or as exercised on the forbidden object rather than another, or a volition instead of a nolition, and choosing that which should be refused, or a refusing that which should be chosen: and whether this comparative specifying foundation, be a privation, or a mode, is a philosophical controversy; and in philosophy, and not in theology, is the difficulty; divines being agreed as aforesaid, that whatever you name it, being, or privation, or mode, it is but such as must be resolved ultimately into the will of man as its original or first cause, supposing God to be the creator and conserver, of that-free power that is able to choose or to refuse, and as an universal cause to concur with the agent to the act as such. But philosophers indeed are at a loss, and are fain to tell us of privations, modes, relations, denominations, 'entia rationis,' and I know not what, that they say are neither beings nor nothing, but between both they know not what! The nature of things, in the utmost extremities of the branches, being so capillar, and spun with so fine a thread, that the understanding is not subtle enough to discern them. And shall this disturb us in divinity, or be imputed to it?

If you say, 'That the will of God is the cause of all things, and therefore of sin.'

I answer, If you call sin nothing, as a shadow, darkness, death, &c. are nothing (for all that we abhor them), then you answer yourselves. If you call it something, we are all agreed, that it is but such a something as man can cause without God's first causing it. It sufficeth that God do the part of a Creator in giving man the free power of choosing or refusing; and the part of a Preserver, in maintaining that power, and as an universal cause concurring to all acts 'in genere,' as the sun doth shine on the dunghill and the flowers: and that he also do the part of a just Governor in prohibiting, and dissuading, and threatening sinners.

*Object.* 'But how can sin eventually be, if God decree it not, seeing all events are from his will?'

I answer, 1. We are agreed that he causeth it not. 2. And that he doth not so much as will the event of sin as sin. 3. And that he willingly permitteth what is by him permitted. 4. And that sin is such a thing as may 'evenire,' be brought forth by a bare permission, if there be no positive decree for the event. As a negative in the effects, requireth not a positive cause, so neither a positive will for its production. There are millions of millions of worlds, and individual creatures, and species possible, that shall never be: and it is audaciousness to assert, that there must be millions of millions of positive decrees, that such worlds or creatures shall not be. 5. Nor is it any dishonour to God, if he have not a positive decree or will about every negation (as that all the men in the world shall not be called by a thousand possible names rather than their own, &c.).

These things being all certain, I add, 1. Let them dispute that dare, that yet 'de facto' God doth positively will the events of all privations, or negations of acts. 2. But when men are once habitually wicked, and bent to evil, it is just with him, if he permit them to follow their own lusts, and if he leave before them such mercies as he foreknoweth they will wilfully make occasions of their sin; and if he resolve to make use of the sin which he knoweth they will commit, for his church's good, and for his glory.

*Object.* 'But doth not God will that sin eventually shall not be?'

*Ans.* Even as I before said, he willeth that obedience eventually shall be. If sin come to pass, it is certain that God did not simply will that it should not come to pass: for then he must be conquered and unhappy by every sin: But he willeth simply that it shall be the duty of man to avoid it; and it may be said to 'nill' the event 'in tantum,' so far as that he will forbid it, and threaten and dissuade the sinner, and give him the helps, that shall leave him inexcusable if he sin, and so leave it to his will. Thus far he may be said to will that sin eventually shall not be; but not simply.

Though these things are not obvious to vulgar capacities, yet they are such, as the subject in hand, viz. God's first causation and creation, together with the weight of

them, and the contentions of the world about them, have made needful.

3. If God be the creator and cause of all, then we must remember that all his works are good: and therefore nothing must be hated by us that he hath made, considered in its native goodness. God hateth sin, and so must we: for that he made it not. (Rev. ii. 6; Psal. xlv. 7; Isa. i. 14.) And he hateth all the workers of iniquity as such, (Psal. v. 5,) and so must we; but we must love all of God that is in them, and love them for it. There is somewhat good and amiable in every creature; yea, all of it, that is of God. Though toads and serpents are odious to us, because they are hurtful, and seem deformed in themselves, yet are they good in themselves, and not deformed as parts of the universe, but good unto the common end. The wants in the wheels of your watch are as useful to the motion as the nucks or solid parts. The night is part of the useful order of the creation, as well as the day. The vacant interspace in your writing, is needful as well as the words: every letter should not be a vowel, nor every character a capital; every member should not be a heart, or head, or eye: nor should every one in a commonwealth be a king, or lord: So in the creation the parts that seem base, are useful in their places, and good unto their ends. Let us not therefore vilify or detest the works of God, but study the excellencies of them, and see, and admire, and love them as they are of God. It is one of the hardest practical points before us, to know how to esteem of all the creatures, and to use them without running into one extreme. At the same time to love the world, and not to love it; to honour it, and despise it: to exalt it, and to tread it under our feet; to mind it, and use it with delight, and yet to be weaned from it as those that mind it not. And yet a great part of our Christian duty lieth in the doing of this difficult work. As the world is the devil's bait, and the flesh's idol, set up against God, and would tice us from him, or hinder us in his service, and either be our carnal end and happiness, or a means thereto, so we must make it the care of our hearts to hate it, despise it, neglect it, and tread it under foot; and the labour of our lives to conquer it. But the same creatures must be admired, studied, loved, honoured, delighted in, and daily used, as they are the excellent work of the Almighty God,

and reveal to us his attributes or will, being the glass in which we must see him while we are in the flesh ; and as they lead us to God, and strengthen, furnish or help us in his service. But to love them for God, and not for themselves, O how hard is it ! To keep pure affections towards them, and a spiritual delight in them, that shall not degenerate into a carnal delight, is a task for the holiest saint on earth, to labour in with all his care and power, as long as he here liveth. Yet this must be done ; and the soul that hath obtained true self-denial, and is dead to the world, and devoted and alive to God, is able in some good measure to perform it. To love the world for itself, and make the creature our chief delight, and to live to it as to our end, and idol, this is the common damning course. To cast away our possessions, and put our talents into our fellow-servants' hands, and to withdraw ourselves as it were out of the world into solitude, as monks or hermits do, this is too like the hiding of our talents, and a dangerous course of unfaithfulness and unprofitableness, unless in some extraordinary case ; and is at best the too easy way of weaklings, that will be soldiers only out of the army, or where there is but little danger of the enemy : But to keep our stations, and take honours, and riches, as our Master's talents, as a burden that we must honour him by bearing, and the instruments by which we must laboriously do him service ; and to see and love him in every creature, and study him in it, and sanctify it to his use ; and to see that our lust get no advantage by it, and feed not on it ; but that we tame our bodies, and have all that we have for God, and not for our flesh ; this is the hard, but the excellent, most acceptable course of living in this world.

And it is not only other creatures, but ourselves also, that we must thus admire, and love, and use for God, while we abase ourselves, as to ourselves, and deny ourselves, and use not ourselves for ourselves, but as we stand in due subordination to him. Abase yourselves as sinful, and abhor that which is your own, and not the Lord's ; but vilify not your nature in itself, nor any thing in you that is the work of God. Pretend not humility for the dishonouring of your Maker. Reason and natural freedom of the will, are God's work, and not yours, and therefore must be honoured, and not scorned and reviled ; but the blindness and

error of your reason, and the bad inclinations and actions of your free-wills, these are your own, and therefore vilify them, and hate them, and spare not. And when you lament the smallness of your graces, deny them not; and slight not, but magnify the preciousness of that little that you have, while you mourn for the imperfection. And when men offend you, or prove your enemies, forget not to value and love that of God that yet is in them. All is good that is of God.

4. If all things be of God, as the Creator and Conserver, we must hence remember on whom it is that ourselves and all things else depend. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.) "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power." (Heb. i. 3.) The earth standeth upon his will and word. The nations are in his hands, so are the lives of our friends and enemies, and so are ourselves. And therefore our eye must be upon him; and our care must be to please him; and our trust and quietness must be in him; and blessed is he that maketh sure of an interest in his special love.

5. Hence also we must observe the vanity of all creature-confidence, and our hearts must be withdrawn from resting in any means or instruments. They are nothing to us, and can do nothing for us, but what they have or do from him that made and preserveth us.

6. And lastly, Hence also we may see the patience and goodness of the Lord, that as he refused not to make those men that he foreknew would live ungodlily, so he denieth not to uphold their being, even while they sin against him. All the while that they are abusing his creatures, they are sustained by him, and have those creatures from him. From him the drunkard hath his drink, and the glutton his meat, and the voluptuous youth their abused health and strength; and all men have from him the powers or faculties of the soul and body by which they sin. And shall any be so ungrateful as to say therefore that God doth cause their sin? It is true he can easily stop thy breath while thou art swearing, and lying, and speaking against the service of God that made thee: And wouldst thou have him do so? He can easily take away the meat, and drink, and riches, and health, and life which thou abusest: And wouldst thou have him do it? He can easily keep thee

from sinning any more on earth, by cutting off thy life, and sending thee to pay for what thou hast done: And art thou content with this? Must he be taken to be a partaker in thy sin, because he doth not strike thee dead, or lame, or speechless, or disable thee from sinning? Provoke him not by thy blasphemies, lest he clear himself in a way that thou desirest not. But O! wonder at his patience, that holds thee in his hand, and keepeth thee from falling into the grave and hell, while thou art sinning against him! While a curse or oath is in thy mouth, he could let thee fall into utter misery. How oft hast thou provoked him to take thee in thy lust, in thy rage, or in thy neglect of God, and give thee thy desert! Would any of you support your enemy, as God doth you?

### CHAP. XI.

10. As we must know God as our Creator, so also as our Redeemer; of which I shall say but little now, because I have mentioned it more fully in the "Directions for Sound Conversion." It is life eternal to know the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. (John xvii. 3.) The Father redeemeth us by the Son, whom he sent, and whose sacrifice he accepted, and in whom he is well pleased. And this must have these effects upon our souls.

1. We must be hence convinced, that we are not now in a state of innocency, nor to be saved as innocents, or on the terms of the law of our creation: But salvation is now by a Redeemer: and therefore consisteth in our recovery and restoration. The objects of it are only lapsed, sinful, miserable men. Name the creature if you can, since Adam, that stood before God here in the flesh, in a state of personal perfect innocency, except the immaculate Lamb of God. If God, as a Creator, should now save any, without respect to a redemption, it must be on the terms of the law of creation: upon which it is certain that no man hath or shall be saved; that is, upon perfect personal persevering obedience. You cannot exempt infants themselves from sin and misery, without exempting them from Christ the Redeemer, and the remedy: "There is none righteous (in himself without a Redeemer), no not one—They are all gone out of the way—That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God; (and if

all the world be guilty, none are innocent;) therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." (Rom. iii. 10. 19. 20. 22, 23.) "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 6.) "Through the offence of one, many are dead; and the judgment was by one to condemnation; by the offence of one, death reigned by one; by the offence of one, judgment came on all men to condemnation: By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." (Rom. v. 15—19.) "We were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mothers conceive us." (Psal. li. 5.) "We were by nature the children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1. 3.) "In Adam all die." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." (2 Cor. v. 14.) "Christ is the Saviour of the body: Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church——." (Eph. v. 23. 25—27.) If infants have no sin and misery, then they are none of the body, the church, which Christ loved and gave himself for, that he might cleanse it. But what need we further proof when we have the common experience of all the world? Would every man that is born of a woman, without exception, so early manifest sin in the life, if there were no corrupt disposition at the heart? And should all mankind, without exemption, taste of the punishment of sin, if they had no participation of the guilt? "Death is the wages of sin; and by sin death entered into the world, and it passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) Infants have sickness, and torments, and death, which are the fruits of sin. And were they not presented to Christ as a Saviour, when he took them in his arms and blessed them, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of God?" Certainly, none that never were guilty, or miserable, are capable of a place in the kingdom of the Mediator. For to what end should he mediate for them? or how can he redeem them that need not a redemption? or how should he reconcile them to God, that never were at enmity with him? or how can he wash

them that were never unclean? or how can he be a physician to them that never were sick? when "the whole have no need of the physician." (Matt. ix. 12.) He "came to seek and to save that which was lost," (Luke xix. 10,) and to save "his people from their sins." (Matt. i. 21.) They are none of his saved people therefore, that had no sin. He came to "redeem those that were under the law." (Gal. iv. 5.) But it is most certain, that infants were under the law, as well as the adult: and they were a part of "his people Israel, whom he visited and redeemed." (Luke i. 68.) If ever they be admitted into glory, they must "praise him that redeemed them by his blood." (Rev. v. 9.) God doth first justify those whom he glorifieth. (Rom. viii. 30.) And they must be "born again" that will "enter into his kingdom." (John iii. 3. 5.) And there is no regeneration or renovation but from sin: (Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 22 :) nor any justification but from sin, and "from what we could not be justified from by the law of Moses;" (Acts xiii. 39;) nor any justification but what containeth a "remission of sin." (Rom. iii. 25.) And where there is no sin, there is none to be remitted; nor is there any justification but what is "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and his propitiation." (Rom. iii. 24, 25.) "He is made of God redemption to us;" (1 Cor. i. 30;) and the redemption that we have by him, "is remission of sins by his blood." (Col. i. 14; Eph. i. 7.) "By his own blood entered he once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:" The eternal inheritance is received by means of death for the redemption of transgressions. (Heb. ix. 12. 15.) So that all Scripture speaks this truth aloud to us, that there is now no salvation promised but to the church, the justified, the regenerate, the redeemed; and that none can be capable of these but sinners, and such as are lost and miserable in themselves. And till our necessity be understood, redemption cannot be well understood. They that believe that Christ died not only for this or that man in particular, but for the world, methinks should believe that the world are sinners, and need his death. He is called "the Saviour of the world," (John iv. 42,) and the "Saviour of all men, especially of believers." (1 Tim. iv. 10.) "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." (1 John iv. 14.) And from what doth he

save them? "From their sins," (Matt. i. 21,) and "from the wrath to come." (1 Thess. i. 10.) "For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Infants then are sinners, or none of those that he came to save. Christ hath made no man righteous by his obedience, but such as Adam made sinners by his disobedience; "For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous." (Rom. v. 19.) Infants are not made righteous by Christ, if they were not sinners: and sinners they cannot be by any but original sin: "God commended his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: Much more being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" (Rom. v. 8—10;) so that it is sinners that "Christ died for," and sinners that "are justified by his blood," and sinners that are "reconciled to God." Infants therefore are sinners, or they are none of the redeemed, justified, or reconciled. And when Jesus Christ "by the grace of God did taste death for every man," (Heb. ii. 9,) infants are sure included. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all;" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6;) therefore all had sin and misery, and needed that ransom. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And is it not plain that the whole world are sinners?

