

right in such a land or house as they have. Now Jesus Christ, though he be our elder brother, yet he is called an everlasting Father. Now, we are joint co-purchasers; ay, but it is more to be a co-heir than a co-purchaser: the right of inheritance is better and a more noble right than the right of purchase, and in some case it may be more certain. Now this is the right of the saints to all the good that Jesus Christ hath, they may be as certain of it as Christ himself. Christ himself shall be disinherited as soon as a believer, because a believer is a co-heir with Jesus Christ. Oh, blessed then are the peacemakers, for they are the children of God, and the children of God in a glorious mystical way. Such children, as they are co-heirs with Jesus Christ, have interest in his glory, and can be no more disinherited than Jesus Christ himself can. And I will give you one scripture as a

most excellent comfort to the saints, that Christ here doth join himself and them together in the relation that he and they have to his Father: in John xx., the latter end of ver. 17, 'I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God,' saith Christ. It is as comfortable a scripture almost as I know any in the book of God. I ascend to my Father; ay, and your Father too. He that is my Father, is your Father; you have interest in my Father as well as I: 'I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God.' Oh, who can utter the soul-satisfying, soul-ravishing consolation there is in this, that the same God that is the God of Jesus Christ is my God, and the same Father that is the Father of Jesus Christ is my Father! Oh 'blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be called the children of God!'

SERMON XXXI.

OR,

WHAT THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS IS IN ADOPTION.

'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.'—MAT. v. 9.

YEA, they are heirs of all, of all the inheritance—the whole inheritance is every one's. Among men, the more one hath, the less the other hath. A father, though he be rich, if he gives one child a great portion, if the elder doth inherit, the younger hath the less; or if he would divide his inheritance, if one hath a great deal, the other hath but little. But it is not so in the children of God's inheritance. There is no one child of God hath less because the other hath more, but every one inherits all there is in God, all there is in Christ, all there is in heaven; it is the inheritance of every child of God one way or other, for the good of every one.

Sixthly, Another particular is this, that now in Christ there is a great deal more privilege than there was in former times to the child of God. That is one of the mysteries of the gospel. Oh, it is true: Is not Ephraim my dear son? The saints in former times were God's children, but in the times of the gospel they have far higher privilege and prerogative than before; this is a part of the mystery of the gospel. Formerly God had children in nonage, under tutorage: all the saints, the most eminent of them,

were as children in their nonage, and came not to their inheritance; but we are as children, in comparison of them, that are of years. That is made out clearly to us in Gal. iv.: 'Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of this world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' So that it seems, till Christ came, there was no receiving the adoptions of sons. Why, were not the saints children before Christ came? Truly, in regard of God's usage of them, they were not as children, they were not sons—that is, they were not sons of age, to come to enjoy their inheritance, but they were sons; as kings' sons, when they are little children, have their tutors and governors, that use them as other children of meaner men, so were they used, and God revealed little to them of the excellency of their inheritance then. But as noble-

men and princes, they are fain to please their children with plums, and rattles, and baubles, as other men please theirs—they cannot tell them of their inheritance and possession that they shall have while they are little children; but when a child comes of age, then he comes to understand his dignity, his possession, and it is that that pleases him then, and not those baubles that he had before. And the truth is, in comparison of the ordinances of the gospel and the privileges of the gospel, what the people had under the law were but as rattles, and plums, and baubles that we please children withal; and therefore the Holy Ghost calls even those ordinances that then they had to be as beggarly rudiments. But now by Christ we are redeemed, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and come to enjoy a great part of our inheritance; and it is a special part of the inheritance of children to have the gospel clearly revealed to them, and to have the blessing and the privileges of the gospel; but that we shall speak to more by and by. Thus you have the mystery of godliness in our adoption.

And the benefit of children, or the privileges that we have by being children, are very great and many. I remember Luther in his Comment upon this Gal. iv. 7, saith he, If we did but know what this privilege were, all the riches of all the kingdoms in the world would be but as filthy dung to us; that is his expression. And the greater the pomp and the glory of the world is, the more would we have it whatsoever it be; if we know but the excellency of this prerogative of being children, there are great privileges in it. In John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' To them gave he power, he gave an authoritative power, to become the sons of God, that they may claim it and challenge it; they have a kind of authority and privilege in becoming the sons of God.

Now the first privilege of a child of God is this, great honour is put upon him. According to the dignity of the father, so is the honour and dignity of the child. If the father is a yeoman, so is the child looked upon; if the father is a gentleman, so is the child; or a duke, or a prince, or monarch, the child hath honour according to the honour of his father. Now, to be a child of God must needs be honourable. The children of great men of the earth are honourable; but the children of the infinite God must needs have honour above them by their birthright, the reflection of the honour of their Father is upon them. It is a speech of David in 1 Sam. xviii. 22; some came and commended with him about marrying of Saul's daughter, what saith David? 'Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?' Now this Saul was a wicked man, and it was to be but his son-in-law; and if that were

accounted so great an honour and privilege, much more this.

