

THE DIVINE CALL TO LEAVE THE DEVIL'S FAMILY, EXPLAINED AND URGED.*

2 COR. vi. 17, 18.—*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

THE sacred feast before us the Lord makes for his own children in the lower house, and for them only. His children that are above need it not. The children of the devil, which all in a state of nature are, will not get the welcome of the Master of the feast to it, for he has made it only for those of his own family. But there is another family that bears the greatest bulk in the world, and that is Satan's: and all the world belongs to one of the two. The apostle tells us there can be no communion or agreement betwixt these two families, ver. 14, 15, 16. But God making up his family of such as are brought out of Satan's, the gospel is sent into the world to invite sinners to desert their natural father's house, promising them thereupon a kindly reception into the family of God, both which we have in the text. Wherein is,

1. The gospel-call to sinners. And that is to come out from among them, &c. And here is,

(1.) The substance of the duty, *Come out from among them.* This black society, which ye are called to come out of, is that of unbelievers, unrighteousness, darkness, idolaters, headed by Belial, the devil; that is, in a word, the world lying in wickedness; all the unconverted world, which the text and context represents as the devil's family, to which the family of God is opposed. To *come out from among them*, is to come out of your natural state, to renounce the devil, the world, and sin, and to come to Christ by faith. And that the text aims at no less than this, (though it is pertinently enough applied to renouncing external visible church-communion with idolaters), I think it is evident from this, that adoption into God's family is proposed and promised on compliance with this call, ver. 18. And let men separate as they will, till they make this holy separation, that they can never have.

(2.) The manner of the duty. [1.] Ye must come away freely, and for altogether: *Be ye separate.* A withdrawing for a time

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while the relation stands betwixt you and them, will not do; there must be a total separation, by going to the contrary side, and setting up in opposition to them: *Be ye separate*. Thus the apostle explains, Isa. lii. 11. whence this is taken. [2.] Ye must come away cleanly and honestly, taking up nothing of theirs to carry away with you, as Rachael did her father's images: *Touch not the unclean thing*. Thus God himself calls you away: *Saith the Lord*.

2. The gospel-offer and promise, on compliance with the call, *I will receive you*. I will take you in, viz. into my house and family; namely, as children by adoption, having left your natural Father, the devil. Compare ver. 18. which we explained before.

I observe from the words the following doctrine, viz.

Doct. 'The Lord calls to sinners to come freely and cleanly away out of the devil's family, promising thereupon to take them into his own family, as children of his house by adoption.'

Having at large explained the doctrine of the divine adoption from ver. 18. and applied it in the way of trial, I have chosen further to pursue that design, in a way of exhortation, in the words of this text. To prepare which for application, I shall only,

I. Shew you a few things implied in this call.

II. What this coming out from among them is.

I. I shall shew you a few things implied in this call.

1. Sinners naturally are of the devil's family, John viii. 44. Ye are in among them, else there were no need of coming out from among them. The family of Satan consists of devils, damned spirits of men, and all the unconverted world lying in wickedness; in a word, of all those that are not of the family of God. All these are under one head, the prince of devils. And accordingly, when time is at an end, they shall all be housed under one dreadful roof for ever, Matth. xxv. 41. O! unconverted sinner, thou art a son of the house of hell, (what ever blood run in thy veins), a prison-house, a dark house, a dreadfully miserable house, Matth. xxiii. 15. Never was a child liker a father than thou art like the devil. He is a fallen creature, lying in wickedness; his nature is enmity against God and his holy law; so art thou and thine. And though thou put a fair face on it by a form of godliness, that will not make thee unlike him, who can transform himself into an angel of light. So thou art among them.

2. It is possible thou may get out from among them. Satan has a great family, one part whereof he has in the lower house, in hell; these are devils and damned spirits. If once he get you down among them, ye cannot get out from among them again, but must abide among them for ever and ever. So this call has nothing ado

with that part of the devil's family; they are past hope. But there is another part of it in his upper house of this world, who as really belong to his family as the other, 2 Cor. iv. 4. with this difference, that as long as they are there, he is never quite sure of them, that as sons they shall abide in his house for ever. The elder brother of the family of heaven, the Lord of his Father's house, has his lower house in this same world, where Satan has his upper one; and he has his Father's commission to fill it out of Satan's family, those of them in his upper house. And for this cause he sends out his ambassadors, ministers, to call in the name of the Lord to them, as in the text, *Come out from among them, &c.* 'Forget thine own people, and thy Father's house,' Psal. xlv. 10. They must be in earnest with that part of the family, and give them no rest, because there is yet hope, Luke xiv. 23. and he has a Spirit that can draw them out effectually, that are farthest in, in the house.