I speak all this for the evincing of original sin only, because that only is denied by such as yet pretend to Christianity; for actual sin is commonly confessed, and shews itself. And truly so doth original sin, in our proneness to actual; and in the earliness and commonness of such evil inclinations; and in the remnants of it, which the sanctified feel, though they are such as were sanctified never so early, before actual sin had time to breed those evil habits, which therefore certainly were born with us.

And if the image of God, consisting in true holiness, be not natural, or born in every infant in the world, then original sin must needs be born with them: for that sin is either only or chiefly the privation of that image or holiness. He that will say that this image is not requisite to infants, and

so that the absence of it is a mere negation, doth make them brutes, and not of the race of man, whom God created after his image, and leaves them incapable of heaven or hell, or any other life than beasts have. And he that thinks so of infants to-day may think so of himself to-morrow. And he that will affirm that this image or holiness is born with every infant into the world, so wilfully contradicteth common evidence which appeareth in the contrary effects, that he is not worthy to be further talked with.

One thing more I will propound yet to the contrary-minded : Can they say that any infants are saved or not ? If not, either they perish as brutes (which is a brutish opinion), or they live in misery ; and then they had sin that did deserve it ; yea, if they think that any of them perish in the wrath to come, it must be for sin. If they think that any of them are saved, it is either by covenant, or without ; there is some promise for it, or there is none. If none, then no man can say that any of them are saved. For who hath known the mind of the Lord without his revelation ? It is arrogancy to tell the world of the saving of any that God did no way reveal that he will save. But if they plead a revelation or promise, it is either the covenant of nature or of grace ; a promise contained in nature, law or Gospel. The former cannot be affirmed, (not only because the dissenters themselves deny any such covenant to have been in nature, or any way made to Adam, but) because there is no such covenant or promise in nature to be found, for the salvation of all infants (and if not for all then for none) : and because it is contrary to abundance of plain passages in the Scriptures, that assure us there is but one covenant of salvation now in force : and that all the "world shall become guilty before God, and every mouth be stopped, (Rom. iii. 19,) and that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight." (ver. 20 ; Gal. ii. 16.) And if "righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. ii. 21.) "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. And that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident ; for The just shall live by faith ; and the law is not of faith ; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them." (Gal. iii. 10—12.) And certainly the law of nature requireth not less than Moses' law, to a man's justification, if not more. And "if there had been a law

given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe." (Gal. iii. 21, 22.)

By the fulness of this evidence, it is easy to see, that infants and all mankind are sinners, and therefore have need of the Redeemer.

2. To know God as our Redeemer, containeth the knowledge of the great ends of our redemption, and of the manifestation of God to man thereby. Having treated of these in the book forecited, I shall now say but this in brief. It is beyond dispute, that God could have made man capable of glory, and kept him from falling by confirming grace, and without a redeemer settled him in felicity, as he did the angels. He that foresaw man's fall, and necessity of a saviour, could easily have prevented that sin and necessity: but he would not; he did not: but chose rather to permit it, and save man by the way of a redeemer. In which his infinite wisdom is exceedingly manifested. And in Christ, who is the "power and wisdom of God," (1 Cor. i. 24,) among others these excellent effects are declared to us, which the way of redemption attaineth, above what the saving us on the terms of nature would have attained.

1. God is now wonderfully admired and magnified in the person of the Redeemer. Angels themselves desire to pry into this mystery. (1 Peter i. 12.) As the frame of nature is set us to see God in, where we daily as in a glass behold him and admire him; so the person of the Redeemer, and work of incarnation and redemption, is set the angels for their contemplation and admiration, as well as us: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." (Ephes. iii. 10.) And in the glorious perfection and dignity of the Redeemer, will God be everlastingly glorified; for his greatest works do most greatly honour him: and as the sun doth now to us more honour him than a star; so the glorified person of the Redeemer, doth more honour God than man or angels. "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him." (1 Pet. iii. 23.) "Being raised from the dead, God hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities, and

powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, 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." (Ephes. i. 20—22.) "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." (Heb. i. 3.)

And here a very great truth appeareth, which very many overlook, that the exaltation of the person of the Redeemer, and the glory that God will have in him, is a higher and more principal part of God's intent in the sending of him to be incarnate and redeem us, than the glorifying of man, and of God by us. Christ will be more glorious than men or angels, and therefore will more glorify God; and God will eternally take more complacency in him than in men or angels; and therefore (though in several respects) he is for us, and the means of our felicity and we are for him, and the means of his glory (as the head is for the body, and the body for the head), yet we are more for Christ as a means to his glory, than he for us: I mean he is the more excellent principal end. "For to this end Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living;" (Rom. xiv. 9;) "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 6—12.) "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten

thousand, and thousands of thousands : saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 8—12; so xv. 3, 4, and xx. 6.) "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. xxi. 23.) "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. xxii. 3, 4.) These and many other Scriptures shew us, that God will be for ever glorified in the person of the Redeemer, more than in either men or angels; and consequently that it was the principal part of his intention in the design of man's redemption.

2. (I will be more brief in the rest) In the way of redemption man will be saved with greater humiliation and self-denial than he should have been in the way of creation. If we had been saved in a way of innocency, we should have had more to ascribe to ourselves. And it is meet that all creatures be humbled and abased, and nothing in themselves, before the Lord.

3. By the way of redemption, sin will be the more dishonoured, and holiness more advanced, than if sin had never been known in the world. Contraries illustrate one another. Health would not be so much valued, if there were no sickness; nor life, if there were no death; nor day, if there were no night; nor knowledge, if there were no ignorance; nor good, if man had not known evil. The holiness of God would never have appeared in execution of vindictive justice against sin, if there had never been any sin; and therefore he hath permitted it, and will recover us from it, when he could have prevented our falling into it.

4. By this way also, holiness and recovering grace shall be more triumphant against the devil and all its enemies: By the many conquests that Christ will make over Satan, the world, and the flesh, and death, there will be very much

of God to be seen to us, that innocency would not thus have manifested.

5. Redemption brings God nearer unto man. The mystery of incarnation giveth us wonderful advantages to have more familiar thoughts of God, and to see him in a clearer glass, than ever we should else have seen him in on earth, and to have access with boldness to the throne of grace. The pure Deity is at so vast a distance from us, while we are here in flesh, that if it had not appeared in the flesh unto us, we should have been at a greater loss. But now "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory." (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

6. In the way of redemption, man is brought to more earnest and frequent addresses unto God, and dependance on him; necessity driveth him; and he hath use for more of God, or for God in more of the ways of his mercy, than else he would have had.

7. Principally in this way of saving miserable man by a Redeemer, there is opportunity for the more abundant exercise of God's mercy, and consequently for the more glorious discovery of his love and goodness to the sons of men, than if they had fallen into no such necessities. Misery prepareth men for the sense of mercy. In the Redeemer there is so wonderful a discovery of love and mercy, as is the astonishment of men and angels. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God!" (1 John iii. 1.) "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and 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 towards us by Christ Jesus; for by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephes. ii. 4—9.) "For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, &c. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by

works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus iii. 3—5.) Never was there such a discovery of God as he is Love, in a way of mercy to man on earth, as in the Redeemer, and his benefits.

8. In the way of redemption the soul of man is formed to the most sweet and excellent temper, and his obedience cast into the happiest mould. The glorious demonstration of love, doth animate us with love to God; and the shedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the Spirit of the Redeemer, doth draw out our hearts in love to him again: And the sense of his wonderful love and mercy filleth us with thankfulness: so that love is hereby made the nature of the new man; and thankfulness is the life of all our obedience: for all floweth from these principles, and expresseth them: so that Love is the compendium of all holiness in one word; and Thankfulness of all evangelical obedience. And it is a more sweet and excellent state of life, to be the spouse of Christ, and his members, and serve God as friends and children, with love and thankfulness, than to serve him merely as the most loyal subjects, or with an obedience that hath less of love.

9. In the way of redemption, holiness is more admirably exemplified in Christ, than it was, or would have been in Adam. Adam would never have declared it in that eminency of charity to others, submission to God, contempt of the world, self-denial, and conquest of Satan, as Christ hath done.

10. And in the way of redemption, there is a double obligation laid upon man for every duty. To the obligations of creation, all the obligations of redemption and the new creation are superadded: and this threefold cord should not so easily be broken. Here are moral means more powerfully to hold the soul to God.

11. And in this way there is a clearer discovery of the everlasting state of man, and life and immortality are more fully brought to light by the Gospel, (2 Tim. i. 10,) than for ought we find in Scripture, they were to innocent man himself. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John i. 18.) "For no man hath ascended

into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven." (John iii. 13.)

12. Man will be advanced to the judging of the ungodly and of the conquered angels: even by the goodwill of the Father, and a participation in the honour of Christ our head, and by a participation in his victories, and by our own victories in his strength, by the right of conquest, we shall judge with Christ, both devils and men, that were enemies to him, and our salvation; as you may see 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. And there is more in that promise than we yet well understand, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father." (Rev. ii. 26, 27.)

13. And that which Augustine so much insisteth on, I think is also plain in Scripture, that the salvation of the elect is better secured in the hands of Christ, than his own or any of his posterities was in the hands of Adam. We know that Adam lost that which was committed to him: But "we know whom we have believed, and are persuaded, that he is able to keep that which we commit to him, against that day." (1 Tim. ii. 12.) Force not these Scriptures against our own consolation, and the glory of our Redeemer, and then judge. "As thou hast given him power, over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John xvii. 2.) "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (ver. 39.) "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall take them out of my hands: My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands." (John x. 26—29.) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and

without blame before him in love: having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Ephes. i. 3, 4.) "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (ver. 11.)

And if faith, and repentance, and the right disposition of the will itself, be his resolved gift to his elect, and not things left merely to our uncertain wills, then the case is past all question. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.) "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." (Ephes. ii. 8.) "The fruit of the Spirit is love, faith——." (Gal. v. 22.) "To you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him——." (Phil. i. 29.) "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts xiii. 28.) "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." (Jer. xxiv. 7.) "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you: and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." (Ezek. xi. 19, 20.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) See also Heb. viii. 6—10, where this is called the "new" and better "covenant." "I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts——." (Jer. xxxi. 33.) And Jer. xxxii. 39, 40, "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, and I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." "Who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) Much

more may be produced, from which it is evident that "Christ is the author and finisher of our faith;" and that the certainty of the salvation of his elect, doth lie more on his undertaking and resolution infallibly to accomplish their salvation, than upon our wisdom, or the stability of our mutable free-wills; and that thus we are better in the hands of the second Adam, than we were in the hands of the first.

14. To conclude: Vindictive justice will be doubly honoured upon them that are final rejecters of this grace. Though conscience would have had matter enough to work upon for the torment of the sinner, and the justifying of God, upon the mere violation of the law of nature or works, yet nothing to what it now will have on them that are the despisers of this great salvation. For of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, that hath trodden under foot the Son of God? when it is wilful impenitency, against most excellent means and mercies, that is to be charged upon sinners, and when they perish because they would not be saved, justice will be most fully glorified before all, and in the conscience of the sinner himself. All this considered, you may see that (besides what reasons of the counsel of God are unknown to us) there is abundant reason open to our sight, from the great advantages of this way, why God would rather save us by a Redeemer, than in a way of innocency, as our mere Creator.

But, for the answering of all objections against this, I must desire you to observe these two things following:

1. That we here suppose man a terrestrial inhabitant clothed with flesh: otherwise it is confessed that if he were perfect in heaven, where he had the beatifical vision to confirm him, many of these forementioned advantages to him would be none.

And it is supposed that God will work on man by moral means; and where he never so infallibly produceth the good of man, he doth it in a way agreeable to his nature and present state; and his work of Grace is Sapiential, magnifying the contrivance and conduct of his wisdom, as well as his power: otherwise indeed God might have done all without these or any other means.

3. The knowledge of God in Christ as our Redeemer, must imprint upon the soul those holy affections which the design and nature of our redemption do bespeak, and an-

swer these forementioned ends. As, 1. It must keep the soul in a sense of the odiousness of sin, that must have such a remedy to pardon and destroy it.

2. It must raise us to most high and honourable thoughts of our Redeemer, the Captain of our Salvation, that bringeth back lost sinners unto God; and we must study to advance the glory of our Lord, whom the Father hath advanced and set over all.

3. It must drive us out of ourselves, and bring us to be nothing in our own eyes, and cause us to have humble, penitent, self-condemning thoughts, as men that have been our own undoers, and deserved so ill of God and man.

4. It must drive us to a full and constant dependance on Christ our Redeemer, and on the Father by him: As our life is now in the Son as its Root and Fountain, so in him must be our faith and confidence, and to him we must daily have recourse, and seek to him, and to the Father in his name, for all that we need for daily pardon, strength, protection, provision and consolation.

5. It must cause us the more to admire the holiness of God, which is so admirably declared in our redemption; and still be sensible how he hateth sin and loveth purity.

6. It must invite and encourage us to draw near to God, who hath condescended to come so near to us; and as sons we must cry, "Abba, Father," and though with reverence, yet with holy confidence must set ourselves continually before him.

7. It must cause us to make it our daily employment to study the riches of the love of God, and his abundant mercy manifested in Christ; so that above all books in the world, we should most diligently and delightfully peruse the Son of God incarnate, and in him behold the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Father: and with Paul we should desire "to know nothing but Christ crucified;" and all things should be counted "but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." (Phil. iii. 8.) "That we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God."

8. Above all, if we know God as our Redeemer, we must live in the power of holy love and gratitude. His manifested

love must prevail with us so far, that unfeigned love to him may be the predominant affection of our souls. And being free from the spirit of bondage and slavish fear, we must make love and thankfulness the sum of our religion; and think not any thing will prove us Christians, without prevailing love to Christ, nor that any duty is accepted that proceedeth not from it.

9. Redemption must teach us to apply ourselves to the holy laws and example of our Redeemer for the forming and ordering of our hearts and lives.

10. And it must quicken us to love the Lord with a redoubled vigour, and to obey with double resolution and diligence, because we are under a double obligation. What should a people so redeemed esteem too much or too dear for God?

11. Redemption must make us a more heavenly people, as being redeemed to the incorruptible inheritance in heaven. "The blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." (1 Pet. i. 3.)

12. Lastly, Redemption must cause us to walk the more carefully, and with a greater care to avoid all sin, and to avoid the threatened wrath of God, because sin against such unspeakable mercy, is unspeakably great; and condemnation by a Redeemer for despising his grace, will be a double condemnation. (John iii. 19. 36.)