Secondly, The second privilege of the children of God it is, that they are freed from all kind of bondage, from a spirit of bondage, and from all bondage whatsoever; they are no more bond-slaves, as every man naturally is. You know what Christ saith, 'Do the children pay tribute, or strangers?' The children of the kingdom they are free, they are not in that servility as others are; they are not so much as servants, they are in a higher degree than servants; and yet to be a servant of God it is a very great privilege, but they are beyond: in Gal. iv. 7, 'Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son.' They are beyond the degree of a servant in the house of God. It was a great honour to Moses that he had this title, 'Moses my servant;' but the meanest believer in the times of the gospel hath a greater privilege than Moses had, he is a son. There is not that spirit of servility now, but a more free spirit in the child of God. Therefore, in Rom. viii. 14, 15, 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.' The spirit of adoption, I shall speak of that presently. But now I only shew their privilege in respect of being delivered from the spirit of bondage. They do not serve God now in that mercenary way as formerly, nor out of that slavery of spirit from fear. The people of the Jews, even the godly people,—the Holy Ghost saith in Heb. ii.,—'were all their lifetime subject to bondage through the fear of death.' There was a spirit of bondage and fear upon the hearts of the people of God in former times. Now God expects his children should serve him out of another principle, out of a principle of love, as it becoms children; which we shall shew more when we come to the duties of children, as they are the children of God. Yea, and likewise they were under the bondage of a more tedious way of worship—the bondage of the law. Now the children of God are freed from that: from the bondage of sin, and from the bondage of the law they are wholly free. That is the second privilege; free from bondage.

Thirdly, The third privilege, the entire fatherly love that they are embraced withal. God, who is the infinite glorious first-being, embraces them with an entire fatherly love. All the love that ever was in any parents towards children, is but as one drop of the infinite ocean of fatherly love that there is in God unto his people. You that are fathers or mothers, you know what the love of a parent to children means. Now, when you find that natural affection of love to children, you should help your faith by this, if you be godly: And is it so that I that am a parent have such affections and love towards my children, that

come from my body? Oh the affections then and love of God, a Father to his children! Why is it that God hath taken upon him this title of a Father, but to the end that it might be a ground of the faith of his people to look up unto him, and to see his love as entire as ever the love of a parent, the love of all parents in the world put together, is towards children. Put all the natural affections of all the most loving, tender-hearted parents that ever were in the world into one parent, you will say that father surely is a loving father, that hath all the love that all the fathers had in the world since the beginning, he hath it all in his heart; yet I say of this father, he were a hard-hearted, carnal father in comparison of God, of the love of God, that is a Father unto his saints. That is the third privilege.

Fourthly, The fourth privilege of the children of God, it is the right that they have unto the creatures, that is restored unto them by being children. Why, the Jews they were deprived of a great part of the comfort of the creature; but now the children of God have their right restored, renewed, strengthened, increased, their right to all comforts in all creatures. It is true, Adam he had a right unto the creature at first, and by sin he lost it; so that all mankind have lost their right unto the creatures.

You will say, What! are wicked men usurpers then when they make use of the creature? have they no right?

I confess this sometimes hath been taught, that though they have a right before men, yet they have no right before God, but they are usurpers. But there might be a mistake in that; for though it is true all our right is lost, that must be granted. But yet if God by a free donation shall give them right, shall give the creature again to wicked men, 'give the earth to the children of men,' we cannot say that they are usurpers, if they have it by a free gift from God, in the time of his bounty and patience towards the wicked. But still they have not that right that the children of God have; their right is merely by donation. But the right that the child of God hath, it is partly by purchase and partly by inheritance; they have a challenging right, that they can in a bold and holy way even challenge from God all good things from all creatures that they have need of as their own. A wicked man may have many comfortable things in the world for his present subsistence, and I dare not say that he is a usurper if he get them lawfully; for God in his bounty and patience doth give wicked men these things, and we say, what freer than gift? Ay, but there is no wicked man in the world that can challenge these, and say, Lord, these are mine own, it is mine inheritance, it is my purchase; this is the privilege of the children of God. If a malefactor by his offence hath forfeited his estate, hath forfeited all the right that he hath to the good

things in a kingdom, but yet if those that have supreme power to condemn him, shall out of their bounty grant unto him some provision for his supper the night before he is to be executed, you cannot say that he doth usurp it; he hath a right to it—that is, it is given him, though he hath forfeited all; and truly this is the right that wicked men have. Is there not a great deal of difference now between the right that a child hath at his father's table, and the right that a malefactor hath the night before he goes to the gallows? This now is the difference between the right of the one and the other, even before the Lord. Therefore when you look upon your estates, and see your houses furnished with good furniture, and look upon your tables and see them furnished with full dishes, consider what right you have to all these in reference unto God, whether it be merely the right of donation, as a malefactor may have to preserve him to the execution, or whether it be the right of children. But now if you be the children of God, you come to your tables, as to your Father's table; it is the provision that your Father doth make for you, and so you may look upon it. And this is the privilege of the children of God. Oh what a blessed thing is it to be a child of God then!

And then the fifth privilege of a child of God is this, he hath free access to his Father's presence; he may come at any time into his Father's presence, and so long as he is owned to be a child, he may come with comfort into his Father's presence. God hath no children that he serves as David served Absalom, 'Let him not see my face;' he acknowledged him to be his child, and yet he would not have him to see his face. No; but God loves to have his children be in his presence, and it is a part of the purchase of Jesus Christ that we should come into the presence of God by him. We have access by Jesus Christ, and we may always come and stand before our Father, which is a great privilege that those which are the children of God account of.