3. Ye will not be carried away from among them against your will. Ye must come away voluntarily, setting down your own feet to make your escape, Psal. cx. 3. There is a generation that makes the doctrine of man's impotency too good a pillow for their sloth: they say they can do nothing, and they will do nothing. But if ye were willing to come away, ye would do something for that end; ye would stretch out the withered hand, ye would take the help of Christ's grace offered unto you, ye would take no rest till ye were got away.

4. Ye need not expect to get the good-will of your father, nor of the family, to the parting. The call is directed to you, without noticing them; for it is known, they will never let you go as long as they can hinder you. Therefore you must be resolute and peremptory, in spite of all opposition, to come away from among them, Mat. xi. 12. No sooner does one begin to stir out from among them, but he will raise the hue and cry after him. Hell's flatterings and threatenings are all plied to get them back again, and to lay aside their purpose. But ye must stop your ears to them all, and look not behind you, as Lot's wife did, Gen. xix. 17.

5. Ye must come out from among them, for good and all. *Be ye separate.* Come away wholly, come away for ever, Psal. xlv. 10. Come away, with a sincere purpose never to go back among them, Psal. lxxx. 18. Leave not your heart behind you. Remember Lot's wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt, for the rueful look she gave to what she had left in Sodom. They that come not away thus freely separating from them, they will not go far away, they will not go off the devil's ground: and they will go back again, if the communion were over.

6. *Lastly*, Take up nothing from among them, to bring along with you: *Touch not the unclean thing*. There are many who meaning to come out from among them, secure themselves in the devil's snare, and shut the door of the house of heaven on themselves, by the preparation they make for the journey.

(1.) They think they will need something in God's house for their hearts to feed upon. They think Christ's blood will do well enough for their consciences; but to get something to stop the mouths of their hungry hearts, that must have something to feed upon, they bring along with them some of the provision of the house they came from. [1.] Some of the dust they were wont to eat with the serpent: some lust or other, which they have sucked much sap and sweetness out of, and they know not how to live without it, more than Herod without his Herodias, or Judas without the bag, &c. But remember, if ye touch that unclean thing, God will not receive you. Leave it then behind you to the devil from whence it came; it is his proper food, Isa. lxv. ult. all the pleasure he has lies in such things. Say ye, 'I have behaved and quieted myself as a child, that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child,' Psal. cxxxi. 2. [2.] Some of the husks they were wont to eat with the swine, Luke xv. 16; the dry, sapless, foisonless world, that Satan used to dress up to them, as best suited their palate, in the pleasures, vanities, profits, and pomp of it. But touch not the unclean thing, Cant. iv. 8; and drop that unclean bulky vanity, and come away. There is no need of any such provision in our heavenly Father's house, that is abundantly provided with the product of the better country, Isa. lv. 2.

(2.) They think they will need something on them, suitable to the new house they are coming to, that they come not in among them like hand-beggars. And so they take up the garb of the house they come from, and bring it with them, even the filthy unclean garment of their own righteousness, the loathsome rags of the pretended good that is in them, or about them, to commend them to Christ. But O drop the nasty garment, and touch not that unclean thing, Isa. lxiv. 6. Come away naked and bare, and receive the blessing in the elder brother's clothes, or ye cannot have it. Seek nothing to commend you to him, but your utter misery, vileness and want of all things. The more you bring with you to commend you to him, the more securely ye shut his door on you.

II. The next head is to shew what this coming out from among them is. It is no local motion, but a spiritual motion of the soul; and I give it you briefly in three steps.

1. A hearty and unfeigned willingness to leave them, and to come

out from among them. This is the first step. And O what a deal of work is there, ere the sinner can be brought this length! No less than the power of grace is able to bring the soul to this, Psal. cx. 3. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' It is a dead grip the sinner takes of his father's house, and he will shift hither and thither ere he let go the grip. It is as death to him to think of parting with his dear lusts, that are to him as a right hand or eye, which neither promises nor threatenings can make him consent to part with, till grace loose the heart. Whosoever then has got the length of this, they have made the first step, which is the most difficult one.

2. An actual renouncing and giving up with that house, and all that belongs to it. The soul being willing to leave it, actually gives up with it, Job xxxiv. 32; renounces its natural relation to that society, their work, their way; resolving, come what will, to stay no longer there among them, it bids an eternal farewell to it. Though a Red Sea appear before such persons, which they know not how they will get through, they are peremptory they will not return to the spiritual Egypt, the house of their soul's bondage. This is the second step.

