

practice, the salvation of your souls. Wherefore think on all these things and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON VII.

SOUL-RESIGNATION INTO THE HANDS OF GOD.

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” LUKE xxiii. 46.

THESE are the last words of Christ on the cross, the seventh speech; and of all others the most exemplary for us. “Into thy hands,” that is, into thy charge, care, and tuition. God hath no hands at all, for he is a Spirit; but by his hands we are to understand his keeping, charge, and custody. Numb. xxxiii. 1, it is said, “The children of Israel went forth out of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron;” that is, under the charge of Moses and Aaron; so the translators do interpret it. For whereas, chap. xxxi. 49, it is said by the officers of the army, “Thy servants have taken the sum of the men that were under our charge;” the margin tells you that in the Hebrew it is, “under our hand.” So Ps. xci. 11, 12, “He shall give his angels charge over thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands.” By the hands of God therefore, understand his keeping and tuition; Father, into thy keeping and tuition I do commend my spirit; the word is, *παραδωσομαι*, I will commend; but our Saviour follows the Septuagint, and the Septuagint the Hebrew of Ps. xxxi., whence these words are taken. And it is ordinary with the Hebrew to put the future for the present time. I will, or I do commend my spirit, that is, my soul, myself, but especially my soul; the thing commended was his soul; the person to whom he did commend his soul, was his Father; the time when he commended his soul, was at the instant of his death, for having said so, he gave up the ghost. Now if ye ask why Christ did at this time especially commend and resign himself and soul up to God? I answer, For these reasons.

Thereby he testified that he had not lost his confidence in God as a Father; in the former words he had cried out and said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Men might think if he had so died, that he had quite lost his confidence; but now that he concludes all with this, it shews that God had not forsaken him, and that he had not lost his confidence in God. Possibly a dying christian may be in an agony at the beginning of his sickness, yet may sweetly believe at the last. In the former part of his death, Christ was in an agony, but he closes up all with full assurance of faith: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Thereby also he did commend the souls of all those that he died for, into the hands of God: for he was now offering up himself through the eternal Spirit unto God for us, as our common person; and as in his prayer, John xvii., he did not only pray for himself, but for us, so in this act and deed he did commend the souls and spirits of all those that he died for, into the hands of God: and as he died in our room and stead, so in our room he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And when should he do this more fitly, than at the last of his suffering?

Thereby also he became an example unto us; that when we come to die or suffer, we should die with the Scripture in our hearts and mouths, for this was Scripture, as ye read Ps. xxxi. 5. And that we should suffer and die believing and resigning up ourselves and souls into the hand of God as a Father. And for this end certainly Christ did now speak these words, for says he, "I have power to lay down my life, and to take it up again;" and if he had power to take it up again, why did he resign it into the hands of God, as a *depositum* to be kept for him? Surely for this reason, that in all this matter he might be an example unto us of soul-resignation into the hands of God. And so the doctrine is this:

It is a good thing for us to resign up our souls into the hands of God, and that especially at the time of our death and greatest sufferings; what Christ did, and did as our example, that is good for us to do: this hath Christ done before us; good therefore it is for us to do it, good at all times, especially at some times, and most especially at the time of our death and sufferings.

It is God's due, and it is our duty; for what is resignation of our souls or selves unto God, but that act of faith, whereby we do put ourselves under the power, wisdom, and mercy of God, to be ordered and disposed of according to the good

will of God? This is our duty, and it is God's due. Is it not the duty of an inferior to resign up himself and his will to the hands and will of his superior? Doth not the wife resign up her will to the will of her husband; the servant to the will of his master; the child to the will of his father; and is not God much more our superior; is not he our Husband, our Lord, our Father in most transcendent manner? Surely then, this soul-resignation is both God's due, and it is our duty.

Yea, and it is a very profitable thing for us to do it, hereby we make a virtue of necessity; and where can we lodge our souls in safer hands? If a man cannot keep a thing himself, but must betrust and deposit it in other hands, will he not do it in the safest hands that he can find? Now three things there are that are required to a safe hand: power, wisdom, and love. If I deposit a thing in a man's hand to keep, he must be able to keep it for me against violence, else his hand is no safe hand; though he be able and have power to keep it for me, yet if he be prodigal and lavish, and not wise, I shall not count his hand a safe hand to keep my *depositum*; but though he be never so wise, yet if he be not my friend, I shall not betrust him with any great matter: but if a man be able, wise and friendly, then his hand is a safe hand to keep my *depositum*. Now God is all this, almighty, infinitely, wise, and our best friend and acquaintance? Wherefore, says the apostle, "I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able that which I have committed to him, against that day," 2 Tim. 1. 12. As if he said, Do ye blame me for venturing so much in the cause of the gospel? Why I have but deposited what I laid out for God, and am persuaded that he will not embezzle my trust; but will truly and faithfully keep it for me: for he is able, and I have experience of him: for I know whom I have trusted, he is no stranger to me, and I am persuaded that he will keep it for me unto that day. God's hand then is the safest hand.