Sixthly, By being the children of God they come to have the image of God renewed in them. A father communicates somewhat of his nature to his child; but a father cannot communicate all the good that he pleases to his child. A father that hath wisdom cannot communicate his wisdom to his child; a father that hath holiness cannot communicate his holiness to his child. But now God he communicates what he pleases to his children; communicates of his image to them, communicates that wherein his very glory doth consist. The reason why a father cannot communicate wisdom and holiness to his child, it is because he begets the child as a man, but not as a man so qualified. But now when God begets a child, if he begets a child to himself, he must beget him like unto himself some way or other. Now God himself

is holy, and infinitely wise; it is not accidental to God to be holy and wise, and to be void and free of all kind of sin. Therefore all that are the children of God, they having on God's image, are like to God in that which is the excellency of God himself; in his holiness and in his wisdom they are made partakers of the life of God. There is no parent that begets a child but the parent makes the child partaker of his life. Now the very life of God doth consist especially in his holiness, in the acting to himself as the highest end of all things.

Seventhly, A child of God hath the Spirit of God communicated to him. That you have in those former scriptures, Rom. viii. 14-16, 'We are led by the Spirit, being sons;' and therefore 'we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.' And in that forenamed place, Gal. iv. 6, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' It is the observation of a learned man upon this place; saith he, He doth not say God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your minds, to give you knowledge and understanding, but into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. The Spirit of his Son, that now rules in the heart, God hath sent that into it; and this is a great blessing of God, that he gives his Spirit. This Spirit is an enlightening Spirit in the mind, and it is a Spirit that doth sanctify the heart, a Spirit that makes known the great and deep counsels of God to the soul, and a Spirit that guides the soul in the way of eternal life. That is the privilege of all sons: they are partakers of the Holy Ghost. I remember in one of the Gospels Christ saith, 'How much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?' Mat. vii. 11. The other hath it, 'How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Spirit to them that ask it?' Luke xi. 13, as noting the Spirit of God hath all good things in it. Oh blessed are they that are partakers of the Spirit of God—that are not acted and carried on by their own spirits, but by the Spirit of God!

Eighthly, The privilege of God's children is, that they have protection from God; God as their Father doth provide for them, and protect them. If any of your children be in any danger, what do they do but run to their father or mother, and complain to their father? and the father, according to his power, he will protect his children; and so there is a natural instinct in the children of God to run to their Father for protection. Indeed, a carnal heart, if he be wronged, all the way he hath to help himself, it is to rage, and fret, and vex, and seek to revenge himself. But a child of God, the way that he hath, it is to go and make his moan to his Father, to make his moan to God, and to tell God of all the wrongs that he hath, of all the calumnies that are cast upon him, and of all his

accusations. He goes presently to his Father, and makes his moan there. There is a notable scripture in Ps. cix. 4; saith David there, 'For my love they are my adversaries.' What then? They are mine adversaries; and God knows I intend nothing but good unto them. There is no spirit of bitterness and rage in me; but yet they are carried on by a wicked spirit. What then? But I pray—you have it in your books—'but I give myself unto prayer.' But *give myself* is in another character, and so notes that the interpreters put it in to make up the sense, They are my adversaries; but I, am I an adversary to them again? No; but I pray. They are mine adversaries for my love; but I know what to do. Why, what will you do? I know what I will do; as if David should say, I will go to God, and tell my Father of all this. I will go to prayer; that shall be my help and refuge. That is the privilege of God's children, that they have the protection of their Father. He will protect them in all their wrongs and injuries that are done unto them.

Ninthly, lastly, They shall have a kingdom. We are made kings and priests unto the Father by Jesus Christ. Why now, my brethren, we may say concerning this point of children of adoption, as the apostle in Rom. viii., having spoken concerning the benefit both of justification and adoption together, then he concludes, after he had said this, Why, then, what shall we say unto these things? What shall we say after all this? So that these things have a reality in them, they be certain truths. What shall we say to these things—these high prerogatives and privileges of the children of God? Oh who would not be a peacemaker, when he shall have such a blessing as this is! But there is faith required to make these things real to the soul.

Tently, That is one thing that passed from me in his privileges. The privilege of a child of God is, his compassions towards him as a Father. God doth compassionate him both in his sins and afflictions: in Ps. ciii., 'As a father pities his child, so the Lord pities them that fear him.' And that known place in Mal. iii., 'And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels: I will spare them, as a man spares his only son that serveth him.' If you have a servant that displeases you, you can turn him out of doors; but you will not so presently turn a child out of doors, or, at least, you will not be so ready to disinherit him. Nay, a man that hath a father's affections will never disinherit his child, if he return to him, whatsoever his fault be. Now this is the state of God's children. If they were in any other relation, indeed, to God, they might be cast off. As now a wife may be cast off from her husband, so as she never be entertained again, though she should be never so sorrowful, if she

commit adultery or uncleanness. Jer. iii. 1, 'They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted?' She can never return to him again; but it is not so with a child. A child can never be in such a disposition that he shall be made incapable of his father's love. There is no relation else whatsoever, but there may be such a change of it as that they may wholly lose the benefit of that relation; but a child can never while he lives. Though he be a disobedient child, yet he cannot lose altogether the benefit of that relation of a child: for, notwithstanding his disobedience, yet upon his coming in to his father, though he be never such a prodigal son, some kind of fatherly affection will work. There is no kind of father in the world, that hath but nature in him, but though the child hath been never so disobedient, yet if he were sure that the heart of the child were now changed, his bowels would yearn towards him. This is the relation of a child. I say it can never be wholly lost; but there will remain a capacity of receiving some fatherly love. A servant may be cast out from service, so as there can be no capacity of receiving him again; and so a wife. But it is not so with the child; for this is his privilege.

But now, if you ask me, what shall I say to these things? Why, I am to say these particulars unto those privileges. I have named ten privileges, and I may name nine or ten duties that follow upon our being children.

