SERMON IX.

THE DUTY OF LOVING OUR NEIGHBOUR ILLUSTRATED.

Mark xii. 31.—"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: there is none other commandment greater than these."

You have already been instructed in the first and great commandment, which is the love of God. The second is like unto it, and falls now to be considered: "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Our Saviour reduces the ten commandments into two, viz., the love of God, and the love of our neighbour; and Paul reduces them all into one, which is love, Rom. xiii. 10, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Gal. v. 14, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, which is this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If any say, how can the law be fulfilled in the love of our neighbour? is not the love of God the first and great commandment? I answer, the love of our neighbour here is not to be taken as separate from the love of God, but as included in it, or flowing from it; even as the effect flows from the cause. God, whom we see not, will be loved in our neighbour whom we see; he will have us manifest our love to him, by loving our neighbour for his sake. In the words we have, 1st, The duty enjoined, which is loving our neighbour. 2dly, The manner of this love, or how we are to love our neighbour, viz. as ourselves. 3dly, The resemblance betwixt this and the first and great commandment; "And the second is like," &c. What is further necessary
for explaining this division of the text, will cast up as we proceed upon the subject.

In discoursing upon it, I shall, First, Endeavour to state the true notion of our neighbour, or whom we are to understand here by neighbour. We learn from our Saviour's sermon on the mount, that the Jewish teachers had greatly corrupted the law, and particularly that they had corrupted the general commandment of the second table touching the love of our neighbour, Matt. v. 43, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy." The passage there referred to, is Lev. xix. 18. But there is not one word commanding or allowing us to hate our enemy; that was the addition of the corrupt Jewish teachers. They corrupted the text two ways, 1. By a misinterpretation of the word neighbour, confiningly restricting it to a friend or a relation. 2. By a false inference from it; that because a man must love his friend, therefore he must hate his enemy. For though our friends and relations, and those who live near to us, are our neighbours, yet in scripture, enemies are called neighbours. Thus the Egyptians are said to be neighbours to the Israelites, yet we all know that they were deadly enemies to them, Exod. xi. 2, "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman borrow of her neighbour, jewels of silver and jewels of gold." But these neighbours, of whom they borrowed, were the Egyptians. The Samaritan, as our Saviour teaches, was neighbour to the Jew who was in distress and wounded; yet were the Jews and Samaritans enemies to one another. Therefore, by neighbour here, we are to understand mankind at large; and so every man is our neighbour. And as an evidence hereof, it is proper to observe, that the Hebrew word for neighbour in the ninth commandment is the same with that in Lev. xix. 18. Now, neighbour in the ninth commandment is taken for mankind at large, and cannot possibly be taken otherwise, as it can never be lawful for us to bear false witness against any person. And in like manner the ob-
ject of the love enjoined here, is, every person partaking of the same human nature with ourselves. Not but that we may choose our friends among mankind, and love some more than others, but we must love them all, and hate none of them.

Having seen who is our neighbour, I proceed now in the second place, to explain the great duty enjoined towards our neighbour, viz. love. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." Now, that we may see this duty in its full latitude, I would consider it in a twofold view, First, To love our neighbour, is to do no harm to our neighbour. This is the lowest sense in which we can understand the precept. Secondly, To love our neighbour, is to do him all the kind and good offices we can.

First, To love our neighbour is to do him no harm. And in general, I call that a doing harm to our neighbour, when we do that to him which we would not have him to do to us, according to that notable maxim of our Saviour, Matt. vii. 12. Now the negative part of our duty towards our neighbour comprehends these things.