3. *Lastly*, A sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ by faith, in the marriage-covenant held forth in the gospel; whereby they take him for all, and instead of all, and give themselves to him, to be his only, wholly, and for ever, Cant. ii. 16. There is no interdependent state betwixt the two families, but the soul lifting the one foot, as it were sets down the other. It lets go the hold of its lusts and idols, by embracing of Jesus Christ, not only for a rest to the conscience, but a rest to the heart; and embracing Christ as the one pearl of great price, lets go all that it has. Thus the soul is united to Jesus Christ, and is come out from among them, as one that is married is from that moment no more of her father's house, but her husband's. So the soul, though in the midst of the world lying in wickedness, is no more of that society, but come out from among them, John xv. 19.

Now, the souls thus joined to Christ, are by him introduced to his Father's house and presence, and by him adopted as his children, as Jacob did the two sons of Joseph for his sake.

I shall not here stand to confirm the doctrine, since it is very plain from the text, and I confirmed the certainty of adoption into God's family, to those that comply with the gospel-call, the last day; but shall proceed to the application; which I make in the words of the text.

Wherefore, O sinners, *'Come forth from among them, and be ye se-*

parate,' &c. It is the Lord's call to you this day to come away freely and cleanly out of the devil's family, and the Lord will take you in. Hearken unto this,

1. Ye that have lived all your days at ease in Satan's family, never knew ye were there, and were never troubled how to get out of it. Open your eyes, and know your natural state; see yourselves children of the devil, and heirs of wrath, at length; and sleep no longer the sleep of death, but look about you; see your danger, and come out from among them, and be ye separate to-day.

2. Ye that sometimes have had an awakening, and seen yourselves undone, but have fallen asleep again, and look on that former fright as a dream. Know ye that it was most real, and represented your case to you as indeed it was, and yet is: and Satan it is, who to keep you still among them, deluded you to think that God's armies advancing against you were but the shadow of the mountains. Wherefore bestir yourselves, and come out from among them.

3. Ye apostates and backsliders, that sometimes seemed to make considerable advances in coming out, but now have gone back in among them, and fallen afresh to the entertainment, the work and manners of the house. Our Lord gives you a new call to come out from among them and go on your way again, Jer. iii. 22.

4. Ye that are halting, and in a doubt what to do, whether to come out from among them or not. Conscience is pressing you forward, and corruption drawing you back. Something tells you, 'To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Something else is saying, It is too soon, there will be time enough after this. Know this last is the language ye hear among them that seek the ruin of your souls. Take no heed to what they say, but resolutely come out from among them.

5. Ye that have been often aiming at coming, but never yet have come away freely and cleanly. Make a fair and cleanly separation now, *Touch not the unclean thing.* Give up with your natural father's house, and have no more to do with any thing that belongs to it. Let no beloved lust be spared. Leave not a hoof behind you, as being minded never to return.

6. *Lastly,* All that desire for Heaven or the favour of God, in time or eternity, come out from among them. And be still coming farther and farther from them, and nearer to Jesus Christ. I offer the following motives.

Mot. 1. It is a most miserable case to be among them, the true sight whereof may frighten one out of their society. Never could one that was in a den of lions, or beset with serpents, or enclosed with venomous creatures, be more desirous to be from among them,

than God's elect to be out of the world lying in wickedness, out of the devil's family, when once the Spirit of the Lord has opened their eyes to see clearly where they are, Luke xv. 17, 18. For,

1. There is not, and never will be, any peace with heaven among them. This is the apostle's argument in the text, ver. 14.—17. Sooner shall light and darkness agree, than the two families of heaven and hell. God has declared they are a society with whom he will have war for ever, Isa. lvii. ult. Some of the devil's family may be roaring on account of God's felt enmity against them, while others have a profound peace; but the one as well as the other stand for marks to the arrows of God's justice, Deut. xix. 19, 20. As long as thou art among them, thou art an enemy to God, and God is an enemy to thee, Rom. viii. 7. Luke xix. 27. Wilt thou be able to endure this? No; *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, &c.*

2. There is not, and never will be, any thing pure or clean among them. *Touch not the unclean thing*, i. e. Meddle not with any thing that belongs to them. For they, and all that is theirs, are unclean and loathsome in the sight of God, Tit. i. 15. As long as thou art among them, thy whole soul in all its faculties is utterly defiled, and so are all thy works, even the best of them; for thou canst do nothing but sin, canst do no good at all, Psal. xiv. 1. The opening of thy mouth to God in prayer or praise, is but like the opening of an unripe grave; all thy fair promises and engagements to duty, are but abominable deceit, Rom. iii. 13. The meddling with God's holy things, see what it is, Isa. lxvi. 3. 'He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man: he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood: he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol: yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.' For a child of the devil can never please God in any thing, till he come out from among them, and be separate, Heb. xi. 6.