As, first, Let us learn to behave ourselves as it becomes the children of the Most High. They should shew themselves to be of noble breed, not to be of a base, vile, and sordid spirit. It is said in Acts xvii. 11 of the Bereans, that they were more noble than those of Thessalonica. The word is, they were men of a better breed—more noble. Oh, let all those that are children of God shew their breed by their holiness, by their gracious carriage before men! It doth not beseem the children of princes to be raking in kennels, to behave themselves in a sordid way; but it beseems the children of princes to carry themselves according to the state of their father—to the state of princes they are to carry themselves. And so the children of the living God, they must carry themselves according to the estate of the children of God—that is, above the world—above these vanities of the world—look upon them as too mean and too low things for them. Oh, it is exceedingly unbecoming a child of God for to have his heart dejected for the want of the comforts of this world—because he hath not some few things that others have; for him to be dejected as if he were undone. Oh no.

But see thou live according to this rate. Look upon your father as the Lord of heaven and earth, and know that all the power, and all the goodness,

and excellency, and treasure that he hath, thou hast some way or other right unto. And therefore when any affliction doth befall thee, do not thou presently let thy heart sink, as if thou wert undone. Remember thy relation; thou art a child, and God protects thee, and is to provide for thee, and do thee good. It was a notable speech, in 2 Sam. xiii. 3, of one Jonadab: 'Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very subtle man. And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me?' He perceived the countenance of Amnon much dejected, and looked sickly upon sorrow of heart; and saith he, Why art thou thus, being a king's son? It is strange, being a king's son, that thou shouldst be so dejected in thy spirits. Hast not thou enough that belongs to thee to comfort thy heart, when thou art a king's son? Oh, so it should be with the sons of the living God. Dost thou believe that thou art a child of God?—that God hath adopted thee, and set his heart upon thee as a child? Oh, why doth the want of some few outward comforts deject thee?

You will say, If I were the child of God, God would not let me want these things.

Oh, thou art mistaken in this. God hath other manner of blessings, to let forth his fatherly love to thee in, than these outward things. A child that is sick and weak might say as well, If my father loved me, why will he not give me such and such meat? Why, the child hath need of physie. Now dost not thou love thy child when thou givest him physie, and not what he cries for? If God be thy Father, and thou his child, wilt thou not give God leave to nurture thee, his child, as he gives thee leave to nurture thine own child? Yea, let me say more to thee than this. Thou mayest, notwithstanding thy being without outward comforts, thou mayest have the same fatherly love that Jesus Christ his Son had; and will not that serve thy turn? You will say, That will serve indeed. Mark, in John xvii. 26, 'And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.' Now mark, how did the love of God work towards Jesus Christ his Son? Did he not let him be without many outward comforts in this world? There was a time that he was in hunger, and wanted bread, and then the devil would have had him distrust in his Father. Oh no. 'Though the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, yet he had not a hole to hide his head in.' Thou hast as good a cottage to dwell in as Christ had. Christ he was thirsty, and he was fain to beg a little water of a woman to drink. There are very few of you that are put to more straits for outward

things than Christ was, and yet do not you think that God the Father loved his Son? and will not then that love serve thy turn that Jesus Christ the Son of God had? Though thou beest a son, yet thou art not dearer to God than Jesus Christ the Son of God was to the Father. Oh then raise up thy spirits, in the want of all outward comforts in this world, for thou art a son, and hast an inheritance to come hereafter.

Secondly, And then let there be reverence. 'If I be a father, where is mine honour?' Mal. i. 6, saith God. 'And if you call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man according to his work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear,' 1 Pet. i. 17. It is true, we are children, and so delivered from the bondage of the law, but yet we must have the reverence of the Father—walking before our Father with a filial reverence.

Thirdly, If God be a Father, then let there be love to him; do all you do out of love, be not mercenary. A servant doth not care to do anything any further than he may be paid for it: but a child doth not so; he doth what he doth out of love. Oh that we could bring all our obedience to be out of love to God, so that we need not stand to argue thus, Must we of necessity do this or go to hell? Shall no man be saved unless he do so strictly? This is a base spirit to argue thus. No; this is enough to a child, This would please your Father. Let any minister of God but open any point, and shew one that hath a child-like disposition, and tell him that it will but please God, and make but that out to him that it will be but pleasing to God. Oh a child will seek the acceptable and pleasing will of God; he doth not his duty merely for wages. Now most people do their service merely for wages; otherwise, what is the reason why, in the time of your greatest prosperity, you are not as serviceable to God as in the time when you lie upon your sick-bed and death-bed? Why do men upon their sick and death-beds cry, Oh that I might but live, then I would serve God better; I would not live in sin as heretofore I have done. Why? because then they are afraid they should go to hell. But now, if it were out of love, when I have the greatest prosperity of all, this shall gain my heart so much the more. Oh then you will be abundant in service, when you serve out of love.

Fourthly, And further, you must be obedient to God; the principle must be love. And look that in all your ways you be as obedient children: in Eph. v. 'As obedient children,' a command of God should be more to you than all the world besides. I will give you one instance that the Holy Ghost makes use of for the obedience of children to their parents, and that is, the obedience of the sons of the Rechabites. That the Holy Ghost doth record for their honour: Jer. xxxv. 5, 6, 'And I set before the sons of the

house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups; and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.' Mark their answer. 'But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever.' That was argument enough. This was a long time after the command; and though it was such a command that Jonadab had no power to enjoin upon his sons, but that was the obedience that they professed to owe to their father, that because their father commanded them, they would never drink wine though they might. Now, how many will call God Father, and say, Our Father which art in heaven, and the like, yet yield no obedience to him. Now though God their Father doth but command them that they should not be excessively in it, and if they be prone to wine or strong drink, that they should avoid the occasions of coming where wine and strong drink is, they regard it not. Ay, but remember it is thy Father that commands thee. The Rechabites would drink no wine at all if their father commanded them. Oh, the command of a Father should be strong unto us, if we profess ourselves to be children.