1st, We must not judge harshly or rashly of our neighbour, Matt. vii. 1. Rom. xiv. 4. James iv. 12. Surely, we would have others judge charitably of us, and are angry with them when they do otherwise: why then should we not do the same unto them? but this matter should be stated clearly, that we may not mistake, and call that rash judging which is sober and just. If I see one do a thing which is manifestly evil, charity does not oblige me to approve either of the deed or the doer: on the contrary, you must not suffer sin to lie upon your brother, but reprove him. Nor is it rash judging to pronounce those who are manifestly living in sin, to be in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity: for this is what ministers of the gospel declare every day. If I see a man living in direct contradiction to the laws of Jesus Christ, it is not rash judging to say, the love of God is not in that man: but it would be very rash judging to call such a one a reprobate, and beyond the reach of the grace of God. This would be a
stepping up to the throne of God, and attempting to open
the sealed books of his decrees, and to read out of them the
fates of our fellow-men. Rash judging is, for the most part,
occaisioned by people's different opinions and principles,
with respect to religious matters. Hence it prevails among
none so much as among professing Christians, though it is
a very great scandal to their profession. Many confine
their charity entirely to their own sect, and are extremely
harsh and cruel in their judging of others, who are in
reality better than themselves. They seem to think none
are going to heaven, but those who walk in a particular
path or lane which they have cut out. My brethren, I
wish never to approve of any thing, though in the most
eminent sect, that is contrary to the precept or example
of Jesus Christ. May my soul never come into the secret
of those who thrust the Searcher of hearts out of his office,
and take it upon themselves, judging of people's hearts,
and pronouncing them hypocrites, or sincere, according as
they affect them. The devil is the great pattern of this
practice, Job i. 10, 11.

2dly, We must not speak evil of our neighbour: so the
apostle James exhorts, "Speak not evil one of another,
brethren," James iv. 11. Some have a malicious pleasure
in tearing open the sores of their neighbours, and exposing
them to shame. They have not an eye to see, nor a heart
to acknowledge, anything that is good or commendable
about their neighbour; but if there is any blemish, they
are eagle-eyed to discern it: if there is any sore that
should be gently touched, there they tread, and upon that
they feed, like foul creatures upon ulcerous sores.

This is far from being the example of Jesus Christ: for
when he saw any thing commendable about any person,
he was sure to take notice of it, though otherwise they
were but nought. Of the young man that came to him,
mark what is said, "Jesus beholding him, loved him," see
Mark x. 21.

But is there any harm of speaking evil of our neighbour,
if we speak nothing but the truth? Ans. What we speak
of our neighbour must be consistent with love as well as with truth. Though we are to speak nothing but the truth, yet all the truth is not to be spoken at all times, or before every person. Though we speak nothing but the truth of our neighbour, yet, if we speak it from malice and ill-will, on purpose to defame and make him odious, we transgress the law of charity. Now, we may reduce evil speakers into, (1.) False accusers. These are mentioned in the black roll, 2 Tim. iii. 3. Under this character are comprehended, not only false libellers and false witnesses at law, who tease and torment innocent people with vexatious processes; but likewise a vile set of people, who, like their father the devil, are the common accusers of the brethren. Ishmael-like, their hand is against every man; rather than want a bad report of a person, they will make one out of their own heads, and lay things to the charge of their neighbours, which they know to be false. Such persons are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, and people in public character, as magistrates, ministers, &c. The malicious heart, and the lying tongue, attack every character, and poison every company and conversation where they get admittance, with something that tends to blast the good name and reputation of some one or other. You may shut your door against a thief, and defend yourself from a murderer; but who can screen himself from a false and lying tongue? (2.) Whisperers. These are mentioned in the black roll, Rom. i. 29. and downwards. These, in the Old Testament, are called talebearers, Lev. xix. 16, “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among the people.” The word rendered talebearer, signifies a pedlar, which fitly sets forth the character of such persons. The pedlar goes up and down the country offering his wares at every door, and never ceases travelling till he has sold them off: so the talebearer catcheth an evil report of a man at one house, and cannot rest till he is at some other house to tell it again. Now observe how contrary this is to the character of a citizen of Zion, who taketh not up an evil report against his neighbour. He not only will
not make up a false report against his neighbour, but when it is made up to his hand, and laid down at his foot, he will not take it up and send it about as the talebearer does. People of this character raise great commotions in families and in neighbourhoods; and they are the more dangerous, that they do things secretly and under hand, and oftentimes on pretence of friendship. Solomon says, "a whisperer separateth chief friends;" and that "the words of a talebearer are as wounds, and go down to the innermost parts of the belly," Prov. xvi. 28. He that takes away a man’s good name, kills him alive, and buries him as it were in the open sepulchre of his own throat.