And again if we do not commend, commit, and resign ourselves and souls into his hands, we must be responsible for them ourselves. If a woman have a child put to nurse to her, and she go abroad, and do not commit the child to some safe hands, and the child come to any hurt, she must be responsible for it. If we commit our souls into God's hands, he

will be responsible for them. "Who will keep that which I have committed to him unto that day," says Paul: but if we do not commit our souls into his hands to keep, and they get any hurt, we must be responsible for them ourselves. And are we able to answer for our own souls? Surely, no. Oh, what a good thing is it then to resign and commit our souls unto God.

What benefit shall we get thereby? Much every way. This resignation of our souls and selves unto God, is an inlet to many mercies, graces, and comforts.

As for mercies and blessings; what greater blessing can there be in this world, than to enjoy one's-self; under God to enjoy one's-self, and to be free from all things? Paul counted it a blessing to have the comforts of this world, and to be under the power of none, but to stand free from all; now there is no such way in the world, to stand free from all things, as to resign up ourselves, souls and wills unto God. *Hæc est vera libertas servire Deo*, True liberty doth consist in perfect subjection to God; who more free than Christ, yet who more subject to the will of God than Christ? "Not my will, but thy will be done:" no such way to enjoy one's-self, as to give up ourselves unto God. Doth not the beggar enjoy herself most in giving up herself to a prince in marriage?

Yea, what greater blessing is there in the world, or in the world to come, than to enjoy God? Now if you do resign and give up yourself unto God, you shall enjoy God, for God will give down himself unto you. It is observed, that God the Father never gave down that great dispensation of the Spirit unto Christ, till Christ had thus resigned up his spirit unto the Father. Look what we do give up to God, that God will give down to us in a better edition; yea, he will not only give ourselves to ourselves, if we resign ourselves unto him; but if you resign and give up yourself unto him, he will give down himself unto you; if you resign up your spirit unto him, he will give down his Spirit unto him. Thus this soul-resignation is an inlet to this mercy.

Yet you will all say, it is a great mercy and blessing to have your prayers and desires granted; then read what the Psalmist saith, Psalm xxxvii. 4, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way to the Lord, trust also in him, and he will bring it

to pass." Dost thou say, I pray and use endeavours; yet the thing prayed for, endeavoured after, doth not come to pass? Why, then commit thy way to the Lord; resign up thy way unto God, and he will bring it to pass. I remember a notable story that Thaulerus hath; this Thaulerus lived in the beginning of the German reformation, a little before Luther, whom Luther seems to prize above all authors; *Da mihi istum insignem Theologum Thaulerum*, said he, Give me that eminent author Thaulerus. Now this Thaulerus tells us of a certain woman, that was much given to prayer, and had so great credit in heaven, that she did but ask and had from the hands of God; insomuch, said he, that divers came to her to pray for them, according to their necessities, whom she promised to pray for; yet sometimes did forget to pray for them: yet, says Thaulerus, the things which her friends did desire were given to them; and coming to her to thank her for her prayers; Nay, truly, said she, I am ashamed and blush before you, for if you have received the mercy, it is no thanks to me, for I forgot you. And thereupon going unto God in prayer, she begged this of God, that he would please to tell her the reason why the mercies desired were given, though she did not pray for them? Whereupon she received this answer from God, says Thaulerus,* Hear O my daughter, from the day that thou didst resign thy will up to me, I did give my will to thee. And the truth is, there is no such way to obtain what we would, as to resign up our wills unto God. Thus this soul or self-resignation is an inlet unto many mercies.

As it is an inlet unto many blessings: so it is an inlet unto many graces and duties. What grace or duty will ye instance in? Will ye instance in prayer?

It opens the sluices of prayer; and, as one speaks well, though you pray never so long or loud, yet if you do not resign up your soul and will unto God, your prayer is but nonsense, and a contradiction *in re*.