3. There is nothing but rank poverty among them, nor ever will be, Rev. iii. 17. The best raiment among them to cover the soul's nakedness, is rags, filthy rags. And they must appear before God as their Judge; and that is all they have to hide their shame, and it will never do. The whole family is drowned in debt to the justice of God, and they have nothing wherewith to pay. Sin is the debt, and it will be exacted; and as long as ye are among them, ye cannot have a cautioner, for in the whole family there is not one that is able to answer for it. And there is no forgiveness of the debt, while ye remain among them, Acts iii. 19.

4. There is a cloud of wrath hangs above them continually, and abideth on them, and every one that is among them, John iii. ult.

While ye are among them, your state is a state of wrath, and ye are children of wrath. There is never a gleam of light or favour towards you, Psal. vii. 11. There is never one word of God speaks peace to you. While ye dwell among them, ye dwell under Mount Sinai, that fiery mountain where the curses of a broken law are flying about your ears. And though being asleep ye are secure, ye shall no sooner be awakened, than ye shall see the fearful lightnings, hear the thunders of wrath, and the voice of the trumpet, &c. Therefore I would say to you, as Dent. i. 6. 'Come out from among them; ye have dwelt too long in this mount.'

5. Death reigns among them. See where they sit, Matth. iv. 16. 'In the region and shadow of death.' The whole society are a parcel of condemned criminals, John iii. 18. that know not how soon the sentence shall be executed upon them; their father the devil ready to be the executioner; they are all in a dying condition, their souls have got their death's wounds, and they are pining away in their iniquity, while in the meantime their eyes are held that they cannot see the preciousness of the Physician. Nay, they are dead already in a spiritual sense; God, the life of the soul, is departed far from them. O! why will ye stay in the congregation of the dead? Come out from among them to the Lord of life.

6. *Lastly*, They are not to stay in this upper house of the world; they will all be down in the lower house together ere long. The devil's upper house is a throng house now; but the day comes that God will set it on fire about their ears, 2 Pet. iii. 10. And then the whole family shall go away together into the bottomless pit, and be all under one roof, so as not one shall remain behind. There are some dropping down to it daily; yet the rest remain secure; but it will not be always so. There was a dreadful cry at Dathan and Abiram's downgoing, Num. xvi. 34. What a cry will there be, when the whole family shall go down together? Rev. xx. ult. Therefore I would say to you, as Num. xvi. 26. 'Come out from among them; depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.'

Mot. 2. Come out from among them, and be ye separate; and the Lord will take you into his family, and that in the quality of sons and daughters. Ye have his word expressly for it in the text: and that has been the lot of all that came away before you, John i. 12. And that this may take with you, consider,

1. The glorious society ye shall be taken into, being taken as children into God's family by adoption. The apostle declares this at large, Heb. xii. 22,—24.

2. I might say much to the commendation of the Father of the family. He is the most honourable, loving, and helpful, and rich father, the wisest father, and he is an immortal father. His children shall never be fatherless; let all the world leave them, they shall have a father to take them up. And while they are under minority, they shall have the best attendants. The elder brother of the family is fairer than the sons of men; and he is of our nature, and will own us as of his flesh and of his bones, Eph. v. 30. And the most loving to his adopted brethren; he died for them while they were yet in the devil's family. And he can do all with his father, having the entire management of the house of heaven, John v. 22. He is a most compassionate and merciful High Priest. The Spirit of the family is a noble spirit, that will spirit you for the greatest achievements; a holy and sanctifying Spirit, that will make the vilest heart holy: a quickening Spirit, an enlightening Spirit. And all the children partake of this Spirit.

3. Ye shall have glorious privileges here; and, among the rest, establishment and perseverance in the family, John viii. 35. Come once in, and ye shall never be cast out.

4. *Lastly*, The full possession of your eternal inheritance in heaven, Matth. xxv. 34. He will give the kingdom to all his children, sons and daughters. Your elder brother will give you to sit on his throne.