Moreover, my brethren, as we commonly say, were there no resetters there would be no thieves: so if there were no receivers of evil reports, there would be no rehearsers of them. If you love your neighbour, you will not entertain the malicious whisperer, nor seem pleased at the tale he tells you. David says, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight," Psal. ci. 7.

(3.) Backbiters. These are mentioned along with the whisperers in the black roll, Rom. i. towards the close, and do the same evil to their neighbour's good name, openly, that the whisperers do privately and underhand. At meals and in public companies, they rail at others, either by diminishing and obscuring any thing that is commendable about them, or by aggravating and magnifying, out of all measure, their faults and failings. Thus the head of John the Baptist is oftentimes brought in upon a charger, at the feasts and combinations of malicious backbiters: when they are merry at wine and good cheer, then, to be sure, religious people must be brought into the conversation, as Samson was brought in to the Philistines to make sport to them. The Psalmist complains, that he was made the song of the drunkard.

3dly, We must not defraud, supplant or undermine our neighbour, 1 Thes. iv. 6, "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter." It is strange to con-
sider how differently things stand rated in the word and in the world. In the world, he is reckoned the best man that sees best to his own affairs, right or wrong. To impose upon a neighbour's ignorance or necessity, to overreach him in a bargain, to supplant and undermine him, if it be done with any thing of art or address, is so far from being reckoned a reproach, that they who do such things, boast and glory in them. But, let us appeal from the wicked world to the holy word of God, and see how such conduct is characterised there; and behold we shall find, that the deceitful, as well as the bloody man, is abhorred of the Lord: that false weights and measures, and every sort of false and double dealing, are an abomination to the Lord; and that they who do such things shall never inherit the kingdom of God.

4thly, We must not oppress our neighbour, nor by fraud or violence seize upon what belongs to him. Oppression is a sin that has a multitude of cries against it, and therefore will, sooner or later, be very terribly revenged. The word of God cries aloud against it, Hos. iv. 1, “For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.” Isa. v. 8, “Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no place, that they may be placed alone.” Jerem. ix. 4, “Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother.”

The oppressed cry against it, and the Lord has all along had an ear very ready to hear their cry. Israel, oppressed in Egypt, cries and groans, till at length the Lord heard their cries and groans, and avenged them of the oppressors. The tyrant who sunk them down with labour, was himself sunk like lead in the mighty waters. James v. 4, “Behold the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.” Acts vii. 34, “I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people, which is in Egypt,
and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them."

The world cries against it. The unbiassed, unprejudiced spectators of oppression, will cry out against it, though they have no religion, and will be ready to applaud the justice of God when it is executed upon the oppressors. "When the wicked perish there is shouting," says Solomon.

Conscience cries against it. Even the conscience of the oppressor himself; it often rises upon him with fearful challenges, and gives him many a fearful blow, when the world knows nothing about it. What a miserable night did Darius pass in his palace, after he had put Daniel into the den of lions!

Secondly, To love our neighbour, is to do him all the kind and good offices we can. As the cause is best known by its effects, and the tree by its fruits; so the love we owe to our neighbour will be best understood by descending on some of its fruits and effects, which I call the duties and offices of love; and they are these following,

1st, Praying for them, 1 Tim. ii. 1, "I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all men." The expression, first of all, not only says, that prayer is a principal part of worship, but perhaps it may intimate, that the concerns of God and Christ in the world should be the first, and not the last part of our prayers, as they commonly are. The order of the petitions in the Lord's prayer, I think, plainly teaches this, though the most part do not advert to it. The first three petitions are for the public interests of Christ in the world; "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;" and then follows the petitions with respect to our own particular concerns. This likewise seems to have been the mind of the famous Westminster divines, compilers of our Confession, in their directory for public worship annexed thereto, which you may consult at your leisure.

The prayers of saints are the church's common stock, of which every member does partake; and those who love
God, and mankind for God's sake, will pray for the conversion of the ignorant and wicked world; for by this means God would be glorified, and immortal souls saved from eternal ruin. If the effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man avails much, certainly the joint prayers and supplications of many righteous ones would avail more. Let us, therefore, in our addresses at a throne of grace, mind others as well as ourselves: let us mind not only our fellow Christians, but also our fellow men. Some have observed, that in seeking for others, they have obtained liberally for themselves.