## CHAP. XII.

11. The third Relation in which God is to be known by us, is as he is our Sanctifier and Comforter, which is specially ascribed to the Holy Ghost. And doubtless as the dispensation of the Holy Ghost is the perfecting dispensation, without which creation and redemption would not attain their ends; and as the sin against the Holy Ghost, is the great and dangerous sin; so our belief in the Holy Ghost, and knowledge of God as our Sanctifier by the Spirit, is not the least or lowest act of our faith or knowledge. And it implieth or containeth these things following.

1. We must hence take notice of the certainty of our common original sin. The necessity of sanctification proveth the corruption, as the necessity of a Redeemer proveth the guilt: It is not one but all that are baptized, that must be "baptized into the name of the Son and Holy Ghost," as well as of the Father: which is an entering into covenant with the Son as our Redeemer, and with the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier. So that infants themselves must be sanctified, or be none of the church of Christ, which consisteth of baptized sanctified persons: "Except a man be born again (even of the Spirit, as well as water) he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," (John iii. 3. 5, 6,) and therefore the fleshly birth producing not a spiritual creature, will not serve without the spiritual birth: The words are most plain; not only against them that deny original sin, but against them that misunderstanding the nature of redemption, do think that all infants are merely by the price paid, put into a state of salvation, and have the pardon of their original sin in common, attending their natural birth. But these men should consider, 1. That this text and constant experience tell us that the new birth doth not thus commonly to all accompany the natural birth: and yet without the new birth none can be saved, nor without holiness any see God. 2. That pardon of sin is no man's, upon the bare suffering of Jesus Christ; but must be theirs by some covenant or promise conveying to them a right to the benefits of his suffering. And therefore no man can be said to be pardoned or saved (without great arrogancy in the affirmer) that hath not from God a promise of such mercy. But no man can shew any promise that giveth remission of original sin to all infants. Produce it, or presume not to affirm it, lest you fall under the heavy doom of those that add to his holy word. The promise is to the faithful and their seed. The rest are not the children of the promise, but are under the commination of the violated law; which indeed is dispensable; and therefore we cannot say that God will pardon none of them; but withal, we cannot say that he will, unless he had told us so. All the world stand in need of a Sanctifier: and therefore most certainly (even since Christ's death) they are naturally corrupted.

2. And as our belief in the Holy Ghost, as Sanctifier,

engageth us to acknowledge our original sin and misery, so doth it engage us to magnify his renewing work of grace, and be convinced of the necessity of it, and to confess the insufficiency of corrupted nature to its own renovation. As no man must dishonour the work of our Creator; and therefore our faculties of reason and natural freewill are not to be denied or reproached: so must we be as careful that we dishonour not the works of our Redeemer or Sanctifier; and therefore the viciousness and ill-disposedness of these faculties, and the thralldom of our wills to their own misinclinations, and to concupiscence, must be confessed; and the need of grace to work the cure. It is not ingenuous for us, when God made it so admirable a part of his work in the world, to redeem us, and save us from our sin and misery, that we should hide or deny our diseases, and make ourselves believe that we have but little need of the physician, and so that the cure is no great matter, and consequently deserveth no great praise. I know the church is troubled by men of dark, yet self-conceited minds, that in these points are running all into extremes. One side denying the Sapiential method, and the other the Omnipotential way of God in our recovery. One plainly casting our sin and misery principally on God; and the other as plainly robbing the Redeemer and Holy Spirit of the honour of our recovery. But it is the latter that my subject leadeth me now to speak to. I beseech you take heed of any conceit that would draw you to extenuate the honour of our Sanctifier. Dare you contend against the Holy Ghost for the integrity of your natures, or the honour of your cure? Surely he that hath felt the power of this renewing grace, and found how little of it was from himself, nay, how much he was an enemy to it, will be less inclined to extenuate the praise of grace than unexperienced men will be. Because the case is very weighty, give me leave by way of question to propound these considerations to you.

*Quest. 1.* Why is it, think you, that all must be baptized into the name of the Son and Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father? Doth it not imply that all have need of a Sanctifier, and must be engaged to that end in covenant with the Sanctifier? I suppose you know that it is not to a bare profession of our belief of the trinity of persons that we are baptized. It is the covenant entrance into

our happy relation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is then celebrated. And therefore as infants and all must be thus engaged to the Sanctifier, so all must acknowledge their necessity of this mercy, and the excellency of it. It is essential to our Christianity, that we value it, desire it, and receive it. And therefore an error inconsistent with it proveth us indeed no Christians. (Matt. xxviii. 19.)

*Quest.* 2. Why is it, think you, that the Holy Ghost and this renewing work, are so much magnified in the Scripture? Is not the glory of it answerable to those high expressions? undoubtedly it is. I have already told you elsewhere of the elogies of this work. It is that by which "Christ dwelleth in them, and they are made a habitation of God by the Spirit." (Ephes. iii. 17; ii. 22.) They are made by it "the temples of the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. vi. 19.) It is the Divine Power (which is no other than Omnipotency) that "giveth us all things pertaining unto life and godliness." (2 Pet. i. 3.) Think not, I beseech you, any lower of this work than is consistent with these expressions. It is the "opening of the blind eyes of our understanding, and turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and bringing us "into his marvellous light." (Acts xxvi. 18; Ephes. i. 18; 1 Pet. ii. 9.) It is an inward "teaching of us by God," (John vi. 45; 1 Thess. iv. 9,) and effectual "teaching and anointing," (1 John ii. 27,) and a "writing the law in our hearts, and putting them in our inward parts." (Heb. viii. 10, 11.) I purposely forbear any exposition of these texts, lest I seem to distort them; and because I would only lay the naked word of God before your own impartial considerations. It is God's work by the Spirit, and not our own, as ours, that is here so much magnified. - And can all this signify no more but a common bare proposal of truth and good to the intellect and will? even such as ignorant and wicked men have? Doth God do as much to illuminate, teach, and sanctify them, that never are illuminated, or taught, and sanctified, as them that are? This work of the Holy Ghost is called a quickening, or making men that were dead, alive. (Ephes. ii. 1, 2; Rom. vi. 11. 13.) It is called a new begetting or new birth, without which none can enter into heaven. (John iii. 3. 5, 6.) A renewing us, and making us new men, and new creatures,

so far as that "old things are passed away, and all become new." (Ephes. iv. 23, 24; Col. iii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17.) It is a "new creating us after the image of God." (Ephes. iv. 24.) It maketh "us holy as God is holy;" (1 Pet. i. 15, 16;) yea, it maketh us "partakers of the Divine Nature." (2 Pet. i. 4.) It "giveth us repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, that we may recover ourselves out of the snare of the devil, who were taken captive by him at his will." (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.) It giveth us that "love by which God dwelleth in us, and we in God." (1 John iv. 16.) We are redeemed by Christ "from all iniquity," and therefore it is that "he gave himself for us, to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus ii. 14.) It is an "abundant shedding of the Holy Ghost" on us for our renovation, (Titus iii. 5, 6,) and by it a "shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts." (Rom. v. 5.) It is this Holy Spirit given to believers by which they pray, and by which they "mortify the flesh." (Jude 20; Rom. viii. 13, 26.) By this Spirit we live, and walk, and rejoice." (Rom. viii. 1; xiv. 17.) Our joy, and peace, and hope, is through the power of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xv. 13.) It giveth us a spiritual mind, and taketh away the "carnal mind that is enmity against God, and neither is nor can be subject to his law." (Rom. viii. 7.) By this Spirit that is given to us, we must "know that we are God's children." (1 John iii. 24; iv. 13.) "For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his." (Rom. viii. 9.) All holy graces are the "fruits of the Spirit." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) It would be too long to number the several excellent effects of the sanctifying work of the Spirit upon the soul, and to recite the elegies of it in Scripture. Surely it is no low or needless thing which all these expressions do intend.

*Quest. 3.* If you think it a most heinous sin to vilify the Creator and his work, and the Redeemer and his work, why should you not think so of the vilifying of the Sanctifier and his work, when God hath so magnified it, and will be glorified in it? and when it is the applying perfecting work, that maketh the purchased benefits of redemption to be ours, and formeth our Father's image on us.

*Quest. 4.* Do we not doctrinally commit too much of that sin (if we undervalue the Spirit's sanctifying work, as a common thing) which the ungodly world do manifest in

practice, when they speak and live in a contempt or low esteem of grace? And which is more injurious to God? for a profane person to jest at the Spirit's work, or for a Christian, or minister, deliberately to extenuate it; especially when the preaching of grace is a minister's chief work, sure we should much fear partaking in so great a sin.

*Quest. 5.* Why is it that the Scripture speaks so much to take men off from boasting or ascribing any thing to themselves? "That every mouth may be stopped;" (Rom. iii. 19;) and why doth not the law of works exclude boasting but only the "law of faith?" (Rom. iii. 27.) Surely the actions of nature (except so far as it is corrupt) are as truly of God, as the acts of grace. And yet God will not take it well to deny him the glory of redemption, or sanctification, and tell him that we paid it him in another kind, and ascribed all to him as the author of our freewill by natural production. For as nature shall honour the Creator, so grace shall also honour the Redeemer and Sanctifier. And God designeth the humbling of the sinner, and teaching him to deny himself; and to honour God in such a way as may stand with self-abasement, leaving it to God to honour those by way of reward, that honour him in way of duty, and deny their own honour.

*Quest. 6.* Why is the blaspheming, and sinning against the Holy Ghost made so heinous and dangerous a sin, if the works of the Holy Ghost were not most excellent, and such as God will be most honoured by?

*Quest. 7.* Is it not exceeding ingratitude for the soul that hath been illuminated, converted, renewed, quickened, and saved by the Holy Ghost, to extenuate the mercy, and ascribe it most to his natural will? O what a change was it that sanctification made! what a blessed birthday was that to our souls, when we entered here upon Life Eternal! (John xvii. 3.) And is this the thanks we give the Lord for so great a mercy!

*Quest. 8.* What mean those texts, if they confute not this unthankful opinion? "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) "God 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 towards us through Christ Jesus: For by grace

ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created to good works in Christ Jesus." (Ephes. ii. 7—10.) The like is in Titus iii. 5—7 ; John xv. 16: " Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us——." (1 John iv. 10.) " For who maketh thee to differ ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive ?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) " No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John vi. 44.) " The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) " That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit ;" (John iii. 6 ; ) that is, plainly, the fleshly birth produceth but flesh and not spirit ; if any man will have the Spirit (and so be saved) it must be by a spiritual begetting and birth by the Holy Ghost : " The Lord opened Lydia's heart that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul," &c. (Acts xvi. 14.) Was the conversion of Paul, a murdering persecutor, his own work rather than the Lord's, when the means and manner were such as we read of ? " The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth," &c. (Acts xxii. 14.) He was chosen to the means and to faith, and not only " in faith unto salvation." When Christ called his disciples to come and follow him, was there no prevailing inward power that made them leave all and follow him ? And was it not the power of the Holy Ghost that converted three thousand Jews at a sermon, of them that by wicked hands had crucified and slain the Lord Jesus ? (Acts ii. 23. 41.) When the preaching and miracles of Christ converted so few ; his brethren, and they that " saw his miracles believed not on him," (John xii. 37 ; v. 38 ; vi. 36 ; vii. 5,) but when the Holy Ghost was given after his ascension, in that plenty which answered the Gospel and promise, his words were fulfilled : " And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John xii. 32.) I pass by abundance more such evidence.

*Quest. 9.* Doth it not tend to bring sin into credit, which holiness is contrary to, and to bring the love of God into discredit, and to hinder men's conversion; and keep them from a holy life, when holiness is taken for so low and natural or common a thing?

*Quest. 10.* And consequently doth it not tend to the vilifying of the attribute of holiness in God, when the image and effect of it is so extenuated?

*Quest. 11.* And doth it not tend to the contempt of heaven itself, whose state of felicity consisteth much in perfect holiness? And if sanctification be but some common motion, which Cain and Judas had, as well as Paul, sure it is less divine and more inconsiderable than we thought.

*Quest. 12.* Doth it not speak a very dangerous suspicion of a soul that never felt the special work of grace, that can make light of it, and ascribe it most to his own will? And would not sound humiliation do more than arguments to cure this great mistake? I never yet came near a thoroughly humbled soul, but I found them too low and vile in their own eyes, to have such undervaluing thoughts of grace, or to think it best for them to leave all the efficacy of grace to their own wills! A broken heart abhors such thoughts.

*Quest. 13.* Dare any wise and sober man desire such a thing of God, or dare you say that you will expect no other grace, but what shall leave it to yourselves to make it effectual or frustrate it? I think he is no friend to his soul that would take up with this.

*Quest. 14.* Do not the constant prayers of all that have but a show of godliness contradict the doctrine which I am contradicting? Do you not beg of God to melt and soften and bow your hearts, and to make them more holy, and fill them with light, and faith, and love, and hold you close to God and duty! In a word, do you not daily pray for effectual grace, that shall infallibly procure your desired ends? I scarce ever heard a prayer from a sober man but was orthodox in such points, though their speeches would be heterodox.

*Quest. 15.* Do you not know that there is an enmity in every unrenewed heart against sanctification, till God remove it? Are we not greater enemies to ourselves, and greater resisters of the Holy Ghost, and of our own conversion, and sanctification, and salvation, than all the world

besides is? Woe to him that feeleth not this by himself. And is it likely, that we that are enemies to holiness, should do more to our own sanctification, than the Holy Ghost? Woe to us if he conquer not our enmity.

*Quest. 16.* Is it probable that so great a work as the destroying of our dearest sins, the setting of our hearts and all our hopes on an invisible glory, and delighting in the Lord, and forsaking all for him, &c. should come rather from the choice of a will that loveth those sins, and hateth that holy, heavenly life, than from the Spirit of Christ? sure this is much above us.

*Quest. 17.* Whence is it that so often one man that hath been a notorious sinner is converted by a sermon, when a civiler man, of better nature and life, is never changed, though he have that and ten times more persuasions?

*Quest. 18.* Doth not experience tell impartial observers, that the high esteemers of the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, are ordinarily of more holy, heavenly lives, than they that use to ascribe the differencing work to their freewills? In my observation it is so.

*Quest. 19.* Should not every gracious, humble soul, be more inclined to magnify God, than himself? and to give him the glory, than to give it to ourselves, especially in a case where Scripture and experience telleth us that we are more unlikely than God to deserve the praise? Our destruction is of ourselves, but in him is our help. (Hos. xiii. 9.) When we see the effect and know it, and the causes that are in question, it is easy to conjecture from the quality, which is the true cause. If I see a serpent brought forth, I will sooner think that it was generated by a serpent than a dove. If I see sin in the world, I shall easily believe it is the spawn of this corrupted will, that is so prone to it. But if I find a divine nature in me, or see a holy, heavenly life in any, I must needs think that this is liker to be the work of the blessed God, than of such a naughty heart as man's, that hath already been a self-destroyer.