Or will ye instance in Faith? faith is a trusting unto God; now the more you betrust God with yourself, the more you trust to God. And what greater betrustment, than the resignation of ones-soul unto God?

* Audi filia mea, ex quo die tuam mihi resignasti voluntatem, ego viciesim dedi tibi meam.—Thaulerus.

Thereby you shall be contented with your condition whatever it be, with the best contentment: for there is a two-fold contentment. One, that arises from the fulness of your enjoyment; another, that arises from the apprehension of the wise carving hand of God. This last is best, and the most refined. Now if you can but truly resign yourself and will unto God, you will be thus contented.

Thereby also you will rejoice in God, and mourn for sin at once; some mourn for sin, and neglect joy in God; some joy in God, and neglect grief for sin. But if I can truly resign myself unto God, I shall grieve for sin, and rejoice in God together.

Yea, thereby also you will be able to answer unto your temptations, especially that great temptation that lies so hard upon some. You are now in a good condition; but suppose it were so and so with you, what would you do then? why, if ye have resigned yourself unto God, you will be able to say, I do not know what may befall me, but I am sure nothing shall come amiss, for I have resigned myself and my will unto God. Thus this holy resignation is, ye see, an inlet to many graces and duties.

As it is an inlet unto many graces, so it is an inlet also unto many comforts; yea indeed, unto all our comforts: for what comfort can a man have in himself or condition, till he hath truly resigned and given up himself and soul and will unto God? but being done, ye may freely go about your business. If a man have a suit in law, and have left his cause in the hand of an able, careful friend and lawyer, he is quiet: much more may we be quiet, when we have left and lodged our case and way and soul with God. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established," Prov. xvi. 3. Not thy business and works, but thy thoughts shall be then at rest. Do not all things rest in their centre; and is not God our centre? The more indifferently that a man's heart is carried out towards changes, the more quiet and sedate is his spirit. Now when a man hath resigned himself up to God, then he will be more indifferent unto all conditions. The private soldier doth march indifferently, this way or that way, at the command of his leader; why? because he hath resigned up himself to the wisdom of his commander. The sheep is indifferently led into this pasture,

or the other; why? because resigned up to the will of the shepherd. So if our souls be truly resigned up to God, we shall be indifferently carried to this or that pasture: for we are the sheep of Christ. I remember a notable speech that Luther had to Melancthon: Melancthon being much troubled about the affairs of the churches, and the low estate of the same, Luther wrote a letter to him; and in that letter he hath this expression; Thou art much troubled and afflicted, O Melancthon; yet Philip is to be admonished and desired to leave governing the world:* as if he had said, Philip, thou undertakest to govern the world, therefore thou art thus dejected; do but leave the cause to God, and let him govern, and thou wilt be quiet and not troubled. The only way therefore to be quiet within, is to resign and give up all unto God. This self or soul resignation is an inlet unto many mercies, an inlet unto many graces, an inlet unto many comforts; surely therefore it is a good and an excellent thing to resign and give up ourselves unto God.

Well, but then how is this work to be done that we may truly resign and give up ourselves, our souls, and our wills unto God?

It is not to be done slightly and overly, but seriously and solemnly. It is an ordinary thing with men to say, "The will of the Lord be done." God's will be done, and the like. But it is one thing for a man to be indifferent in a business, saying, The will of the Lord be done; and another thing for a man to give up himself and will effectually unto God. It is one thing for a man to do this in a slightly and general way, saying, The will of the Lord be done; and another thing to make a distinct and clear resignation of his will to the will of God in particular things. Look into Scripture, and ye shall find, that wherever this work was done truly, it was done solemnly and seriously.

As this work is not to be done slightly and overly; so neither is it to be done forcedly and lastly, but freely and firstly. The first thing I do, I must commit myself, and cause, and will unto God. If a city or town be besieged, it yields and resigns at the last, because it can hold out no longer; but this resignation is a forced work; the resignation of ourselves

* Sed monendus est Philippus, ut desinat gubernare mundum.

and wills unto God is not such. When Pharaoh could stand out no longer, then he resigned up the Israelites: and so when men can hold out no longer, then they say, Well, it is the will of God that this thing should be; wherefore now, the will of the Lord be done. When they can do no other, then they resign up the thing and themselves unto God. But this true resignation is done freely and firstly, not forcedly and at last.