2dly, We must forgive them injuries and offences which they have done against us. Therefore our Lord says, Mark xi. 25, 26, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." It is accounted a great spirit in the world to be irritable, and immediately in a flame upon the least provocation: but if we would measure greatness of spirit by the scripture, we shall find it is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression; and he was a king who said so.

Man is naturally a proud and revengeful creature, very ready to offer injuries to others, very unfit to bear any offered unto himself; "But dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," Rom. xii. 19. God bears a thousand times more at our hands, than we have to bear at the hands of any of our fellow creatures; yet for his Son's sake, he both forgives and forgets our numberless provocations. And how can those be thought to share of this forgiveness, who will neither forgive nor forget the injuries they receive from their neighbours, or those who pretend to forgive injuries, but at the same time will not forget them! Surely God commands us to forgive injuries, when he forbids us to harbour malice and ill will against our neighbour, and he has set us an example herein, in that he forgets the sins he forgives.
If it be asked, whether suing our neighbour at the law be consistent with that love and forgiveness we owe unto him? I answer with the apostle, that the law is good if a man use it lawfully. Medicine is good on some occasions and in some circumstances; and in others, you know, it may be as pernicious: so it is with the law. And I judge, that lawsuits or processes are not inconsistent with Christianity, or with the particular duty I am recommending, if the following things be duly observed.

1. That they be not commenced for trifles. It argues a litigious, wicked and selfish disposition, to be making court pleas and requiring oaths for every little petty trifle that will not bear its own expense.

2. That they be not commenced, but upon a just and righteous cause. Much unrighteous gain has been made under the colour of law and justice, when neither the law nor the judge could be blamed, but the party pursuers and defenders.

3. That we offer peace, and to compound the matter, before we go to law. He who loves his neighbour as himself, will propose terms of agreement, or submit the matter to the arbitration of neutral persons rather than go to law. And if none of these is yielded to, he does not forfeit the character of a peaceably disposed man though he should take the benefit of the law.

4. That we do not harbour malice and revenge against such as we are obliged to go to law with.

3dly, We must honour them: for so the apostle exhorts, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Besides the honour due to those in authority over us, or that are any how exalted above us, there is an honour due unto all men, or to human nature, as it subsists in every individual of the species, let them be never so mean and unprofitable in society. Nay, suppose them to be bad men, we are still to respect them as men: for any thing we know they may be elect vessels; they may be among those for whom Christ died, and in some particulars, they may be better than we.

The Jews, we are told, would not willingly tread on the
smallest piece of paper in their way, but take it up, lest the name of God should be on it. Whatever superstition was in this usage, apply it unto men, and it is solid religion; trample on no man, as thou knowest not but a work of grace may be there: yea, suppose it evident that hither-to there has been no such work, yet thou knowest not what God designs to work there.

4thly, We must put the most favourable constructions on their words and actions that they will bear. The charity the apostle so strongly recommends, has this property among many others, that "it thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. xiii. 5. Some are such sons of Belial, that one knows not how to speak to them; they take everything that is said or done, in the very worst sense, being jealous and suspicious of every body: but he who loves his neighbour as himself, thinks well of his fellow men, and is willing to impute any wrong they do him, to inadvertency and mistake, rather than to design: he makes suitable allowances for men's natural temper, their constitution, education, calling and customs. And indeed, if we would learn to make these allowances one to another, we should live in far more peace, love and charity than we do.

But it argues a strange malignity of spirit to take every thing in the worst sense; that when your neighbour's conduct may be favourably construed, then you will be at pains to put a blot upon it, and expose him.

5thly, We must relieve their necessities as occasion offers. For as the apostle James says, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?" James ii. 15, 16. Now the general rules for charity may be reduced to three. (1.) Our neighbour's necessity. "Distributing to the necessity of the saints," Rom. xii. 13. The necessity of some is great, the necessity of others is extreme: some need more, others less. Christian prudence must judge in those cases, and make a difference. (2.) God's oppor-
tunity, by which I mean the occasions and opportunities which God in the course of his providence lays before us, for relieving our fellow men in want or misery. The apostle speaks of this, Gal. vi. 10. So long as the world is filled with so much misery and distress, we cannot miss frequent providential calls to sympathy with and relieving our fellow men. (3.) Our own ability, 2 Cor. viii. 12, "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." God has placed people in different stations and characters in life. Those that are rich in this world, are charged to be rich in good works, and ready to distribute to the necessity of their neighbours. Those in lower circumstances are not exempted from deeds of charity; but must give, according as God has blessed and prospered them in worldly things.