*Quest. 20.* What motive hath any man to exalt himself, and sin against the Holy Ghost by such an extenuation of his saving grace? It is a causeless, fruitless sin. The only reason that ever I could hear for it, was lest the doctrine of differencing grace should make God a respecter of persons,

or the author of sin, of which there is no reason of a suspicion. We all agree that no man perisheth, or is denied grace, but such as deserve it: And when all deserve it, it is no more respect of persons in God to sanctify some only of those ill deservers, than it is that he makes not all men kings, nor every dog, or toad a man, nor every star a sun, or every man an angel. To clear all objections concerning this, would be but to digress.

3. Lastly, Our knowledge of the Holy Ghost must raise us to an high estimation of his works, and a ready reception of his graces, and cheerful obedience to his motions. He sanctified our Head, that had no sin, by preventing sin in his conception, and he anointed him to his office, and came upon him at his baptism. He sanctified and anointed the prophets and the apostles to their offices, and by them endited the Holy Scripture. He illuminateth, converteth, sanctifieth and guideth all that are to be heirs of life. This is his work. Honour that part of it that is done on Christ, on the prophets, apostles, and the Scriptures; and value and seek after that which belongeth to yourselves. Think not to be holy without the Sanctifier, nor to do any thing well without the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who is Christ's internal, invisible agent here on earth (as Tertullian in the church's creed speaks, '*misit vicariam vim Spiritus sancti qui credentes agat*'). O that men knew how much of their welfare dependeth on a faithful obeying of the Holy Ghost!

### CHAP. XIII.

12. The next part of our knowledge of God is to know him in those great consequent Relations, to which he is entitled by creation and redemption; viz. as he is our absolute Lord or Owner, our most righteous Governor, and our most bountiful or gracious Father or Benefactor.

1. God both as our creator and redeemer hath '*jus dominii*,' an absolute dominion of the world; that is, he is our Owner or Proprietary, and we are his own; for we take not the term, lordship or dominion, here in the looser sense as it signifieth a ruler, but in the stricter sense, as it signifieth an owner. Of this relation I have already spoken in a sermon of "Christ's Dominion:" and therefore shall say the less in this place.

The knowledge of God's dominion or propriety must comprehend, 1. The certain truth of this his right; 2. The fulness of it; 3. The effects that it must have on us.

I. And the truth of it is beyond dispute, even among infidels that know there is a God. He that made us of his own materials, or of nothing, must needs be the owner of us; and so must he that bought us from destruction; "Behold, all souls are mine!" (Ezek. xviii. 4.) "To this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." (Rom. xiv. 9.) "All things that the Father hath are mine." (John xvi. 14, 15.) The Father then hath this propriety by creation, and the Son by redemption; and the Father also by communication with the Son in redemption; and the Son by communication with the Father in creation.

II. And it must be the most absolute plenary dominion, because the very being of all the creatures is from God, and therefore no one can be co-ordinate with him, or his co-rival, nor any thing limit his interest in us.

III. And the effects that this must have upon us, are these following.

1. Hence we must conclude, and reverently and willingly confess, that further than he voluntarily doth oblige himself to us, it is impossible that God should be our debtor; and consequently that upon terms of commutative justice we should merit any thing of God. For what can we render to him but his own? And how should he (properly and antecedently) be indebted to and for his own?

2. And we must conclude, that (antecedently to his laws and promise) it is impossible that God can do us any wrong, or any thing that he can do, can be guilty of injustice: For justice giveth to all their own; and therefore it giveth nothing to us from God, but what he voluntarily giveth us himself, which therefore is first a gift of bounty, and but secondarily a due in justice.

3. And therefore we must hence learn, that God may do with his own as he list. And therefore we must take heed that we repine not at any of his decrees or providences, or any passages concerning them in his word. Much may be above us, because our blindness cannot reach the reasons of his ways; but nothing is unreasonable or evil; for all proceedeth from Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, as well as from

Omnipotency: As no man must feign any thing of God, and say, 'This is his decree, or word, or providence; and therefore it is good,' when there is no such thing revealed to us; so when we find that it is indeed revealed, our reason must presently submit, and undoubtedly conclude it reasonable and good. Yet is there no cause from hence to fear, lest God should condemn the innocent, or break his promises, and deny us the reward; nor is there any hope to wicked men that he should violate his peremptory threatenings, or (as they call it in their selfish language) be better than his word: Because though God have an absolute propriety, and therefore in regard of his interest or power, may do what he will, yet he is essentially also most wise and good, and accordingly hath fitted all things to their use, and taken upon him the relation of our Governor, and as it were obliged himself by his laws and covenants, and declared himself to be most just; and shewed us hereby that he will do nothing contrary to these. As there is no contradiction but most perfect unity in God's omnipotency, wisdom, and goodness; his dominion or propriety, his kingdom, and paternity; so shall there be no contradiction but a perfect concord of all these in the exercise. He therefore that as our King and Governor, hath undertaken to advance the godly, and destroy the wicked, will not by the exercise of his absolute dominion, deny himself, nor be unfaithful to his people, or to his rules of government.

If you ask me, in what cases then this dominion is exercised? I answer, 1. In laying the foundations of laws, and right. 2. In the disposal of the unreasonable creatures. 3. In abundance of things about his rational creatures, wherein as Rector he is not engaged, nor hath in his laws declared his will: As about the various constitutions and complexions of men, their ranks and dignities in the world, their riches or poverty, their health or sickness, their gifts and parts both natural and acquired; the first giving of the Gospel, and of special grace, to such as had forfeited them, and had no promise of them: the degrees of outward means and mercies; the degrees of inward grace, more than what is promised, &c.

From hence also we must learn, not to repine at the providences of God about his church, which are strange to us, and past our reach, and seem to make against its welfare.

Remember that as he may do with his own as he list, so we have no reason to think that he will be lavish or disregarding of his own. The church is not ours, but God's: and therefore he is fitter than we to be trusted with it.

And so in our own distresses by affliction; when flesh repineth, let us remember, that we are his own, and he may do with us as he pleases. If we be poor, despised, sick and miserable in the world, let us remember, that as it is no injury to the beasts that they are not men, or to the worms that they are not beasts, or to the plants that they have not sense, or to the stars that they are not suns; so it is no wrong to the subjects that they are not princes, or to the poor that they are not rich, or to the sick that they are not healthful. May not God do with his own, as he list? shall a beggar grudge that you give not all that he desireth, when you are not bound to give him any thing?

4. Yea, hence we must learn to be the more thankful for all our mercies, because they proceed from the absolute Lord, that was not obliged to us. He might have made us idiots, or madmen; he might have made us beasts or toads, without any injury to us; and the mercies which are consequently from his promise, are antecedently from his propriety and dominion; for he might have put us into other capacities, and have chosen not to have made those promises. And his promises bind us not to be less thankful but more. As his mercies are not the less mercies but the greater, for being promised; because we have now the comfort and use of them in the promise, before we have them.

5. Hence also we must learn, that there can be no simple absolute propriety in any creature. No creature gave all the being and wellbeing to another that it hath, and this originally as of its own. We being not our own but God's, cannot have any thing that is absolutely our own. Human propriety is but derived, limited, and respective. Our goods, and lands, and lives are ours; that is, they are ours to use for God, as the instruments of a workman to do his work; but not ours to use as we think meet. They are so ours, as that men may not take them from us, but God may take them from us at his pleasure. And therefore think not you may misspend a penny if you were never so rich, because it is your own; but know that you must misspend nothing, because it is not your own but God's.

6. Principally, we must hence learn to deny ourselves, as being not our own, and having nothing in the world that is our own, in respect to God, the absolute owner. And therefore above all the sins of your souls, still watch against this selfishness; lest you should grow to look at your time, your strength, your wealth, your interests, as your own, and forget that you are mere stewards; and say as the ungodly, "Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" (Psal. xii. 4.) O take heed that you use not your strength, or interest, or any thing for yourselves: no not so much as your food and raiment; (1 Cor. x. 31;) that is, for yourselves ultimately, or not in subordination to the Lord. For self as subject unto God, or as closed with him in the bond of love, is no longer self in enmity and opposition, nor that which we are forbidden to seek or serve.

7. And this knowledge of the dominion of God, must prevail with us effectually to resign ourselves absolutely to him. Our consent doth give him no title to us, but it is necessary to our welfare that we confess his title. All men, even the wicked, are his own, but that is against their wills: but the godly are willingly his own, and disclaim all interest in themselves but what is duly subordinate to his: The name of God is put upon them, as you put your names on your goods or sheep. "I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine." (Ezek. xvi. 8.) "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Mal. iii. 17.) To be entirely his by covenant, is proper to a saint: for sanctification hath these parts; one is the habitual devotion of the soul to God, and the other is the actual dedication, and a third is the relation of the person as thus dedicated, and the fourth is the actual using of ourselves for God. These four are the parts of sanctification; so that all is but our giving up ourselves to God. But to be his in right, is common to the devils, and most ungodly. The hearts of the sanctified do resolvedly and delightfully say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his;" (Cant. ii. 16;) and "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." (vi. 3.) See then that you keep not any thing back, but resign up yourselves entirely to God, as those that know they are wholly his.

8. And with ourselves we must resign up all to God that

we have. For if we are not our own but his, then our children, our wealth, our wits, our time, our abilities, and all that we have are his. All is not to be used one way for God : not all to the poor, nor all to the commonwealth, nor all to the direct promoting of his worship : but all must be his, and used for him, in one way or other, and in those ways which he requireth. Possess not any thing merely for yourselves.

9. And especially see to it in the use and improvement, that you use yourselves, and all that you have, for God. Let this be your intention, trade, and study. See that you be always at his work ; that if a man come in upon you any hour of the day, and ask you what you are doing, and whose work it is that you are upon, you may truly be able to say, the Lord's. If you be asked, who you are now speaking for, or spending your time for, or for whom do you expend your wealth? You may truly say of every hour, and every penny, and every word, It is for the Lord. Even that which you give your children or friends, and that which you receive for your support or comfort, may all be principally and ultimately for God : " 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." (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) " Christ died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 15.)

10. Lastly, This must be a stay to the souls of true believers, and cause them with comfort to trust themselves and all their affairs in the hands of God. When we have first made it our care to " give to God the things that are God's ;" (Matt. xxii. 21 ;) and heartily consecrated ourselves and all that we have to him as his own ; we have no reason to doubt of his acceptance, nor of his care, and protection, and merciful disposal of us. This is a wonderful comfort to poor Christians, to think that they have such an owner. Whoever is against you, Christians, be sure of it, God will look to you, as his own ! And if you do but promise another that you will be as careful of his child, his horse, his goods, as if they were your own, he will think you say as much as can be expected. If you be poor, or sick, or desolate, you may be sure that yet God will look to you as his own. And why should you think that he will be careless of his own ?

Ground your prayers and confidence on this, as David doth, "I am thine, save me." (Psal. cxix. 94.) And in all our labours, and the affairs of our lives, when our consciences can say that we live to God, and study to do all we do for him, and to improve all our time and parts, and other talents, to his use, it may very much quiet us in all his disposals of us. If he keep us in the lowest case, if we be his, we must rest in his wisdom, that knows best how to use his own. If he take our friends from us, he taketh but his own. If he deny his saving grace to our ungodly children (a heavy judgment of which we must be sensible); yet when we have devoted them to God, and done our own part, we must be silent, as Aaron was when his sons were destroyed; (Lev. x. 3;) and confess that the "potter hath power over his own clay, to make of the same lump a vessel to honour, and another to dishonour." (Rom. ix. 21.) All his disposals shall work to that end which is the most universal perfect good, and most denominateth all the means. But those that are his own by consent and covenant, may be sure that all shall work to their own good. Let us die with Christ, and be buried to the world, and know no lord or owner but our great Creator and Redeemer (except in a limited subservient sense), and then we may boldly argue with him to the quiet of our souls from this relation, "I am thine, help me." "Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even to my cause, my Lord and my God;" when faith and love have first said as Thomas, "My Lord and my God." (John xx. 28.)

#### CHAP. XIV.

13. The next Relation to be spoken of, is God's Sovereignty: Both by creation and redemption he has the right of governing us as our Sovereign King, and we are obliged to be his willing subjects, and as such to obey his holy laws. He is the Lord or Owner of all the world; even of brutes as properly as of man: But he is the Sovereign King or Governor only of the reasonable creature; because no other are capable of that proper moral government which now we speak of. Vulgarly indeed his physical motions and dispositions are called his rule or government; and so God is said to govern brutes and inanimate creatures; but that is but a metaphorical expression: as an artificer metaphorically governeth his clock or engine, or a shepherd his sheep. But

we now speak of proper moral government. God having made man a rational and free agent, having an immortal soul, and capable of everlasting happiness, his very nature and the end of his creation required, that he should be conducted to that end and happiness by means agreeable to his nature; that is, by the revelation of the reward before he seeth it, that he may seek it and be fitted for it: and by prescribed duties that are necessary to obtain it, and to his living here according to his nature: and by threatened penalties to quicken him to his duty: so that he is naturally a creature to be governed, both as sociable, and as one to be conducted to his end. He therefore that created him having alone both sufficiency and right, doth by this very creation become his Governor. His government hath two parts (the world being thus constituted the kingdom of God). The first is by legislation, or making laws and officers for execution. The second is by the procuring the execution of these laws: to which end he doth exhort and persuade the subjects to obedience, and judge them according to their works, and execute his judgment. His first law was to Adam, the law of nature, obliging him to adhere to his Creator, and to love him, trust him, fear him, honour him, and obey him with all his might, in order to the pleasing of his Creator, and the attainment of everlasting life: to which was added a positive law, against the eating of the tree of knowledge; and death was the penalty due to the sinner. This law was quickly broken by man; and God delayed not his judgment, but sentenced the tempter, the woman and the man; but not according to their merits: but graciously providing a redeemer, he presently stopt the execution of the far greatest part of the penalty, the Son of God undertaking as our surety to become a sacrifice and ransom for us. Hereupon the covenant of grace was made, and the law of grace enacted with mankind; but more obscurely in the beginning; being cleared up by degrees in the several promises to the fathers, the types of the law, and the prophecies of the prophets of several ages, and the law being interposed because of transgression: In the fulness of time the Messiah was incarnate, and the first promises concerning him fulfilled, and after his holy life, and preachings, and conquests of the tempter and the world, he gave himself a ransom for us, and conquering death he rose again, ascended into heaven, being

possessed in his manhood of the fulness of his power, and all things being delivered into his hands; so that he was made the General Administrator and Lord of all. And thus he more clearly revealing his covenant of grace, and bringing life and immortality to light, commissioned his ministers to preach this Gospel to all the world. And thus the primitive Sovereign is God, and the Sovereign by derivation is Jesus the Mediator, in his manhood united to the second person in the Godhead; and the laws that we are governed by, are the laws of nature with the superadded covenant of grace; the subordinate officers are angels, magistrates and pastors of the church (having works distinct); the society itself is called the church and kingdom of God; the reward is everlasting glory, with the mercies of this life in order to it: and the punishment is everlasting misery, with the preparatory judgments, especially on the soul, which are here inflicted. Subjection is due upon our first being; and is consented to, or vowed in baptism, and is to be manifested in holy obedience to the death. This is the Sovereignty and Government of God. And now let us see how God, as our Sovereign, must be known.