Fifthly, Another duty is to trust in our Father, and to rely upon him. If the father doth but promise anything, the child relies upon him. A child relies upon his father for provisions and all things needful. A child, when he comes to desire anything of his father, he doth not study arguments to persuade his father; it is enough to call him but father. The word father hath enough argument in it to persuade out all arguments whatsoever. If a stranger come to desire a thing, he must bring arguments to obtain it; but a child need not, because he is his father. And a stranger, if he lives upon another, though he hath a great many reasons to think why the other should maintain him, yet he will be afraid lest he should become burdensome unto him; but now a child doth not think so. Yea, if a child hath provoked his father, and he is angry with him, yet a child will trust to his father for all that; he is my father, and he will trust and rely yet upon his fatherly love; and there is no such way to obtain anything of his father as to cast himself upon his fatherly love. There is a great deal of difference between the confidence of a stranger and the confidence of a child; and a great deal of difference between the confidence of one that is begotten again by the Spirit of God—the confidence of a child and a stranger. I will give you that scripture for the confidence of the children of God trusting upon their Father, and relying upon his grace and mercy notwithstanding their offences: in Isa. lxiv. 6, 7, 'But we all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken

us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirs up himself to take hold on thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities;’ then in ver. 8, ‘But now, O Lord, thou art our Father;’ for all this, though we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade away as a leaf, and there is none that calleth upon thy name. We are all wicked and vile, and thou hast even consumed us; but now, O Lord, thou art our Father.’ This is that that answers all, ‘thou art our Father;’ still she relies upon God as a father. Oh this title of Father, it is a mighty rock of faith, a mighty foundation of faith unto all the saints, that God is their Father. Oh trust then in him, rely upon him for supply, for help! Were it not a great dishonour to any father that his children should go to all his neighbours to beg bread, and say, My father will not give it me, and I shall be starved for all my father. This would be accounted a great dishonour. Parents would have their children look to their duty, and let them alone for providing for them. So if thou callest God Father, let God alone for providing for thee, and rely upon him, as the heart of a child doth rely upon the parents for whatsoever it stands in need of. And therefore if you should come into any great sufferings, yet still exercise faith upon God as a Father. There is that promise for the helping of the faith of a child: in 2 Cor. vi. 18, ‘I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ Mark, it is an exhortation to come out from false worship: ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ If we seek to worship God as a Father, and come out from all false worship, then it may be we shall suffer much, and men will oppose and hate us, and we are like to meet with hard things in the world. Well, saith God, though others should cast you out of all, though your very parents should be against you, ‘yet I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ I am the Lord Almighty, and able to do you good, able to help you and supply all your wants; and therefore, ‘be not afraid, rely and trust in me, for I am your Father, saith the Lord Almighty.’

Again, If you be children, then delight in the presence of your Father. Make use of the Spirit of adoption; come often before your Father. When you go to prayer, do not go to prayer merely as a duty, but go to prayer as children use to go to their father. Oh, God takes much delight in the spirit of adoption! I remember, it is an expression that Luther hath about it; saith he, The word *father* hath

more elegancy before God, than Demosthenes or Cicero had in all their elegant orations; and it pierces the heavens, and fills the heavens with the noise of it. Oh make use of the spirit of adoption! oh love to be in the presence of thy Father! though God thy Father may seem to be angry with thee, yet do not go out of his presence. A child, if he hath a childish disposition, and not a base, sordid disposition, he will not be cast out of the presence of the father. You may read in Ps. li. 11, though it was a time when God was angry with David, yet ‘Lord, cast me not out of thy presence;’ as if he should say, Let me be in thy presence, though it be thy frowning countenance. Oh prize duty as thy privilege, to be often in prayer to thy Father. You that pray merely as a task, and do not know what the meaning of the spirit of adoption is, do not know what it is for your hearts to spring within you when you go to God in prayer, surely there is a great deal of cause that you should fear that you are not yet among the number of children.

Seventhly, And then, if you be God’s children, be zealous for him. A child would be zealous for the honour of his father, yea, a child would fight for his father though his father be angry with him; a servant will not do so for his master. I remember Cressus his son upon a time seeing his father in danger; the story saith he was born dumb, but when he saw a soldier ready to kill his father, presently the natural affection that he had did break the bars of his speech, and made him cry out, Oh, spare Cressus! He never spake word before, yet when he came to see his father in danger, that brake open his lips, and made him cry, Oh, kill not Cressus. So it should be with you; though you never spake word in all your lives, yet when you see your Father dishonoured, oh cry out, Oh spare the honour of God, do nothing against the honour of God. You that are of the meekest, quietest spirits, that you can put up anything concerning yourselves, yet when you see your Father struck at, that should make your spirits boil within you. If you were children you would do so.