6thly, We must warn, admonish and reprove, in reference to sin. We must warn one another of snares in the way, as fellow travellers towards Zion; and we must admonish and reprove our brother and neighbour, and not suffer sin to lie upon him, Lev. xix. 17. True indeed, much wisdom and discretion are requisite to the right administration of reproof. The different tempers, education, callings and stations of men are to be considered, and proper allowances made for them. The proper times and seasons for such duties ought likewise to be observed; for if these circumstances are not attended to, the reproof, however well intended by the person who gives it, comes to be an act of very great indiscretion, and it has no good effect upon the person to whom it is given. If we saw men running upon a precipice, common humanity would teach us to warn them of their danger: so, when we see men living without God in the world, walking in the broad way that leads to destruction, if we have any bowels of mercy, as the elect of God, we will warn our fellow men, our kindred souls, that they bethink themselves, and turn from the evil of their ways, lest they come to the place of torment.
Lastly, Whatsoever we would that men should do to us, let us do the same to them. This is an admirable maxim, and would make neighbourhood most comfortable, were it duly observed. Put thyself in your neighbour's circumstances, and then what you would wish him to do to you, do you the same to him; and what you would complain of as an injury from him, be sure not to offer it unto him.

I am next to consider the manner of this love; we are to love our neighbour as ourself. Now, this is not to be understood, as if we were to love our neighbour with the same degree of love that we love ourselves: for this would be impossible. But the analogy betwixt the love we owe to our neighbour, and that which we bear to ourselves, seems to stand in two things.

(1.) We must love our neighbour, with the same sincerity that we love ourselves. There is a principle of self-love and self-preservation in every creature, much more in rational creatures, as man is. In the exercise of this principle we are naturally very sincere and serious; every man most sincerely wishes all happiness to himself, though, alas! mankind often mistake happiness, or the means which lead thereunto. Now, our love to our neighbour must be like that to ourselves in point of sincerity, according to the apostle's exhortation, Rom. xii. 9, and 1 John iii. 18, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." Say not to your indigent neighbour, be you warmed and be you filled, and yet not give unto him the things that are needful for the body: this is a piece of cruel hypocrisy; yet how many are guilty of it, of whom better things might be expected! They can lament the case of distressed neighbours in very pathetic strains, and express the strongest wishes to have them in better circumstances; yet they never contribute any thing towards it, though it be in their power. Their charity is a labour of the lip only, not a labour of good deeds: they can spare a few words, but not a few pence.

(2.) We must love our neighbour, with the same constancy that we love ourselves. We always love ourselves,
and we should always love our neighbour. Christ's love is constant. John iii. 1, "Jesus having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them to the end." Our love, in imitation of his, should be constant; and we should likewise continue in all the proper expressions and offices of love, and not weary in well doing, even though we meet with very ungrateful returns from men: for if we act from a right principle, we shall in nowise lose our reward.

In the last place, let us view the importance of this second commandment, in that it is said to be like unto the first. And it is so,

1st, In respect to the authority of it. It has the same sanction with the first. God has interposed the very same authority for the love of our brother whom we see, as for the love of himself whom we have not seen; and therefore neglecting the one, as well as the other, implies a contempt of his legislative authority. It is said in the preface to the commands, "God spake all these words." He did not speak the first and second commandment from his own mouth, and the rest by a substitution; but he spake all and every one of them; so that they have all the same authority.

2dly, In respect to the comprehensiveness of it. As the love of God includes all the first table duties, or all that service we owe to God; so the love of our neighbour comprehends all the duties of the second table. Hence the apostle says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 8, and Gal. v. 14, "All the law is fulfilled in one word, which is this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

3dly, In respect to the reward of it. The reward of both is a reward of grace and not of debt. There is a reward in both: the work is its own reward, according to the Psalmist's observation, Psal. xix. 11. And there is a reward for both, even eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4thly, In respect to the difficulty of it. People think it a natural and easy thing to love God. Who would not love him, say they. But unless the principle of love be im-
planted in us by the Spirit, we neither can nor will love him. The same may be said of the love of our neighbour: we will never love mankind from a right principle, and in a way acceptable to God, until it be freely given us of God.