1. The princes, and all the rulers of the world, must understand their place and duty: They are first God's subjects, and then his officers, and can have "no power but from God," (Rom. xiii. 3, 4,) nor hold any but in dependence on him, and subordination to him. Their power extendeth no further than the Heavenly Sovereign hath signified his pleasure, and by commission to them, or command to us, conferred it on them. As they have no strength (or natural power) but from the Omnipotent God, so can they have no authority (or governing power or right) but from the absolute King of all the world. They can less pretend to a right of governing not derived from God, than a justice or constable may to such power, not derived from the earthly sovereigns.

Princes and states also must hence understand their end and work. God who is the beginning, must be the end also of their government: Their laws must be but by-laws subservient to his laws, to further men's obedience to them. The common good, which is their lower nearer end, must be measured by his interest in the nations, and men's relations unto him. The common possession of his favour,

blessing and protection, is the greatest common good. His interest in us, and ours in him, must therefore be principally maintained.

2. The knowledge of God as our sovereign King, must bring the whole man in subjection to him. Our understandings must be subject to his doctrine, and resigned to him, as teachable and tractable: when we know what is his law and will, we must rest in it, though we know not the reasons of it. We take not on us to be competent judges of all the reasons of the laws of men, but must obey them without disputing the reasons (with the limitations after to be mentioned). How much more must we submit to the wisdom of the infallible Lawgiver, that cannot deceive, or be deceived! Our wills also must be fully subject to his will, revealed by his precepts. We must desire no more to move us, or to stop us, but to know what God would have us do. As the first wheels in a watch or other engine moveth all the rest, so the will of God must move all our wills, and rule our lives. We must take heed above all things in the world, lest our wills (which are the lower wheels) should have any such defects, distempers, reserves, any carnal bias, interest, or inclination, that makes them unfit to receive the law of God, or be ruled by his will. We must imitate our Lord, (Heb. x. 7,) and learn of the prophet, "I delight to do thy will, O God." (Psal. xl. 8.) With cheerful readiness to obey, we must stand waiting for the word of his command; and say as Psal. cxliii. 10. "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God:" And as Samuel, (1 Sam. iii. 9,) "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When a man's selfish carnal will is mortified, and his will lies flat before the Lord, and wholly applieth itself to his will, and it is enough to a man to move him in the greatest matters, to know that it is the will of God, this is a state of true subjection. Thus must we be "in subjection to the Father of Spirits," submitting even to his sharpest dispensations. (Heb. xii. 9.) And all the church is subject unto Christ. (Ephes. v. 24.) And this is essential to our holy covenant and Christianity itself. When God is taken to be our God, and we give up ourselves to be his people; when Christ is taken to be our Saviour, and we give up ourselves to him as his members, and redeemed ones, it essentially containeth our taking him for our chief Governor, and giving

up ourselves to him as his subjects. Take heed of that wisdom that would overtop the wisdom of God, and be your guide itself, without depending on his wisdom. This is the foolish damning wisdom of the world. Take heed of that concupiscence or will that would be your ruler, and overtop the will of God. For this is the grand rebel, and greatest enemy of God and us.

3. And subjection must produce obedience ; subjection is the consent of the will to be subjects, and to obey : obedience is the actual performance of commanded duties. Subjection is the root of obedience, and virtually containeth it: Obedience is the fruit of subjection, and supposeth it. If God be your master, shew it by his fear, or service. (Mal. i. 6.) It is not calling Christ our King, but obeying him before all, that will prove us subjects. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven : but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. vii. 21.) "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service : And be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed (or turned into other men) by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. xii. 1, 2.) "And this is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.) "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind : For he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin : that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." (1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.) Yea, we should "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." (Col. iv. 12.) And by the power of the word of God, "every thought should be brought in obedience unto Christ." (2 Cor. x. 5.) Our obedience should be public and exemplary. (Rom. xvi. 19.) "For so is the will of God, that with well doing we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (1 Pet. ii. 15.) "Obedience is better than sacrifice." (1 Sam. xv. 22.) Whatever you do therefore, keep close to the law of God.

4. To this end we must labour to know the law, and be acquainted with God's will. The book of nature must be studied : The holy Scripture must be searched, (John v. 39,)

“and meditated in both day and night.” (Psal. i. 2.) Princes must have this book continually in their hands. (Deut. xvii. 18—20; Josh. i. 8. 9.) Rich and poor must learn it, that they may obey it. (Deut. vi. 6, 7.)

5. And our subjection to God obligeth us to a subjection to the officers which he sets over us. If any man say to judges, justices, and constables, ‘I will obey the king, but you are no kings, therefore I will not obey you,’ he shall suffer as disobeying the king in his officers. Contempt of magistrates and ministers, reflects on God.

6. Yea, hence we must practically understand, in what respect to obey our governors: Not merely as the officers of men: not only as chosen by the people; but as the officers of God, that from him have their authority. The atheistical politicians that derive authority no higher than the sword, or the people’s choice, or natural strength, do teach men to obey their governors, but as a little dog submits unto a mastiff, or so far as their commodity persuadeth them, but not for conscience in obedience to God. And they teach men to look to no higher end than common preservation and liberties, and not to expect protection or reward from the Absolute Sovereign. In a word, they entice all princes and people into damning rebellion against the Lord; as much as if they should entice all constables and justices to hold their places without dependence on the prince. But God teacheth us that “there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God: Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, shall receive to themselves damnation: For he is the minister of God to us for good; even the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore we must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake——For they are God’s ministers continually attending upon this very thing: and for this cause we must pay them tribute.” (Rom. xiii. 1, 2. 4—6.) “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake,——For so is the will of God——.” (1 Pet. ii. 13. 15.) “Judge righteously between every man and his brother——ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but shall hear the small as well as the great, you shall not be afraid of the face of man: For the judgment is God’s.” (Deut. i. 16, 17.) “And he said to the judges, Take heed what ye do; for you judge not for man, but for

the Lord, who is with you in the judgment; wherefore let the fear of the Lord be upon you." (2 Chron. xix. 5—7.) But our atheistical politicians would teach rulers that they are none of the ministers of God, and that they judge for man only, and not for him. The nature of all true obedience is such as Paul describeth in children and servants, Ephes. vi. 1. 6—8, that fetcheth its rise and motives from the Lord; "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right—Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ: not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with goodwill, doing service as to the Lord, and not to men." So Colos. iii. 22, 23.

7. Hence also you must learn, that God's authority is the highest authority, and there is indeed no such thing in the world as true authority that is against him, or not subordinate unto him: And therefore if men command us to disobey God, by neglecting that which is 'hic et nunc' a duty, or by sinning against him, their commands are from a disobedient will of their own, but from no authority: and it is better in such cases to obey God than man; (Acts v. 29;) so many prophets, apostles, and other martyrs, would not have been sacrificed by the fury of persecutors, if they had thought it just to obey them before God. God never gave any man authority against him. Nor to nullify his laws. The acts of a justice or constable against the king, or beyond their power, are private or rebellious acts, and not authoritative. And so are the laws of men that are against God. Yet note well, that though we must rather disobey men, than God, yet we may not forcibly resist, when we may not obey them. And in some cases (as if a king would ravish a woman, or the like) when it is lawful to resist his fact, it is not lawful to resist his state, and disturb the government of the commonwealth: Obey men cheerfully when God forbids it not: but see that God be your absolute Sovereign, whose laws can be dispensed with by none.

If parents or masters command you to break the laws of God, obey them not. Despise them not, but humbly deprecate their displeasure, and obey them in all other things; but in the unlawful thing obey them not: no not if they were the greatest princes upon earth. But say as the three

witnesses of God, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter: If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hands, O king: But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Dan. iii. 16, 17.)

What I have said of magistrates, in the two last cases, I mean also of pastors of the church. They must be obeyed in and for the Lord; but not against the Lord. Saith Paul of the churches of Macedonia, "They gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us, by the will of God." (2 Cor. viii. 5.) See Acts xx. 28; 1 Thess. v. 12. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me." (Luke x. 16.) And yet the leaven of the Pharisees must be avoided: And "an angel from heaven be held as accursed, if he should preach another Gospel." (Gal. i. 8.) And I would not have flatterers to set either princes or pastors above the angels of heaven: Though yet in other respects, we may be still obliged, as I said before, to hear and obey them.

8. And the knowledge of God's Sovereignty must teach us to fear his righteous threatenings, and reverence his justice, and prepare ourselves to be judged by him. He ruleth by his laws, and so by threatenings and promises, which he will make good. It is not a painted fire that he threateneth. Judgment is a part of government. Laws are but shadows if there be no execution. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him all the earth. Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth——." (Psal. xcvi. 9, 10.) As his promises, so his peremptory threatenings shall be fulfilled. He will not revoke his established laws for fear of hurting wilful sinners, that will not fear his judgments till they feel them. "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him: for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Psal. xxxiii. 8.) Mark also the present judgments of the Lord, and rush not on his indignation. For "the Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth: the wicked is (oft) snared in the work of his own hands." (Psal. ix. 16.) Though "the wicked contemn God, and say in his heart, Thou wilt not require it;" (Psal. x. 13;) yet they shall find that "he beholdeth mischief to requite

it with his hand, and that he is the helper of the fatherless and poor that commit themselves unto him." (ver. 14.) "The Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men: the Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth." (Psal. xi. 4, 5.)

9. The Sovereignty of God is a comfort to his loyal subjects. They may be sure that he will protect them, and make good his word. "Behold he cometh, and his reward is with him." (Rev. xxii. 12.) "The righteous Judge at his appearing will give the crown of righteousness to all them that love his appearing." (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. 18.) "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth." (Psal. lxxvii. 4.) "Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad—before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (Psal. lxxix. 11. 13.)

10. Lastly, The Knowledge of God as our Sovereign King, must cause us to desire and pray for and promote the glory of his kingdom, and the obedience of his subjects in the world; that his name may be hallowed, by the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven, must be the matter of our daily requests to God. It must be the grief of every subject of the Lord, to think of the heathen and infidel parts of the world; and to see the rebellion of the profane among us; and that the laws of God are unknown or despised by the most of men. Alas! what abundance are ruled by their lusts, and self-conceitiveness, and corrupted wills, and the customs of the world, or the wills of men! but how few are ruled by the laws of God! O how should it grieve an honest heart, to see God's kingdom hindered by infidelity, and weakened, divided, and disturbed by popery, and heresy, and dishonoured by scandal and impiety, as it is! And to see the multitude, and the violence and industry of corrupters, dividers, and destroyers: and the fewness, the coldness, and the remissness of the builders, the healers and restorers! All you that are loyal subjects to your Lord, lament these ways of rebellion and disobedience, and the diminutions and distempers of the subjects of his kingdom, and the unfaithfulness and negligence of his ministers: and bend your cares, desires,

and prayers, to the promoting of God's kingdom in you, and in the world, and befriend not any thing that hindereth its prosperity.

## CHAP. XV.

14. The third of these Relations, and the next point in the Knowledge of God, to be spoken of, is, That he is our Most Loving Father, or Bountiful Benefactor. As he is Good, so he doth Good. (Psal. cxix. 68.) And as he is the chiefest Good, so he bestoweth the greatest benefits: and therefore is thence by a necessary resultancy, our Most Bountiful Benefactor. The term Father comprehendeth in it all his three great relations to us. 1. A father gives being to his children, and therefore hath some propriety in them; and God is the first cause of our whole being, and therefore we are his own. 2. A father is the governor of his children: and God is our chief governor. 3. A father tenderly loveth his children that are childlike, loving, and obedient to him; and seeketh their felicity: and so doth God love, and will make happy, his loving and obedient children, who have not only their being from him as their maker, but their new being, or holy nature, from him as their sanctifier. And this last being the end and perfection of the rest, doth communicate its nature to the rest, as the means. And so, 1. The new nature that God thus giveth us in our regeneration, is not from his common love, but is an act of special grace, proceeding from his special Fatherly love. 2. The government that he exerciseth over them, as his regenerate children, is not a common government, such as is that of the mere law of nature, or of works; but it is a special government by a law of grace, a justifying, remedying, saving law, or covenant; together with an internal illuminating, quickening, guiding Spirit, with church-state, and officers and ordinances, all suited to this way of grace: Even as his dominion or propriety by redemption, and our sanctification and resignation, is not a common propriety, but a gracious relation to us as our own Father, who hath the endeared relation to him of being his own children. All is from love, and in a way of love, and for the exercise and demonstration of love: So that when I call God our Benefactor, I precisely dis-

tinguish this last part of his relation to us, from the rest : But when I call him a Father, I mean the same thing, or relation which a benefactor signifieth ; but with fuller aspect on the foregoing relations, and connotation of them as they are perfected all in this.

And here, I. I shall briefly name the benefits on which this relation of God is founded. And, 1. Even in creating us, he acted as a benefactor, giving us the fundamental good of being, and the excellency of manhood. 2. By setting us in a well-furnished world, and putting all things under our feet, and giving us the use of creatures. 3. By entering into the relation of a governor to us, and consequently engaging himself to terms of justice in his dealing with us, and to protect us, and reward us, if we did obey ; and making us capable of an everlasting happiness as our end, and appointing us sufficient means thereto. These benefits denominated God the Great Benefactor or Father unto man, in the state of his creation.