As it is not to be done lastly and forcedly, so it is not to be done partially, and by halves, but fully and totally. "I am thine," saith David to God, "Oh, save me," Ps. cxix. 94. When a man comes to God for mercy, he pleads not for part but all. He doth not say, Oh save my body, and not my soul; but "Oh, save me:" nor doth he say, Oh, save my soul, and not my body; but, "I am thine, oh, save me." When a man desires pardon of sin, he desires not the pardon of some, but of all. When God gives himself unto us, he gives himself wholly. This resignation of ourselves unto God, is a great sacrifice, a great offering, and it must be of all, an holocaust. God cannot, will not take less than all. He that resigns himself unto God, with a reservation of a part, doth like Ananias and Sapphira; he pretends the whole, and gives but part, and so he doth lie unto God.

As this resignation must not be done partially, and by halves, so it must not be done conditionally, but absolutely. When you have taken a servant, and you bid him do this or that, it may be he will say to you, It was none of my bargain; I bargained with you for to be your steward, but not to be your groom in your stable; or, I bargained with you to be your clerk, but not to be your scullion; this or that work which you set me about, is not according to my conditions. And so when a city besieged doth resign, it doth resign upon articles; but when a soul doth truly resign itself unto God, then no articles, no conditions. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" says Paul, oh any thing, Lord, any thing: I will return to my father's house, "and let him make me his hired servant." Do but receive me, Lord, and I will not article with thee; it is a resignation without articles. The covenant of grace, whereby God doth give himself to us, is absolute, and not conditional; so is that covenant, whereby we do resign and give up ourselves unto him. Abraham

subscribed to a blank ; so must all the children of Abraham do.

As this resignation is not to be done conditionally ; so it is not to be done passively, and in a way of submission only, but actively. It is one thing for a man to submit unto God's will, and another thing to resign up himself and will to the will of God. A man is properly said to submit, when he quietly yields unto what is done. A man is said to resign up himself and will unto God, when he doth quietly yield over his affections to the thing done as best, because God wills it. For example, I meet a thief on the way, and he takes my purse ; I submit because I cannot help myself, but I do not resign up my will to his will : I resign up my money into his hand, but not my will unto his will, nor my affections and judgment to the thing done ; judging that good which is done. But when a man doth truly resign up himself unto God, he resigns up his thoughts and judgment to the wisdom of God ; it is not a bare submission unto what is done.

As this resignation is not to be done passively, so it is not to be done deceitfully and feignedly, but in all plainness and sincerity. We read of the enemies of the Lord, that they shall submit feignedly unto him ; “ Strangers shall submit themselves to me,” Ps. xviii. 44. The margin hath it, they shall yield feigned obedience, but the Hebrew is, They shall lie unto me. “ Through the greatness of thy power thine enemies shall submit themselves to thee,” Ps. lxvi. 3 ; margin, shall yield feigned obedience ; Hebrew, shall lie unto thee. There is a feigned obedience, a feigned yielding, a lying resignation and submission unto God. The people of the Jews come to Jeremiah to go unto God for them, and they say, “ The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us ; whether it be good, or whether it be evil,” &c. Jer. xlii. 5. Wherefore Jeremiah did intreat the Lord for them, but they would not do what they said ; whereupon said Jeremiah, “ Ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye said, We will do according to all that the Lord our God shall say,” verse 20. So that there is a lying submission, whereby men in affliction and distress, do feignedly submit and resign themselves up to God. Possibly a

man may hear that the only way to have his will is to resign up his will unto God. Now that he may have his will he will resign it up unto God : this is but to serve himself of God. But where this work is truly done, it is done with the greatest plainness of heart, and the most sincerity.

As this work is not to be done feignedly, so it is not to be done sinfully, but in well-doing. Some say, "The will of the Lord be done;" and they say they do resign and give up themselves unto God ; but if ye look into 1 Pet. 4. 19. he will tell you, that this work is to be performed in well-doing: "Let him commit his soul to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." And thus ye see how this work is to be done rightly.

It is to be done solemnly, and not slightly; freely and firstly, not forcedly and lastly; wholly and totally, and not partially and by halves; absolutely, and not conditionally, upon articles; actively, and not in a way of submission only; with much plainness and sincerity; and in well-doing.

Well, but when is this work to be done?

It is to be done daily. Once done, and yet ever doing. But there are some times wherein this work is to be done especially, but most especially at our death.

I say, this work is to be done daily. Sometimes a man is to resign up his will unto God, in reference to his health; sometimes in reference to his outward estate; sometimes in reference to his relations; sometimes in reference to his spiritual condition. But as the Psalmist speaks, "Trust in the Lord at all times;" so I say, we are to resign up selves and souls and will to God at all times.