And now, I shall shut up this subject in some practical improvement. This doctrine reaches reproof to several sorts of persons.

First, To selfish souls, who confine all their love, care and concern to themselves. They make themselves the centre, and all things else the circumference: if it be well with themselves, they care not who it go ill with: they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, nor for the afflictions of any in the world besides themselves. Persons of this character are ranked among the filthy vermin the apostle says should creep out in the latter days; yea, they are placed in the very front of them, 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2. No man is born for himself, either in the natural or spiritual birth; for God hath made men in society, with a mutual connexion and dependence on one another: therefore a selfish man is the very bane of society, as well as the reproach of Christianity: he deserves not a place in the world, much less in the church.

Secondly, To those who harbour malice and revenge in their hearts against their neighbour; Eph. iv. 31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Malice is one of the most vile and barbarous passions in human nature. Were I to describe it, I would take the model from the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, making it in every thing the opposite of charity; and then I would say, malice suffereth nothing, is most unkind, most envious, vaunteth itself, and is puffed up, behaves itself most unseemly, seeks its own always, is easily provoked, thinketh all evil, rejoiceth not in the truth, but in iniquity, beareth nothing, believeth nothing, hopeth nothing, and endureth nothing. Is not this a monstrous picture! yet how many harbour this ugly serpent in their breasts, nights, and days, and months, and years? Instead of letting one sun, they can
let many years of suns go down upon their wrath; and when opportunity offers of revenging themselves, they can do it with as much keenness and cruelty, as they could have done the day they received the provocation. Of such persons I would say, as Jacob to Simeon and Levi: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel."

**Thirdly, To those who envy their neighbours for everything they possess better than themselves.** James iv. 5, "The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy." Some think nothing good enough for themselves, and any thing too good for their neighbours, and so they always look upon them with an invidious eye. My brethren, purge out this as a piece of the old leaven; allow the great God to distribute his favours unto others in what manner and measure he pleases, without grudging or repining. If you have the love of God in you, you will likewise have a right and charitable frame of spirit towards your neighbour and all that is his. The mischief of envy is exceeding great: it murdered righteous Abel; it sold Joseph into Egypt; and it delivered Jesus Christ into the hands of Pilate to be condemned to the cross.

**Fourthly, To those who rejoice at the calamities of their neighbours.** Some are of such a waspish malignant temper, that nothing gives them so much pleasure as to hear of evil befalling others. The breaking of their character, their credit, or their substance, is like oil to their bones; they take pleasure to hear it, and as great pleasure to rehearse it. Well Solomon says, "He who is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished."

**Fifthly, To those who, like the Jews, love their friends, but hate their enemies.** "If ye love them which love you, and do good to them which do good to you, what thank have you?" But Christ calls you to love your enemies, and return good for evil, blessing for cursing, and prayers
for persecution and spiteful usage. You have heard, that the neighbour in my text, is every one partaking of human nature: so that though you may love some more than others, yet you must love all, and bear hatred to none.

Let me exhort you, to love your neighbour as yourself. Love all mankind for God’s sake, and all the saints for Christ’s sake.

(1.) If you love not your neighbour, the love of God is not in you: “For he who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” Where there is no effect there is no cause: now the love of our neighbour is the certain effect of the love of God, which can never fail; therefore, where the former is not, the latter cannot be.

(2.) It is the end of the commandment, and the fulfilling of the law; so that while you neglect love, you do nothing to the purpose.

(3.) Consider the influence love would have to render society useful and comfortable. It is the want of it that fills the world with thefts, robberies, murders, adulteries, lies and perjuries, covetousness and oppression: so that good men are ready to cry out with the weeping prophet, “O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men, that I might leave my people and go from them: for they be all adulterers, and an assembly of treacherous men,” Jer. ix. 2. But were we united one to another in the bond of Christian love, we would look every man on the things of others; we would rejoice and weep with one another, and so the journey through the world would be much more easy and comfortable.