But then moreover he is a common benefactor also. 4. By so loving the world, as to give his only begotten Son, to be their Redeemer ; a sufficient sacrifice for sin. 5. By giving out his promise or covenant of grace, and making a common deed of gift of pardon, reconciliation, and eternal life, to all that will accept it in and with Christ, to Gospel ends. 6. By sending forth the messengers of this grace, commanding them to preach to every creature the Gospel, or word of reconciliation committed to them, and to beseech men in Christ's stead, as his ambassadors ; as if God himself did entreat by them, to be reconciled to God." (Matt. xxviii. 18, 19 ; Mark xvi. 16 ; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.) 7. By affording some common mercies without, and motions of his Spirit within, to second these invitations. But though by this much God hath a title to their dearest love, yet they have no title to his highest benefits, nor are in the nearest relation of children or beneficiaries to him.

But, 8. When he begetteth us again to a lively hope, by his incorruptible Seed, and giveth us both to will and to do, and when the Father effectually draweth us to the Son, and reneweth us according to his image, and taketh away our old and stony hearts, and giveth us new and tender hearts, and giveth us to know him, and love him as a Father ; then is he our Father in the dearest and most comfortable sense,

and we are his children, that have interest in his dearest love. 9. And therefore we have his Spirit, and pardon, justification, and reconciliation with him. 10. And also we have special communion with him in prayers, praises, sacraments, and all holy ordinances and conversation. 11. And we and our services are pleasing to him, and so we are in the light of his countenance, and under a special promise of his protection and provision, and that "all things shall work together for our good." 12. And we have the promise of perfection in everlasting glory.

II. And now as you see how God is our benefactor, or most gracious and loving Father, let us next see what this must work on us.

And, 1. Goodness and bounty should shame men from their sin, and lead them to repentance. (Rom. ii. 4, 5.) Love is not to be abused and requited with unkindness and provocation. He that can turn grace into wantonness, and do evil because grace hath abounded, or that it may abound, shall be forced to confess that his damnation is just. He that will not hate his sin, when he seeth such exceeding benefits stand by, and heareth mercy, and wonderful mercy plead against it, and upbraid the sinner with ingratitude, is like to die a double death, and shall have no more sacrifice for sin.

2. The fatherly love and benefits of God, do call for our best returns of love. The benefits of creation, oblige all to love him with all their heart, and soul, and might : much more the benefits of redemption, and especially (as applied by sanctifying grace to them that shall be heirs of life, it obligeth them by multiplied strongest obligations: The worst are obliged to as much love of God, as the best (for none can be obliged to more than to love him with all their heart, &c.); but they are not as much obliged to that love. We have new and special obligations; and therefore must return a hearty love, or we are doubly guilty. Mercies are love's messengers, sent from heaven to win up our hearts to love again, and entice us thither. All mercies therefore should be used to this end. That mercy that doth not increase, or excite and help our love, is abused and lost, as seed that is buried when it is sowed, and never more appeareth. Earthly mercies point to heaven, and tell us whence they come, and for what. Like the flowers of the

spring, they tell us of the reviving approaches of the sun: But like foolish children, because they are near us, we love the flowers better than the sun; forgetting that the winter is drawing on. But spiritual mercies are as the sunshine that more immediately dependeth on, and floweth from the sun itself. And he that will not see (and value) the sun by its light, will never see it! These beams come down to invite our minds and hearts to God; and if we shut the windows, or play till night, and they return without us, we shall be left to utter darkness.

The mercies of God must imprint upon our minds the fullest and deepest conceptions of him, as the most perfect, suitable, lovely object to the soul of man; when all our good is originally in him, and all flows from him, that hath the goodness of a means, and finally himself is all; not to love God then, is not to love goodness itself; and there is nothing but good that is suited to our love. Night and day therefore should the believer be drawing and deriving from God, by the views and tastes of his precious mercies, a sweetness of nature, and increase of holy love to God, as the bee sucks honey from the flowers. We should not now and then for a recreation light upon a flower, and meditate on some mercy of the Lord, but make this our work from day to day, and keep continually upon our souls, the lively tastes and deep impressions of the infinite goodness and amiableness of God. When we love God most, we are at the best, most pleasing to God; and our lives are sweetest to ourselves: And when we steep our minds in the believing thoughts of the abundant fatherly mercies of the Lord, we shall most abundantly love him. Every mercy is a suitor to us from God! The contents of them all is this, 'My Son, give me thy heart. Love him that thus loveth thee.' Love him, or you reject him. O wonderful love! that God will regard the love of man! that he will enter into a covenant of love! that he will be related to us in a relation of love! and that he will deal with us on terms of love! that he will give us leave to love him, that are so base, and have so loved earth and sin! yea, and that he will be so earnest a suitor for our love, as if he needed it, when it is only we that need! But the paths of love are mysterious and incomprehensible.

3. As God is in special a Benefactor and a Father to us,

we must be the readiest and most diligent in obedience to him. Childlike duty is the most willing and unwearied kind of duty. Where love is the principle, we shall not be eye-servants, but delight to do the will of God, and wish, O that I could please him more! It is a singular delight to a gracious soul to be upon any acceptable duty; and the more he can do good, and please the Lord, that more he is pleased. As fatherly love and benefits are the fullest and the surest, so will filial duty be. The heart is no fit soil for mercies, if they grow not up to holy fruits. The more you love, the more cheerfully will you obey.

4. From hence we must well learn, both how God is man's end, and what are the chief means that lead us to him.

1. God is not the end of reason, nakedly considered, but he is '*finis amantis*,' the end which love inclineth us to, and which by love is attained, and by love enjoyed: The understanding of which would resolve many great perplexing difficulties that '*à natura finis*' do step into our way in theological studies. I will name no more now, but only that it teacheth us, How both God and our own felicity in the fruition of him, may be said to be our ultimate end, without any contradiction, yet so that it be eminently and chiefly God. For it is a union (such as our natures are capable of) that is desired, in which the soul doth long to be swallowed up in God: Understand but what a filial or friendly love is, and you may understand what a regular intention is, and how God must be the Christian's end.

2. And withal it shews us, that the most direct and excellent means of our felicity, and to our end, are those that are most suited to the work of love. Others are means more remotely, and necessary in their places; but these directly. And therefore the promises and narratives of the love and mercy of the Lord, are the most direct and powerful part of the Gospel, conducing to our end: and the threatenings the remoter means. And therefore as grace was advanced in the world, the promissory part of God's covenant or law, grew more illustrious, and the Gospel consisted so much of promises, that it is called "*Glad tidings of great joy*." And therefore the most full demonstration of God's goodness and loveliness to our hearers, is the most excellent part of all our preaching, though it is not all. And

therefore the meditation of redemption, is more powerful than the bare meditation of creation, because it is redemption that most eminently revealeth love. And therefore Christ is the principal means of life, because he is the principal messenger and demonstration of the Father's love, and by the wonders of love which he revealeth, and exhibiteth in his wondrous grace, he wins the soul to the love of God. For God will have external objective means, and internal effective means concur, because he will work on man agreeably to the nature of man. Though there was never given out such prevalent invincible measures of the Spirit, as Christ hath given for the renewing of those that he will save, yet shall not that Spirit do it without as excellent objective means. And though Christ, and the riches of his grace revealed in the Gospel, be the most wonderful objective means, yet shall not these do it without the internal effective means. But when love doth shine to us so resplendently without us, in the face of the glorious Sun of Love, and is also set into us by the Spirit's illumination, that sheds abroad this love in our hearts, then will the holy fire burn, which comes from heaven, and leads to heaven, and will never rest till it have reached its centre, and brought us to the face and arms of God.

5. And from the fatherly relation and love of God, we must learn to trust him, and rest our souls in his securing love. Shall we distrust a Father? an Omnipotent Father! Therefore is this relation prefixed to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and we begin with "Our Father which art in heaven," that when we remember his love, and our interest in him, and his allsufficiency, we may be encouraged to trust him, and make our addresses to him. If a Father, and such a Father, smite me, I will submit, and kiss the rod: for I know it is the healing fruit of love. If a Father, and such a Father, afflict me, wound me, deal strangely with me, and grieve my flesh, let me not murmur or distrust him; for he well understandeth what he doth; and nothing that shall hurt me finally can come from Omnipotent paternal love. If a Father, and such a Father, kill me, yet let me trust in him, and let not my soul repine at his proceedings; nor tremble at the separating stroke of death. A beast knows not when we strive with him, what we intend, whether to

cure, or to kill him: But a child need not fear a killing blow, nor a loving soul a damning death, from such a Father. If he be a Father, where is his love and trust?

6. If God be our Father, and so wonderful a benefactor to us, then thanks and praise must be our most constant work, and must be studied above all the rest of duty, and most diligently performed. If the tongue of man, which is called his glory, be made for any thing, and good for any thing, it is to give the Lord his glory, in the thankful acknowledgment of his love and mercies, and the daily cheerful praises of his name. Let this then be the Christian's work.

7. The children of such a Father, should live a contented, cheerful life. Diligence becometh them, but not contrivances for worldly greatness, nor carking cares for that which their Father hath promised them to care for. Humility and reverence beseemeth them, but not dejection and despondency of mind, and a still complaining, fearful, troubled, disconsolate soul. If the children of such a Father shall not be bold, and confident, and cheerful, let joy and confidence then be banished from the earth, and be renounced by all the sons of men.

#### CHAP. XVI.

15. There are yet divers subordinate attributes of God, that being comprised in the forementioned, may be passed over with the briefer touch. And the next that I shall speak of is, his Freedom. And God is free in more senses than one; but for brevity, I shall speak of all together.

1. And first, God hath a natural Freedom of Will, being determined to will by nothing without him, nor liable to any necessity, but what is consistent with perfect blessedness and liberty. His own being, and blessedness, and perfections, are not the objects of his election; and therefore not of that which we call freewill: But all his works without, as creation, providence, redemption, &c. are the effects of his freewill: Not but that his will concerning all these, hath a necessity of existence: for God did from eternity will the creation, and all that is done in time; and therefore from eternity that will existing, had a necessity of existence: but yet it was free, because it proceedeth not necessarily from the very nature of God: God was God before he made the

world, or redeemed it, or did the things that are daily done. And therefore one part of the schoolmen maintain, not only that there is contingency from God, but that there could be no contingency in the creature, if it had not its original in God: The liberty of God being the fountain of contingency.

2. There is also an eminency both of dominion and sovereignty in God, according to which he may be called Free. His absoluteness of propriety freeth him from the restraint of any obligation, but what floweth from his own freewill, from disposing of his own as he pleases. And his absolute Sovereignty freeth him from the obligation of his own laws, as laws, though he will still be true to his promises and predictions. Let man therefore take heed how he questioneth his Maker, or censureth his laws, or works, or ways.

## CHAP. XVII.

16. Another attribute of God is his Justice. With submission, I conceive that this is not to be said to be from eternity, any otherwise than all God's relations are (as Creator, Redeemer, &c.); because there is no time with God. For though the blessed nature denominated Just is from eternity, yet not the formality or denomination of justice. For justice is an attribute of God as he is Governor only; and he was not Governor, till he had creatures to govern: and he could not be a Just Governor when he was no Governor. The denomination did not arise till the creation had laid the foundation. Many questions may be resolved hence, which I will not trouble you to recite.

Justice in God is the perfection of his nature, as it giveth every one his due, or governeth the world in the most perfect orders for the ends of government. Because he is Just, he will reward the righteous, and difference between the godly and the wicked: for that governor that useth all alike is not just. The "crown of righteousness" is given by him as a "Righteous Judge." (2 Tim. iv. 8.)

1. The Justice of God is substantially (in men we call it an inclination) in his nature, and so it is eternal.

2. It is founded formally in his relation of Governor.

3. It is expressively first in his laws: For as a Just Governor he made them suited to the subjects, objects and ends.

4. It is expressively secondarily in his judgments and

executions; which is when they are according to his law; or in the cases of penalty where he may dispense at least according to the state of the subject, and fitted to the ends of government.

1. The Justice of God is the consolation of the just: He will justify them whom his Gospel justifieth, because he is Just. The Justice of God in many places of Scripture, is taken for his fidelity in vindicating his people, and his judging for them, and procuring them the happy fruits of his government, and so is taken in a consolatory sense. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." (Psal. lxxxix. 14.) "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble us, and rest to the troubled." (2 Thess. i. 5, 6.)

2. The Justice of God is the terror of the ungodly. As he would not make unrighteous laws, for the pleasure of unrighteous men, so neither will he pass unrighteous judgment. But look what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. All his peremptory threatenings shall be made good, and his wrath poured out for ever upon impenitent souls, because he is the Righteous God.

#### CHAP. XVIII.

17. Another of God's attributes is his Holiness. He is called Holy. 1. As he is transcendently above and separated from all the creatures, in comparison of whom the heavens are not clean; and from whom all things stand at an infinite distance. 2. As the perfection of his nature is the fountain of all moral good. 1. In the holiness of his law, the rule of holiness. 2. In the holiness of the soul; and 3. In his holy judgments. And consequently as this perfect nature is contrary to all the moral pollution of the creature, loathing iniquity, forbidding and condemning it. That perfect goodness of the will of God, from whence floweth holy laws, and motions, and the holiness of the soul of man, is it that Scripture meaneth usually by God's Holiness; rather than the aforesaid distance from the creatures. And therefore his Holiness is usually given as the reason of his laws and judgments, and of his enmity to sin: And our holiness is called his image (who imitate not his transcendency), and we are commanded to be "Holy as he is Holy." (1 Peter i.

16.) The nature of the image will best tell us what Holiness is in God. Holiness in us is called "the Divine Nature," (2 Peter i. 4,) and therefore is radically a right inclination and disposition of the soul; which hath its rise from transcendent Holiness in God, even as our wisdom from his transcendent wisdom, and our being from his being. Holiness therefore being indeed the same with the transcendently moral goodness of God, which I have spoken of before, I shall say but little of it now. Thus must the Holiness of God be known.

1. It must cause us to have a most high and honourable esteem of holiness in the creature, because it is the image of the Holiness of God. Three sorts of creatures have a derivative holiness: The first is the law; which is the mere signification of the wise and Holy Will of God concerning man's duty, with rewards and penalties, for the holy governing of the world! This is the nearest image of God, engraven upon that seal which must be the instrument of imprinting it in our souls. Now the holiness of the word is not the mere product of the will of God, considered as a will; but of the will of God considered as Holy, that is, as the infinite transcendent moral goodness in the Archetype or Original. For all events that proceed from God, are the products of his will which is Holy, but not as holy as the creating, preserving, disposing of every fly, or fish in the sea, or worm in the earth, &c. There is somewhat therefore in the nature of God, which is the perfection of his will, and is called Holiness, which the holiness of the law doth flow from and express.