Eighthly, And you would imitate your father: ‘Be ye holy, as your heavenly father is holy; and shew forth the image of your father.’ It is the honour of a child to be like his father; a father loves his child so much the more. I remember it was said of Theodosius’ son, that good emperor, he would never die so long as his son lived; and we say of some that such a man will never be dead so long as this child is alive. Thus it should be with all the children of God: ‘They should labour to hold forth the virtues of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.’ 1 Pet. ii. 9. They should so walk as every one that converses with them they should put them in mind of God. There should be

the image of God in the child, that every time he be looked upon men may be put in mind of God. I have heard out of the world what a holy God God is, and Jesus Christ was of a meek and quiet spirit. I have heard much of God in his word; and every time I see the holy carriage of such a one, I am put in mind of God, for certainly they are led by the Spirit of God. That is the evidence of a child in Rom. viii., 'If we be led by the Spirit of God, we are the sons of God.' And among other things, in the point of peaceableness be like your Father there. If you would have evidence that you are begotten from above, I say shew forth the gracious Spirit of God in you, in the loving of peace, that so you may not only be the children of God, and have comfort to your own souls, that you are the children of God, but that you may be called the children of God.

And that is the next point, that this is a great blessing, not only to be the children of God, but to be called the children of God; and this is the duty of all such as are the children of God, to walk so before men, as they may be called God's children, that the thoughts of men may be convinced of them so as to say, Verily, these are the children of the living God.

Ninthly, And let the children of God walk one towards another as children of the same Father. Though it is true the children of vile persons that have no education at all, but are rude, they will be fighting one with another, and their parents perhaps look on, because they are rude and have no breeding; but if men of any rank and quality in the world, that have breeding themselves, and bestow breeding upon their children, should see them wrangle and fight one with another before their face, oh how grievous would it be to them. It is enough that the children of the world wrangle one with another and fight; let not those that profess God to be their Father, oh let them not in the presence of their Father wrangle and fight one with another, for certainly the Spirit of God cannot bear it. But we pass to that remains.

They shall not be called the children of God.

They shall not only be so, but be accounted so in the world before men. That is then the point.

Doct. That it is a great blessing not only to be God's children, but to walk so as to convince all with whom we live that we are the children of God, so as in their consciences they shall own us to be God's children—they shall call us so. It was a great part of the glory of Christ himself, not only to be the Son of God, but to be declared the Son of God: Rom. i. 4, 'And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' He was the Son of God, that was glory; and he was declared to be the Son of God, that was a special part of his glory likewise; and so it is a great addition of glory to be one that

shall be called the son of God. Christ did lay much upon that, that the world might know that God had sent him. Often he speaks of that. Why, was it not enough, oh blessed Saviour, that thou thyself didst know that the Father sent thee, and the Father knew he sent thee? No; he would have the world to know that the Father sent him; and it is that that the saints should prize as a great blessing of God, that even the world should know the relation that they have to God—that they are 'the children of God.' They shall be called so, for by walking so as that men shall be forced to acknowledge them to be God's children. Hereby,

First, There comes a great deal of glory to themselves. They are honoured in the very consciences of men.

Yea, secondly, Hereby their Father is glorified, when their lives shall hold forth whose they are.

Yea, by this their profession is glorified, and the mouths of wicked men are stopped by this means; men's consciences are convinced; there is much good done by this. Such as have not only grace, but manifest it to the conviction of others, they are of great use in the places where they live. Nay, you shall have the wickedest and vilest say, Were they all but like those, then I could have good thoughts of them; then we could not tell what to say against them. Oh, they would be ready to hearken to anything that is said whenas there is a conversation so as is convincing before them. It will be a means to restrain their malice against others, when they see that some at least walk so as to manifest nothing but the image of God. Oh, it is a great blessing to be such a one as shall force even wicked men to call them God's children. Wherefore, let us,

First, Know it is not enough, then, to have grace in the heart—to say, What do I care for men, so long as I have a good conscience. No; it is the duty of all to walk so as they may be 'called the children of God.' Therefore, it is not enough to have grace in the heart, but it must appear.

Secondly, How vile are those, then, that make profession of a near relation unto God, and yet walk so as there is nothing of God appears in them; so as by their scandalous, wicked lives they make men to think they do God good service to persecute them, and all in that way. If ever there were times wherein God's children should walk as children—should make conscience to walk so as to convince the world, then now it is; and woe to those that now are offensive. Woe to those that are scandals in such times as these, that do open the mouths of wicked men, not only against themselves, but against all that are in their way. The world is set upon offences, and glad of offences, and therefore should God's children labour to walk the more inoffensive. But either of these we shall come to speak to more fully, and of the point

too, if we shall ever come to ver. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' And therefore I only speak to this now in reference to that in the text, to peacemaking, 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.' Peacemaking is a very convincing thing; and therefore such as hope they are God's children, they should manifest it in this, in being of peaceable dispositions. There are some that we hope do belong to God; and yet they are of such rugged dispositions, of such harsh natures, of such froward dispositions, that there is little of the Spirit of God appears in them. They are as furious and froward and peevish in their ways, as if they had nothing of God in their hearts. They manifest nothing but an evil and a proud and a perverse and a froward spirit in their families, and wherever they converse with any. Oh, this is vile! But now all such as profess themselves to be of God should manifest themselves to be God's children in this particular, in being of peaceable, of meek, of gentle, and of loving dispositions. Make conscience of this, all you professors of religion. It is that that is cast upon many professors of religion, that they are as proud and froward, if they be but crossed, as any. There is no quietness, humility, gentleness, meekness, patience, nor love appears in them. Oh, learn from the connexion of these two, to take out this lesson this day, that, as in many other things, you should manifest yourselves to be God's children, so in a special manner in manifesting a gentle, meek, patient, loving spirit, both in your families and the places where God hath set you in.