There are some special times and seasons which do call for this work. I will name five.

When a man doth convert and turn unto God. Then he is in a special manner to resign and give up himself unto God. "What wilt thou have me do?" said Paul at his first conversion. The priests that offered sacrifices unto God, were first offered themselves. After conversion we daily offer our sacrifices to God: at the first, therefore, we are to offer up ourselves unto him.

When a man is called forth unto any great work, or service, or employment, especially if it be beyond his own strength

and power, then he is to resign and give up himself unto God: so Moses did, so David did, so all the worthies of God have ever done, when they have been called out to any great employments.

When a man is in any great danger, distress, and affliction, then he is to resign and give up himself and will unto God. "If the Lord have any pleasure in me (says David) he will bring me back again; yet if not, his will be done." So Joab when he saw that enemies were round about him; "Let us fight, (says he,) for the cities of our God, &c. and the will of the Lord be done."

When a man doth join himself unto the Lord and his people, then he is especially to resign and give up himself unto God. So the churches of Macedonia did; for says Paul, 2 Cor. viii. 5. "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."

When a man hath sinned greatly, and wandered from the Lord, and from his holy profession, and doth return again unto God, then he is in a special manner to resign and give up himself unto God. The same thing is to be done in our renewed as in our first conversion. And if ye look into 2 Chron. xxx. ye shall find, that when all Israel had gone astray, Hezekiah exhorting them to return unto the Lord, he saith, verse 8. "Now be ye not stiffnecked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord:" Margin, give you your hand unto God. When we have stolen any thing from God, it is our duty to restore it. Have we therefore in our first conversion given ourselves unto God, and afterward by our sins taken them away again? Whenever we do return unto God, then it is our duty to restore, and so to resign up ourselves unto him. And thus now ye see what those special times and seasons are which call for this work at our hands. The time of conversion calls for it; the time of special employment calls for it; the time of great danger calls for it; the time of joining to the Lord and his people calls for it; and the times of our returns unto God after wanderings call for it.

But though we are to resign ourselves unto God in such times as these are especially, yet most especially we are to do it when we come to suffer; for then God is ready to re-

ceive us, *Exod. xix. 4.* Then men are ready to destroy us "The poor committeth himself to thee:" *Ps. x. 14.* When we come to die, for then did Christ do it especially. Then the soul is to return unto him that gave it. It doth not die or sleep with the body in the grave, but it returns unto him that gave it. "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," saith Christ. And the apostle tells us, that paradise is the third heavens and the place of glory. Paul saith, "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all." *2 Cor. xii.* How can a man be said to be with Christ presently upon his death, if the soul dies and sleeps with the body? Yea, says he, "I am in a strait;" in respect to you, I desire to live: in respect of myself, I desire to die. But if the soul sleeps and dies with the body, why should not he desire to live in regard of himself? When the man dies, then the soul and spirit returneth to him that gave it. When a man therefore dies, it is fit to resign and give up his soul unto God.

When a man dies, then, if his soul goes to heaven, it is to pass through the enemy's country; for Satan is "the prince of the air." The air is full of devils; the soul therefore hath need of a good convoy to pass through the enemy's country. And how should a man get this convoy, but by resigning and giving up his soul into the hands of God.

When a man dies, then he launches forth into the ocean of eternity; and as God is the disposer of our times for the present, so of our eternity also. Fit it is that we should acknowledge his sovereignty over us, in reference to our eternity: and therefore when a man comes to die, he is in a special manner to resign and give up himself unto God, to be laid out and disposed of to all eternity.

And when a man comes to die, then there is a great parting between the soul and the body; then I part with that which is most dear to me. Now when a man parts with his children, or those things that are dear to him, he will put them into the safest hands that he can; but when we come to die, then is the great parting time. And therefore, then and then especially we are to resign and give up ourselves and our souls unto God. Thus Christ did; "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Well, but how and by what means shall I be able to resign

and give up myself and soul unto God when I die, so as I may receive this *depositum* again to my comfort?