This Holy Word is the immortal seed that begetteth holiness in the soul, which is the second subject of derived holiness: And this our holiness is a conformity of the soul to the law, as the product of the Holy Will of God, and not a mere conformity to his predictions, and decreeing will as such. It is a separation to God, but not every separation: Pharaoh was set apart to be the passive monument of the honour of God's name: and Cyrus was his servant to restore his people, and yet not thus holy. But it is a separation from common and unclean uses; and a purgation from polluting vice, and a renovation by reception of the image of God's Holiness, whose nature is to incline the soul to God, and devote it wholly to him; both in justice, because we

are his own, and in love, because he is most Holy and perfectly good.

The third subject of Holiness is those creatures that are but separated to holy uses, and these have but a relative holiness, and 'secundum quid:' As the temple, the holy utensils, the Bible as to the materials, the minister as an officer, the people as visible members, &c.

All these must be revered and honoured by us according to the proportion of their holiness. 1. Our principal reverence must be to the Holy Word of God; for holiness is more perfect there than in our souls. The Holiness of the Word, which is it that the ungodly hate or quarrel at, is the glory of it in the eyes of holy men. We may much discern a holy and an unholy soul, by their loving or not loving a holy law; especially as it is a rule to themselves. A distaste of the holiness of Scripture, and of the holiness of the writings of divines, and of the holiness of their preaching or conference, discovereth an unholy soul. A love to holy doctrine sheweth that there is somewhat suitable to it in the soul that loveth it. It is the elogy of the Scriptures, the promises, the covenant, the prophets and apostles, that they are all holy. (Rom. i. 2; Psal. cv. 42; Luke i. 70. 72; Rev. xviii. 20; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Rom. vii. 12.) The holiness of the Scripture doth make it as suitable and savoury to a holy soul, as light is suitable to the eyesight, and sweetness to the taste: and therefore it is to them as the honeycomb. But to the unholy it is a mystery, and as foolishness, and that which is contrary to their disposition, and they have an enmity to it: which makes a wonderful difference in their judging of the evidences of Scripture verity, and much facilitateth the work of faith in one sort, and strengtheneth unbelief in the other. Holy doctrine is the glass that sheweth us the holy face of God himself, and therefore must needs be most excellent to the saints.

2. And we must honour and love also the holiness of the saints; for they also bear the image of the Lord. Their holy affections, prayers, discourses, and conversations must be beautiful in our eyes: and we must take heed of those temptations, that either from personal injuries received from any, or from their blots or imperfections, or from their meanness in the world, or from the contempt, and reproach, and slanders of the ungodly, would draw us to think dishonour-

ably of their holiness. He that honoureth the Holy God will honour his image in his holy people. "In his eyes a vile person will be contemned, but he will honour them that fear the Lord." (Psal. xv. 4.) "The saints on earth are the excellent" in his eyes, and his "delight" in them. (Psal. xvi. 2, 3.) The breathings of divine love in the holy prayers, praises and speeches of the saints, and their reverent and holy mention of his name, are things that a holy soul doth sweetly relish, and take pleasure in, as we would do to hear an angel speak of the holy things of the invisible glory.

3. And relative holiness itself, though the lowest, must be honoured by us. Holy offices and persons in them must be revered for their relative holiness. Holy ordinances (which also participate of the law, as significative) must be reverently used. Due reverence must be given even to that which is lawfully by men devoted to a holy use, as are temples and utensils of worship, and the maintenance dedicated to the service of God. That which is holy, must not be devoted, (Prov. xx. 25,) nor used as we do things common and unclean.

2. God's Holiness must make us holy : we must fall in love with it, and wholly conform ourselves unto it. Every part of sanctifying grace must be entertained, and cherished, and excited, and used by us. Sin must be loathsome to us, because it is contrary to the Holiness of God. No toad or snake should seem to us so ugly. A dead carcase is an unpleasant sight, because it sheweth us a privation of natural life : But an unholy soul is incomparably a more loathsome, ghastly sight, because it sheweth us the privation of the life of holiness. No man can well know the odiousness of sin, and the misery and loathsomeness of the unholy soul, that knoweth not the Holiness of God. "Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, and say unto them, ye shall be holy ; for I the Lord your God am holy." (Lev. xix. 2.) "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xx. 7, 8.) "As he that hath called us is Holy, so must we be holy in all manner of conversation." (1 Peter i. 25.) It is "an holy calling wherewith we are called." (2 Tim. i. 9.) We are "sanctified to be a peculiar people to Christ." (Titus ii. 14.) "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (ver. 12.) We are made

"an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter ii. 5.) We must therefore "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service." (Rom. xii. 1, 2.) For we are "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame," (Ephes. i. 4,) and are redeemed and sanctified by Christ, "that we may be presented glorious, holy, and without blemish." (Ephes. v. 26, 27.) See therefore that you "follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) For "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see him." (Matt. v. 8.)

3. The Holiness of God, must be to us a standing unanswerable argument to shun all temptations that would draw us to be unholy, and to confound all the words of wicked men that are spoken against holiness. Remember but that God is Holy, and if thou like that which is spoken against God, thou art his enemy. Think on the prophecies of Enoch, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15.) "God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his holy name in vain;" much less that blasphemeth Holiness, which is the perfection of his blessed nature.

4. The Holiness of God must possess us with a sense of our uncleanness, and further our humiliation. When Isaiah heard the seraphims cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," (Isa. vi. 3,) he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." (verse 5.)

5. The Holiness of God must cause us to walk continually in his fear, and to take heed to all the affections of our souls, and even to the manner of our behaviour, when we come near to him in his holy worship. What suffered the Bethshemites for irreverent looking into the holy ark, (1 Sam. vi. 19,) and Uzzah but for touching it? And what a dreadful example is that of the two sons of Aaron, that were slain by a devouring fire from the Lord, for offering strange fire

which he commanded not. (Lev. x. 1, 2.) And Aaron was awed into silence by this account from God. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." (ver. 3.) Take heed lest irreverence, or deadness, or customary, heartless, wordy services, should be brought before a Holy God. Take heed of hypocritical, carnal worship. The Holy God will not be mocked with compliments and shows.

### CHAP. XIX.

18. The next attribute of God to be spoken of is, his Veracity, Truth, and Faithfulness. This is the result of his perfect wisdom, goodness and omnipotency: For because he is most wise and powerful, he cannot be necessitated to lie: And because he is most good, he will not lie. Though God speaketh by none but a *created voice*, and signifieth his will to us by men, that in themselves considered are defectible, yet what he maketh *his voice* shall speak truth; and what he chooseth to signify his will, shall truly signify it. He therefore condemneth lying in man, because it is contrary to his own veracity. For if any should say that God is under no law, and therefore is not bound to speak truth, or not deceive a prophet or apostle by his inspirations; I answer, that he hateth lying as contrary to his perfect nature, and is himself against it, and cannot possibly be guilty of it, because of his own perfection; and not because he is under a law. Lying comes from some imperfection, either of knowledge, power, or goodness, which can none of them befall the Lord. The goodness of the creature is a goodness of conformity to an obliging law; and the goodness of the law is a goodness of conformity to, and expressive of the good will of God. But the Goodness of God is a perfection of essence, the primitive goodness, which is the fountain, and standard, and end of all other good; and not a goodness of conformity to another.

And this attribute of God is of very great use to his servants. 1. From hence we must be resolved for duty, and for a holy, heavenly life: because the commands of God are serious, and his promises and threatenings true. If God were not true, who tells us of these great eternal things, then might we excuse ourselves from godliness, and justify the worldling in his sensual way: There is nothing of common

sense and reason that can be said against a holy life, by a man that denieth not the Truth of God or of his word. And to deny God's Truth, is most unreasonable of all. O sirs, when you read and hear of the wonderful weighty matters of the Scripture, of an endless life, and the way thereto; bethink you, if these things be true, "what manner of persons you should be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" (2 Peter iii. 11.) If the word be true, that telleth us of death and judgment, and heaven and hell, is it time for us to sin, to trifle, and live unready!

2. The Truth of God is the terror of his enemies. O happy men, if their unbelief could make void the threatenings of God, and doubting of them would make them false! and if their misery were as easily remedied as denied; and ended as easily as now forgotten! or forgotten hereafter as easily as now! But true and righteous is the Lord, and "from the beginning his word is true." (Psal. cxix. 16.) Not a word shall fall to the ground, nor a jot or tittle pass unfulfilled.

3. The Truth of God is the ground of faith, and the stay of our souls and the rock of all our confidence and comfort: A Christian did not differ from another man (unless in being somewhat more deluded) if God were not true. But this is the foundation of all our hopes, and the life of our religion, and all that we are as Christians, proceeds from this. Faith is animated by God's Veracity, and from thence all other graces flow, or are excited in us. O Christians, what a treasure is before your eyes, when you open the blessed Book of God! What life should it put into your confidence and comforts, to think that all these words are true! All those descriptions of the everlasting kingdom, and all those exceeding precious promises of this life, and that which is to come, and all the expressions of that exceeding love of God unto his servants, all these are the true sayings of God. "A faithful witness will not lie," (Prov. xiv. 5,) much less will the faithful God. "Eternal life is promised by God that cannot lie." (Titus i. 2.) "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set be-

fore us." (Heb. vi. 17, 18.) Let faith therefore live upon the truth of God, and let us be strengthened, and rejoice therein.

4. Abhor all doctrines which deny the truth and faithfulness of God, for they destroy the ground of Christian faith, of all divine faith, and all religion. The Veracity of God is the formal object of all divine faith: We believe God, because he cannot lie: If he can lie, and do lie, he is not credible. But you will say, Is there any that hold such odious doctrines? *Answ.* I like not the charging of persons with the consequences of their opinions which they discern not, but disclaim: God will not charge them with such consequences, who do their best to know the truth, and why should we? All men have some errors, whose consequences contradict some articles of faith. It is not the persons that I persuade you to dislike, but the doctrine. And the doctrine is never the less to be abhorred, because a wise or good man may hold that which doth infer it.

I shall now instance only in the Dominicans' predetermination. They that hold that it is necessary to the being of every circumstantiated act, natural and free, that God be the principal immediate physical efficient predetermining cause of it, do hold that he so causeth all the false speeches and writings, (as well as other sins) that ever were spoken or written in the world: not only as they are acts 'in genere,' but as these words in particular; as that he so predetermined the tongues of Ananias and Sapphira to say those very words which they said, rather than others: Now seeing it is apparent, 1. That God hath not a voice, but speaketh to us by a created voice, even by prophets and apostles, and that the Scripture was written by men. 2. And that God's Veracity, which is the formal object of our faith, consisteth in his not using lying instruments, nor sending a lying messenger to us; (it is 'Veracitas revelantis per alium.') 3. And that no way of inspiration can make God to be any more the cause of the words or writings of an apostle, than his immediate physical efficient specifying predetermination doth (for it can do no more than irresistibly as the first cause, physically to premove the agent to his thought, will, word, or deed, considered with all its circumstances). It followeth that we have no certainty when God premoveth an apostle or prophet to speak true, and when to speak falsely; and that no words or writings are of certain truth upon any ac-

count of God's inspiration or premotion, because God not only can, but doth cause all the untruths that are spoken or written in the world: therefore no faith in God's revelations hath any sure foundation, nor any formal object at all: And so all religion is dashed out at a stroke. To say that God causeth not the falsity of the word, nor the word as false, but the word which is false, might well be the justification of them that affirm God to be but the universal cause of the word or act 'in genere,' as a word or act; and that the specification is only from the sinner. But in them that say he is the particular cause of this word comparatively, rather than another, it is but a contradiction: 1. For there is no other cause of the falsity, which is a mere relation, but that which causeth the rule and the word or writing which is false, and so layeth the foundation. 2. It overthroweth all certainty of faith, if God speak to us by his instruments, those words that are false: The 'quod falsum,' as well as the 'qua falsum,' leaveth us no ground of certainty. The Dominicans therefore have but one task in which their hope is placed, to excuse their opinion from plain obliterating all divine belief and religion, and that is, to prove that there is so great a difference between inspiration and their physical predetermination, that God cannot by inspiration premove to an untruth, though by physical predetermination he may: This is their task, which I see not the least possibility that ever they should perform. If God premove, and predetermine every will, and tongue, and pen, to every lie that is spoken or written, more potently and irresistibly than I move my pen in writing, it is past my power to understand what more he can do by inspiration, to interest him in the creature's act: or at least how the difference can be so great as that one of the ways he can predetermine all men to their falsities, and none the other way. But of this I have written a large disputation; yet think it not needless, even in a practical treatise to say thus much here.

5. The Truth of God much teach us to hate every motion to unbelief in ourselves and others: It is a heinous sin to give God the lie, though he speak to us but by his messengers. Every honest man, so far as he is honest, is to be believed; and is God less true? A graceless gallant will challenge you to the field for the dishonour, if you give him

the lie. If you deny God's veracity, you do not only equal him with the worst of men, but with the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. Yea, you may make him incapable of being the Governor of the World, or suppose him to govern it by deceits and lies. Abhor therefore the first motions of unbelief: it makes men somewhat worse than devils; for the devils know that God cannot lie, and therefore they believe and tremble. Unbelief of the truth of the word of God, is the curse of the soul; the enemy and bane of all grace and religion, so far as it prevaieth: Let it be the principal care and labour of your souls, to settle the foundation of your faith aright, and to discern the evidence of Divine authority in the holy Scriptures, and to extirpate the remnants of infidelity in your hearts.

6. Let the Truth and Faithfulness of God engage you to be true and faithful to him, and to each other. You have promised him to be his servants; be faithful in your promises: You are in covenant with him; break not your covenant. Many a particular promise of reformation you have made to God: Prove not false to him that is true to you.

Be as good as your word to all men that you have to do with. Abhor a lie, as the offspring of the devil, who is the father of it: Remember you serve a God of Truth: and that it is the rectitude and glory of his servants to be conformable to him. They say the Turks are offended at Christianity, because of the lies and falsehood of Christians. But sure they were but nominal Christians, and no true Christians that ever they found such: And it is pity that Christianity should be judged of through the world, by the lives of them that never were Christians but from the teeth outward, and the skin that was washed in baptism. They that will lie to God, and covenant to be his holy servants, when they hate his holy service, will lie to man, when their commodity requireth it. When they seem to repent, and honour him with their tongues; "They flatter him with their mouth, and lie to him with their tongues; for their heart is not right with him, neither are they steadfast in his covenant." (Psal. lxxviii. 34—37.) God saith, "Ye shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie one to another." (Lev. xix. 11.) "A righteous man hateth lying." (Prov. xiii. 5.) "The lying tongue is but for a moment, (Prov. xii. 19.)

“for God hateth it, and it is an abomination to him.” (Prov. xvi. 16, 17.) “The lovers and makers of lies are shut out of the kingdom of Christ.” (Rev. xxii. 15.)