And further, Not only to be of peaceable spirits, but to be so peaceable as to manifest the Spirit of God in you—to be peaceable as a child of God; for a man or woman may naturally have a peaceable spirit. Some men cannot endure to be troubled, nor they will trouble nobody else. They live quietly among their neighbours, and they love no trouble. This doth not always come from a gracious disposition, but from a dull and sluggish spirit.

Quest. But you will say then, When is a man of such a peaceable disposition as he manifests himself to be a child of God in that peaceableness of his?

Ans. First, When our peaceableness doth not hinder our duty; when a man, though he love peace, yet he loves to perform his duty too. He can be peaceable among men, and yet be active in the performance of his duty to God. He can stir in the cause of God and public good, and yet can carry it on in a peaceable way too. Some men think there is no way to be peaceable but to do nothing. Let all things go which way they will, for their parts they love not to put their finger into the fire; and these are commended

for quiet and peaceable neighbours. Ay, thou mayest be commended for this before some men; but certainly God will never own thee for his child in this kind of peaceableness. But here is the peaceableness of a child of God: when a man living in the place where God hath set him shall consider, What is the duty that God requires at my hand in my relations as a husband, a master, as a chief man in the parish? What is the duty that God would have me to do? What service can I do for God? How far may I promote the glory of God in the place where he hath set me? Whatsoever becomes of mine own peace and quiet, I will venture to appear in the cause of God; and in the place where God hath set me, I will be as active as possibly I can, yet so as I hope, through God's grace, there shall appear nothing but a peaceable, quiet spirit. Oh it is an excellent temper! There is the Spirit of God in this, when men can tell how to come in between these two—that is, between a dead, sluggish spirit, and between a violent, furious spirit. There is a middle between these. Some men, because they see others to be of violent and furious spirits, they think it is best for them to do nothing. And then other men, because they would avoid sluggishness and slothfulness, they carry it on in a furious and violent way; and so they manifest nothing of God's Spirit on the other side. But now one that is led by the Spirit of God, he knows how to be active and stirring in doing his duty, and yet he can tell how to carry on the work with meekness, quietness, and peaceableness notwithstanding. Here is a child of God indeed.

Secondly, When a man is of a peaceable disposition, and he doth aim at God in it more than at his own quiet. Some men they are of peaceable dispositions. But why? It is merely because they are loath to have any trouble, therefore they will be at peace. But now when a man or woman shall consider this, by disturbance and disquiet and discontentedness, oh what abundance of dishonour comes to God! and what abundance of sin is caused between brethren, many times between those that are good, between such as live in a family, and neighbour and neighbour. Now, then, to the end that I might avoid so great sin, and to the end that I may honour God, so as I know God may be honoured by a peaceable, quiet, humble, and meek disposition, therefore it is I will deny myself rather in that that would be suitable to the flesh. I find that my flesh is prone enough to seek revenge, and to make others that have wronged me to know that they have wronged me. But that I might prevent sin, and bring honour to the name of God, mine own ends shall lie by, and I will rather put up wrongs, and walk peaceably with men, and seek to endeavour it with others too. This is such a peaceable spirit that argues him to be a child of God,

that aims at God, and denies himself. Some men would be peaceable when it may serve for their own ends; but now to be peaceable one's-self, and to make peace with others, and I shall get nothing by it, but I account my good to be wrapped in the glory of God; and so I make peace, because I would not have the name of God to suffer. Here is a peacemaker, that shall be called a child of God.

Thirdly, And then further, such a kind of peacemaker as God himself; as we find recorded in Scripture is attributed to God—to make peace as God doth.

As thus, first, God he is willing to be at peace with those that are unworthy.

Yea, secondly, To those that have wronged him. It is not enough to say, They have wronged me, and they are unworthy, yet you should labour for peace with them, for God causes his sun to shine upon the unjust as well as upon the just; and we are commanded to love our enemies, that thereby we may be declared to be the sons of God.

Thirdly, God he begins the work of peace. If God should not have begun the work of reconciliation between man and himself, what had become of us all? Now those that would be such peacemakers as to evidence that they are the children of God, they should not stand thus and say, He hath wronged me, let him yield first. No; if God had said so, what had become of us? but God yields first. Oh now be you a child of God in this, to labour for peace as God doth; and begin first with them. If they will not begin with you, according to their duty, yet do you begin with them, as a child of God ought to do, who would be like unto his Father.

And then lastly, Be such a peacemaker as to love the peace, and that only, that God loves and delights in. Your Father loves truth, but he loves truth and peace and holiness together; let there not be anything against holiness in the maintenance of peace. God would not have any of his children commit any sin for peace, to save themselves from trouble, or to save others from trouble; that they may purchase their own peace, he would not have them purchase it with sin. It is true, a man cannot buy peace too dear, except it be by sin; but any one sin committed for the gaining of your own peace, or the peace of others, I say in that you buy gold too dear. This is not the peacemaking that becomes the child of God; but 'blessed are they that are peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.' And thus much concerning ver. 9. But we proceed to ver. 10.

'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'—MAT. v. 10.