It is good for us to inquire into this matter; we know not how soon we may be called to this dying work. If the candle be newly lighted it may easily be put out, and if it have burned long it will easily go out. It was the desire of Dionysius, that Christ's last word on the cross might be the last word of his life.* Do you, therefore, desire to close up your life with this gracious resignation according to Christ's example? Then,

Be sure that you do not give away your soul from God to any thing else whilst you live. If you have given away your soul unto other things whilst you live, it will be a vain thing for you to say Christ's words when you come to die. When men come to their death, ye know they do ordinarily make their wills; and in the first place they say, I give my soul unto God; then if they have lands, or houses, or money, they give them to their wives, children, relations and friends, according to their pleasure. But suppose, now, that a man shall give land or house to such or such a child or friend, which he hath sold or given away before, shall his will stand in force? Will not all men say, This he could not give away, for he had sold that or given that before? So in regard of one's soul; though upon my death I say, As for my soul, I give that to God; yet if I have sold away my soul before, for unjust gain, or have given away my soul before unto filthy pleasures, how can I resign and give that to God when I die; will not the Lord say, Nay, this is none of your's to give, this you had sold or given away before? Oh, then, be sure of this, that whilst you live, you do not sell or give away your soul from God, for then death-bed resignation will be but as the act and deed of a man that makes his will when he is not *compos mentis*.

If you would so resign your soul unto God when you die, that you may receive this *depositum* again with comfort; then be sure that you make God your friend whilst you live, else what repose can you put on him when you die. Who doth trust a jewel in the hands of a stranger or enemy? We read, Judges x. 14, when the children of Israel had forsaken the

* Domine, fac ut ultimum tuum verbum in cruce, sit etiam ultimum meum verbum in hoc luce.—Gerard. ex Dionys. Harm. cap. xvii.

Lord, and served other gods, that when they cried to the Lord to save them out of the hands of their enemies, the Lord said unto them, "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen, and let them save you in the time of your tribulation." So will the Lord say to us, if in the time of our health we follow after our pleasures and profits and our old sins, "Go and cry to the gods whom ye have served;" go and repose your souls in their hands, and let them help you now if they can. No man will repose or commit that which he prizeth into the hands of a stranger or enemy. Oh, then, whilst we have our health and life let us make God our friend.

And not only so, but get an assurance that God is your friend and Father: though God be our friend, if we do not know it, how shall we commit our souls to him when we die. Paul said, "I know whom I have trusted, that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him unto that day." It is an hard thing for a doubting heart that cannot say, Father, distinctly, to resign as Christ did. Why then should you live upon hopes mingled with uncertainties; is it not yet time to get your assurance? Oh, labour more and more to attain to these rises of assurance; for the more assurance you have when you come to die, the more easily and truly you will say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

And if you would resign up your soul unto the hands of God, so as you may receive that *depositum* again with comfort; then observe what that *depositum* is which God doth now trust you with, and be you faithful in the keeping thereof. When Christ went away, he left us a *depositum*, he did leave and deposit some of his things in our hands; his truths, his ordinances, his talents; and if I do not keep his trust, his truths, his ordinances, his talents, how can I expect that he should keep my soul for me? Mark how these go together. "I know whom I have trusted," says Paul, "and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him," 2 Tim. i. 12. Then ver. 14, "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep." As if he should say, As we desire that he should keep our trust, so we must keep his trust. Some things the Lord hath committed to us; some things we commit to him. Now, therefore, as you do desire that he may keep your souls for you,

so do you keep his truths, his ordinances, and whatever he hath committed unto you.

And if you would be able to do this work of soul-resignation in the day of your death rightly, then use yourself to do it every day. That is easily done which is often done. And if you look upon the example of Christ, ye shall find, that as soon as he drew near to the cross, the first thing he did was to resign up his will unto God, being in his agony in the garden. "If it be possible (saith he) let this cup pass; yet not my will, but thy will be done." And the last thing he did, was to resign up his soul unto God. This affliction was begun and ended with holy resignation. It is begun with a resignation of his will, it is ended with a resignation of his soul. So should all our afflictions be begun and ended with self-resignation; and if I can but begin my affliction with the resignation of my will unto the will of God, I shall end the affliction with the resignation of my soul into the hands of God. And the more frequently I do it whilst I live, the more easily I shall do it when I die, and say in truth with Christ, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Study the sovereignty of God. The more your heart is possessed with God's sovereignty, the more resignation. "It is the Lord," said Eli, "let him do what seemeth good," 1 Sam. iii. 18. And, "Good is the word of the Lord," said Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 19.

Then behold this example of Christ, being before you: "Whom beholding," &c. The sight of a resigning Christ, will make you resign and say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

And thus now I have done with this last speech of Christ on the cross. The words of dying friends are precious, and we remember them. Now ye have heard this living saying of a dying Christ. You that are the friends of Christ will remember them; and the Lord teach us so to remember them, that thereby we may learn both to live and to die, both to do and to suffer.