Come out from among them, then, unto Jesus Christ, and so be entered into God's family by adoption. Seemeth it a small thing to you to be children of the house of heaven, to have God for your Father, and ye to be his sons and daughters. Believe this offer of the gospel, therefore, made to you, O children of the house of hell, and close with the offer of adoption into God's family, and receive the seal of it in the sacrament. I beseech you to accept it, nay, I charge you to come out from among them this day, and enter into God's family through Jesus Christ, under the pain of God's eternal displeasure. What ails you at it; the language of the hearts of many will be,

1. They do not like the laws of the house. They think it would be what would take away their liberty, and pent them up to intolerable bondage. *Ans.* No; Satan's service is slavery, and the worst of slavery. If ye continue in it, your chains will be ever on you; the chains of your lusts are rattling about you now, 2 Tim. ii. 26. and the chains of wrath will be rattling about you through eternity, Matth. xxii. 13. But those of God's family enjoy true liberty, John viii. 36. And their liberty shall be enlarged afterward, and be very glorious, Rom. viii. 21.

2. They like not the society of the house. They think it is but the peevish silly part of mankind, the scum of the world, that trouble themselves with these things. *Ans.* No; they are the excellent in the earth, Prov. xii. 26. David, a king, thought them so, Psal. xvi. 3. Why do ye despise them, but because they are of another spirit than the spirit of the devil's family? Remember, that 'not many wise men after the flesh are called,' &c. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. But I assure you the main quarrel and the ground of this is, ye like not the Father of the family, and therefore not those that bear his image, 1 John. v. 1. However, remember, that the day will come when you will say, O that my soul were in their soul's stead! 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

3. *Lastly*, They do not believe any such thing, as that God will make men his sons and daughters. *Ans.* Then ye do not believe God's word in the text, John i. 12. Christ's death and sufferings must lose their end, Gal. iv. 4, 5. But ye will be cured of that, if not before, yet at their receiving their inheritance as children, Matth. xxv. 34. when unbelievers get their doom.

But there may be some that would fain believe it, and that with application too, that they might come away and partake of it. But Satan and their hearts muster up objections against it; such as,

1. Was it ever heard, that there was an adoption where the party adopting was not childless? *Ans.* Gods ways are not man's ways. It is free grace only, and not need, that puts the heavenly Father to adopt any of his creatures.—Yet there is a suitableness in it to the divine wisdom. God's family suffered a vast diminution by the spiritual death of children, and thus it is made up again.

2. But how is it consistent with the honour of the adopter to take men as children into his family? *Ans.* This is provided for by the incarnation of the Son; man's nature is thereby nobilitated. The Son of God became the Son of man, that so the sons of men might become the sons of God, in a consistency with God's honour.

3. But I am afraid God will never take me into his family. *Ans.* Wherefore, if ye come in by the door, through Jesus Christ? The greatness of your former sins will not hinder it, Isa. i. 18. the multitude of them, 1 John i. 7. your backslidings neither, Jer. iii. 22. though ye have been the worst of sinners, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. In ye must be, or ye perish.

4. But Satan plies me at a terrible rate, so that I think I will never get away out from among them. *Ans.* When the devil apprehends his time short, he has great wrath.—When the children of

Israel were nearest their deliverance, Pharaoh made their bondage hardest. Be resolute, like the lepers of old.

5. *Lastly*, But I fear I will never be able to carry suitably to the character of one of the heavenly family. *Ans.* Take Christ for sanctification, put your heart and life in his hand this day, for purifying and managing it, Eph. v. 25, 26. 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word.' Believe the promises of sanctification; look on them as sealed by the sacrament, and conscientiously use the means of holiness.

To shut up all, I testify to every one, that they are undone, for ever, if they come not out from among them, and be separate, and touch no unclean thing; and that there is nothing to hinder your entrance into God's family, if ye be content to come out from among them, and to close with Christ. He will receive you, and introduce you into his Father's family, entertain you at his table, and at length carry you to the upper house, where ye shall be for ever with the Lord.

OF SANCTIFICATION.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 11.—*But ye are sanctified—by the Spirit of our God.*

IN this verse the apostle tells the believing Corinthians.

1. What some of them sometime were, such, viz. as those, ver. 9, 10. 'fornicators, idolators, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners;' even the worst and grossest sinners, who therefore could have nothing to move God to sanctify them.

2. What they now all were, viz. the true believers among them; they were 'washed.' Though some of them in their natural state were more unclean and vile than others, yet they all needed to be, and accordingly were washed,

(1.) In sanctification, whereby sin itself is gradually carried out of the heart and life, and grace planted therein, and actuated and advanced. This is done by the Spirit of God, who is holy, and makes the elect holy.

2. In justification, whereby the guilt of sin is removed, and the soul clothed with a perfect righteousness. This is done 'in the