But above all, false teachers that preach and prophesy lies, and deceive the rulers and people of the earth, are abominable to God: see Jer. xxvii. 10. 14—16; xiv. 14. 23, 25, 26. 32; Ezek. xiii. 9. 12; Isa. liv. 13. When Abab was to be destroyed, a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets deceived him. And “if a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.” (Prov. xxix. 2.)

7. Above all, false witness and perjury should be most odious to the servants of the God of Truth. “A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.” (Prov. xix. 9.) “When thou vowest a vow to God, defer not to pay it.” (Eccles. v. 4, 5.) Saith David, “Thy vows are upon me, O God.” (Psal. lvi. 12.) And “unto thee shall the vow be performed.” (Psal. lxxv. 1.) Perjury is a sin that seldom escapeth vengeance, even in this life. The instances of Saul the first, and Zedekiah the last of the kings of Judah, before the desolation, are both very terrible. Saul’s posterity must be hanged, to stay the famine that came upon the people for his breaking a vow that was made by Joshua, and not by him, though he did it in zeal for Israel. (2 Sam. xxi.) Zedekiah’s case you may see, 2 Chron. xxvi; Ezek. xvii. He that sweareth, appealeth to God as the Searcher of Hearts and Avenger of Perjury. The perjured person chooseth the vengeance of God. He is unfit (till he repent) to be a member of any civil society. For he dissolveth the bond of all societies. He cannot well be supposed to make conscience of any sin or villany in the world, against God, his country, his king, his friend or neighbour, that makes no conscience of an oath. It is not easy to name a greater wickedness out of hell, than to approve of perjury by laws or doctrine. And whether the church of Rome do so or not, I only desire them to consider that have read the third canon of the Council at Lateran under pope Innocent the third, where an approved General Council decreeth, ‘That the pope discharge vassals from their allegiance or fidelity to those temporal lords that exterminate not heretics (as they call them) out of their dominions.’ What shall restrain men from killing kings, or any villany, if once the bond of oaths be nullified? But Scrip-

ture saith, "Keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God." (Eccles. viii. 2.) No man defendeth perjury by name: But to say that men that swear to do that which God commandeth, or forbids not, are not bound to keep that oath; or that the pope may absolve men, or disoblige them that swore fidelity to temporal lords, when once the pope hath excommunicated them, doth seem to me of the same importance.

## CHAP. XX.

19. The next attribute to be spoken of is, his Mercifulness, and his Longsuffering Patience, which we may set together. This is implied in his Goodness, and the relation of a Father before expressed. Mercy is God's goodness inclining him to prevent or remove his creature's misery. It is not only the miserable that are the objects of it, but also those that may be miserable; it being as truly mercy to keep us out of it foreseen, as to deliver us out of it when we were in it. Hence it is that he "taketh not pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he may turn and live." And hence it is that he "afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men." (Lam. iii. 33.) Not that his mercy engageth him to do all that he can do for the salvation of every sinner, or absolutely to prevent or heal his misery; but it is his attribute chiefly considered as Governor of the rational creature; and so his mercy is so great to all, that he will destroy none but for their wilful sin, and shut none among us out of heaven, but those that were guilty of contemning it. God doth not prevent the sinner with his judgment, but with his grace he often doth. He never punisheth before we are sinners, nor never decreed so to do, as all will grant. He punisheth none, where his foregoing commands and warnings have had their due effect for the prevention: and therefore because the precept is the first part of his law, and the threatening is but subservient to that, and the first intent of a governor is to procure obedience, and punishing is but upon supposition that he misseth of the first, therefore is God not to afflict willingly; because he doth it not, 'ex voluntate antecedente,' but 'ex voluntate consequente,' that is (for so the distinction is sound) not as a lawgiver, and ruler by those laws considered before the violation; but only as a judge of the lawbreakers. But yet God's mercy is no security to the

abusers of his mercy. But rather will sink them into deeper misery, as the aggravation of their sin: As God afflicts not willingly, and yet we feel that he afflicteth: so if he do not condemn you willingly, you shall find if you are impenitent, that he will condemn you.

If you say, God can be forced to do nothing against his will: I answer you, that it is not simply against his will; for then it should never come to pass: but it is against the principal act of his will, which floweth from him as a lawgiver, or ruler by laws, in which respect it may be said, that he had "rather that the wicked turn and live:" but yet if they will not turn, they shall not live. A merciful judge had rather the thief had saved his life by forbearing to steal; but yet he had not rather that thieves go unpunished than he should condemn them.

1. The mercy of God should lead sinners to repentance, and shame them from their sin, and lead them up to God in love.

2. Mercy should encourage sinners to repent, as well as engage them to it: for we have to do with a merciful God, that hath not shut up any among us in despair, nor forbid them to come in, but continueth to invite when we have oft refused, and will undoubtedly pardon and welcome all that do return.

3. Mercy being specially the portion of the saints, must keep them in thankfulness, love and comfort: and all mercies must be improved for their proper ends. When a merciful God is pleased to fill up his servants' lives with such great and various mercies as he doth, it should breed a continual sweetness upon their hearts, and cause them to study the most grateful retribution. He should breathe forth nothing but thankfulness, obedience and praise, who breathes nothing but mercies from God. As the food that men live upon, will be seen in their temperature, health and strength; so they that live continually upon mercies, should be wholly turned into love and thankfulness: it should become as it were their nature, temperature and constitution. O how unspeakable is the love of God, that provideth so sweet a life for his servants, even in their warfare and pilgrimage in this world! that mercy must be as it were the air that they breathe in, the food which they must live upon; and the remembrance, improvement and thankful mention of it, must be the business and employment of their lives! O with

what sweet affections, meditations and expressions should we live, if we lived but according to the rate of those mercies upon which we live! Love, and joy, and thanks, and praise, would be our very lives. What sweet thoughts would mercy breed and feed in our minds when we are alone! What sweet apprehensions of the love of God, and life eternal, should we have in prayer, reading, sacraments, and other holy ordinances! Sickness and health, poverty and wealth, death as well as life would be comfortable to us: for all is full of mercy to the vessels of mercy. O Christians, what a shame is it that God is so much wronged, and ourselves so much defrauded of our peace and joy, by passing over such abundance of great invaluable mercies, without tasting their sweetness, or well considering what we do receive! Had we David's heart, what songs of praise would Mercy teach us to indite! How affectionately should we recount the mercies of our youth and riper age; of every place and state that we have lived in to the honour of our gracious Lord, and the encouragement of those that know not how good and merciful he is.

But withal, see that you condemn not, or abuse not mercy: use it well; for it is mercy that you must trust to in the hour of your distresses. O do not trample upon mercy now, lest you should be confounded when you should cry for mercy in your extremity!

4. The Mercifulness of God, must cause his servants to imitate him in love and mercy: "Be merciful, for your heavenly Father is merciful. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. v. 7.) Be merciful in your censures: Be merciful in your retributions: You are none of God's children, if you "love not your enemies, and pray not for them that curse you, and do not good to them that hate and persecute you" (according to your power). (Matt. v. 44, 45.) "If you forgive not men their trespasses," but take your brother by the throat, "neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses." (Matt. vi. 14, 15.) Mark, that even while he is called "your heavenly Father," yet he will not forgive, if you forgive not. Unmerciful men are too unlike to God, to claim any interest in his saving mercy, in the hour of their extremest misery. Men of cruelty, blood, and violence, he abhorreth: and usually they do not "live out half their days:" but they that "bite and

devour one another, are devoured one of another." (Gal. v. 15.) The last judgment will pass much according to men's works of mercy, to the members of Christ. (Matt. xxv.) "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy: and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." (James ii. 13.) "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James i. 27.) "He that having this world's goods, seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" But above all cruelty, there is none more devilish than cruelty to souls. And in those that undertake the place of pastors, cruelty to men's souls is a far greater sin than in any others. To starve those that they undertake to feed; and to seduce those whom they undertake to guide, and be wolves to those whose shepherds they pretend to be, and to prefer their worldly honours, and commodity, and ease, before the souls of many thousands, to be so cruel to souls, when Christ hath been so merciful to them, as to come down on earth to seek and save them, and to give his life a ransom for them; this will one day be so heavy a charge, that the man that must stand as guilty under it, will a thousand times wish, that a "millstone had been hanged about his neck, and he had been cast into the bottom of the sea," before he had betrayed or murdered souls, or offended one of the little ones of Christ. Be merciful to men's souls and bodies, as ever you would find mercy with a merciful God in the hour of your necessity and distress.

## CHAP. XXI.

20. The last of God's attributes which I shall now mention, is, his Dreadfulness or Terribleness, to those that are the objects of his wrath. This is the result of his other attributes, especially of his Holiness, and governing Justice, and Truth in his comminations. He is a "great and dreadful God." (Dan. ix. 4.) "A mighty God and terrible." (Deut. vii. 21.) "A great and terrible God," (Nah. i. 5.) "With God is terrible Majesty." (Job xxxvii. 22.) "The Lord most high is terrible." (Psal. xlvii. 22.)

1. His children therefore must be kept in a holy awe; God is never to be approached or mentioned, but with the

greatest reverence. We must "sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and he must be our fear and dread." (Isa. viii. 13.) Even they that "receive the unmoveable kingdom, must have grace in their hearts to serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, because our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. xii. 28, 29.) When we come to worship in the holy assemblies, we should think, as Jacob, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. xxviii. 17.) Especially when God seemeth to frown upon the soul, his servants must humble themselves before him, and deprecate his wrath, as Jeremiah did, "Be not a terror to me." (Jer. xvii. 17.) It ill becometh the best of men, to make light of the frowns and threatenings of God. Also when he dealeth with us in judgment, and we feel the smart of his chastisements, though we must remember that he is a Father, yet withal we must consider that he sheweth himself an offended Father: And therefore true and deep humiliation hath ever been the course of afflicted saints, to turn away the wrath of a terrible God.

2. But above all, what cause have the ungodly to tremble at the dreadfulnes of that God, who is engaged in justice, (except they be converted) to use them everlastingly as his unpardoned enemies. As there is no felicity like the favour of God; and no joy comparable to his children's joys; so there is no misery like the sense of his displeasure, nor any terrors to be compared to those, which his wrath inflicteth everlastingly on the ungodly. O wretched sinner! what hast thou done to make God thine enemy? what could hire thee to offend him by thy wilful sin? and to do that which thou knewest he forbid and condemned in his word? What madness caused thee to make a mock at sin and hell, and to play with the vengeance of the Almighty? What gain did hire thee to cast thy soul into the danger of damnation? Canst thou save by the match, if thou win the world and lose thy soul? Didst thou not know who it was thou hadst to do with? It had been better for thee that all the world had been offended with thee, even men and angels, great and small, than the most dreadful God! Didst thou not believe him, when he told thee how he was resolved to judge and punish the ungodly? Read it, 2Thess. ii. 7—10; ii. 10, 11; Matt. xxv; Jude 15; Psalm i. &c. What caused

thee to venture upon the consuming fire? Didst thou not know that he is merciful, so he is jealous, holy, just, and terrible? In the name of God, I require and entreat thee, fly to his mercy in Jesus Christ; and hearken speedily to his grace, and turn at his reproof and warning; to-day, while it is called to-day, harden not thy heart, but hear his voice, lest he resolve in his wrath, that thou shalt never enter into his rest; there is no enduring, there is no overcoming, there is no contending with an angry, dreadful, holy God: Repent therefore and turn to him, and obey the voice of mercy that thy soul may live.

3. The dreadfulfulness of God, doth tell both good and bad, the great necessity of a Mediator. What an unspeakable mercy is it that God hath given us his Son! and that by Jesus Christ we may come with boldness and confidence into the presence of the dreadful God, that else would have been to us a greater terror than all the world, yea than Satan himself. The more we are apprehensive of our distance from God, and of his terrible Majesty, and his more terrible justice against such sinners as we have been, the more we shall understand the mystery of redemption, and highly value the mediation of Christ.

4. Lastly, Let the dreadfulfulness of God prevail with every believing soul, to pity the ungodly that pity not themselves. O pray for them, O warn them, exhort them, entreat them, as men that know the terrors of the Lord. (2 Cor. v. 11.) If they knew, as well as you do, what sin is, and what it is to be children of wrath, and what it is to be unpardoned, unjustified, and unsanctified, they would pity themselves, and cry for mercy, mercy, mercy, from day to day, till they were recovered into a state of life, and turned from the power of Satan unto God. Alas! they know not what it is to die, and to see the world to come, and to appear before a dreadful God: They know not what it is to be in hell fire; nor what it is to be glorified in heaven: They never saw or tried these things, and they want the faith by which they must be foreseen by those that are yet short of nearer knowledge: You therefore that have faith to foreknow these things, and are enlightened by the Spirit of God, O pity, and warn, and help the miserable! Tell them how much easier it is to escape hell, than to endure it: and how much easier a holy life on earth is, than the endless wrath of the most

dreadful God. Tell them that unbelief, presumption, and security, are the certain means to bring their misery, but will do nothing to keep it off; though they may keep off the present knowledge and sense of it, which would have driven them to seek a cure. Tell them that death and judgment are at hand, and that when they laugh, or sport, or scorn, and jest at the displeasure of the dreadful God, it is posting toward them, and will be upon them before they are aware; and when they slumber, their damnation slumbereth not: but while unbelieving sinners say, peace, peace, sudden destruction will come upon them, as unexpected travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape. O tell them how dreadful a thing it is, for a soul that is unregenerate and unsanctified, to go from that body which it pampered and sold its salvation to please, and to appear at the tribunal of God; and how dreadful it is for such a soul to fall into the hands of the living God. At least save your own souls, by the faithful discharge of so great a duty; and if they will take no warning, let them at last remember, when it is too late, that they were told in time, what they should see and feel at last, and what their latter end would prove; and that God and man did warn them in compassion, though they perish because they would have no compassion or mercy upon themselves. Thus let the terrible-ness of God provoke you, to do your duty with speed and zeal, for the converting and saving of miserable souls.

And thus I have briefly set before you the glass in which you may see the Lord, and told you how he must be known: and how he must be conceived of in our apprehensions; and how the knowledge of God must be improved, and what impressions it must make upon the heart, and what effect it must have upon our lives. Blessed, and for ever blessed, are those souls, that have the true and lively image of this God, and all these his attributes imprinted on them, (as to the creature they are communicable). And O that the "veil were taken from our hearts, and that we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord," (2 Cor. iii. 18,) and may increase and live in the knowledge of the true and only God, and of Jesus Christ, which is eternal life. Amen.