It is a strange kind of blessing this too, as the other were. Some of the other blessednesses seem

to be strange, as the first—blessed are the poor, and they that mourn, that they should be blessed; and now they that are persecuted, is it not as strange that they should be the blessed men in the world? Christ begins with the poor, and ends with the persecuted, when he would shew who are the most blessed men in the world. My brethren, see whether the wisdom of Christ be like the wisdom of the world, yea or no. When you would describe a blessed man, would you begin with the poor and end with the persecuted? Oh the wisdom of Christ, it is not according to the wisdom of the world! the thoughts of Christ concerning blessedness are not according to the thoughts of the world.

And then, secondly, This is to be wondered at, that Christ should have need to speak of the blessedness of those that are persecuted, after he had mentioned the blessedness of the former. What! blessed are the peacemakers, and blessed are the persecuted; what agreement is there between these two, or what connexion can there be? For if a man be of a peaceable disposition, who will harm him? Why, surely they will escape persecution of all men. It may be there are some, though godly, yet are of a turbulent disposition, and are furious and hot; they perhaps may be persecuted, but will the peacemakers be persecuted? Will those that in the places where they live are no occasion of evil to any that they live among, but labour to do all the good that possibly they can, and yet shall these be persecuted? Yes, truly; even these if they be godly, these if they be righteous, these must not think to escape. None that are truly godly and righteous, though they be of the most quiet and peaceable dispositions in the world, they must not think to escape; and therefore these two are joined together. Yea, this blessedness that follows upon persecution is added to all the former, to note that a man may be all the former, and yet a persecuted man. As thus: a man may be of a very poor and humble spirit, and yet persecuted; a man may be of a mournful spirit, mourn for his own sins, and for the sins of others, and yet persecuted; a man may be of a meek spirit, and yet persecuted; a man may be hungering and thirsting after righteousness; a man may be a merciful man, and yet persecuted; a man pure in heart, not having any base ends of his own, and yet persecuted; yea, a man may be a peacemaker, and yet persecuted. Such is the wickedness of the world, the vileness of the nature of man, that there is nothing in the world can keep him from persecuting of the saints, though they be of never such poor, and mourning, and meek, and pure, and merciful, and peaceable hearts. This for the connexion.

Blessed are they that are persecuted. *Διούκωμένοι*, the word translated *persecuted*, coming of *διώκειν*, it

signifies the following of a thing hard, a hard following of a thing; it is taken sometimes of a good sense. The same word that is here, and in divers other scriptures, is taken in an ill sense; it is often taken in a good. 1 Thes. v. 15, 'Follow that that is good,' saith the text there; *τὸ ἀγαθὸν διώκετε*, persecute that which is good. And in Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace,' there is the same word; 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 'Follow after charity,' there is the same word there too. It signifies, therefore, so to follow a thing, as not to leave it till we have gotten what we would have. So the apostle uses it in Phil. iii. 14, 'I press towards the mark;' I persecute the mark, as it were—that is, look with what eagerness I did ever follow the saints in the persecution of them, I do now with the same eagerness press towards the mark. A man that hath an eager spirit doth press towards a thing. Now, as it is applied in an ill sense, taking the meaning of it, to follow the thing thoroughly. Now if you would know what persecution is, it is nothing but this:

A pertinacious following of one to do him hurt, tending to his destruction. When men do follow eagerly a business that is evil, and follow a man or woman in a thing to do hurt to them, and follow them eagerly, and resolve never to leave till they have got their wills of them, they may be said to persecute these men; for persecution is not merely to do a man hurt. There is a difference between wronging a man and persecuting a man. They may do them wrong in some one act; they may do them wrong accidentally. But now persecution is when, intending to follow a man or woman in a constant way, and resolve never to leave them until they have had their wills of them. Oh, blessed are they that are persecuted, that are followed by the world—those that the persecutors of the world are set upon, and are eager to do hurt unto. This is for righteousness. It is not the punishment, but the cause that makes the martyr. Those are not blessed that are followed hard for their sin, for their wickedness—that suffer for wickedness, that suffer for evil doers, for God would not have them suffer so. No; that is a part of the curse of God upon them—that as they do evil, so they should suffer evil. Now the saints that are blessed, they labour to be so far from suffering for evil-doing, that they would rather suffer all the evil in the world than do the least. There is a great deal of difference between these two.

'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

If you observe it, here is the same promise made to them that suffer persecution, as to those that are poor in spirit. Ambrose upon the place saith this: One is a promise of the soul's blessing. The poor in spirit, they shall have their souls blessed for ever in the kingdom of heaven. And the other is a promise of blessing to the body for bodily afflictions. Blessed

are those that are persecuted, for even their bodies shall go to heaven. But I think that doth not attain to the meaning of the Holy Ghost here. But I should rather take it thus, that those that are poor in spirit they think themselves unworthy of anything; they seem to be of the lowest form of all the saints of God, the poor in spirit are dejected in the sight and sense of their own poverty. And such as suffer persecution, they are of the highest form: the martyrs that suffer for Jesus Christ, oh they are glorious creatures. Saith one that is dejected in the sight and sense of his own poverty: I am a poor-spirited man or woman, I am not able to get through my difficulty. I am unworthy that ever God should look at me. Indeed, there are others that are of excellent spirits, and whatsoever opposition they meet withal, they can suffer the spoiling of their goods, imprisonment—they can suffer reproach, they can resist unto blood, can suffer torments for Jesus Christ—yea, they are happy men. Now mark, the same promise is both to the poor in spirit that is dejected, and thinks he is unworthy of anything—he hath the same promise with them that suffer martyrdom for Jesus Christ. A poor weak Christian may come to have the same glory that the most glorious martyr ever had. Therefore this self-same promise is annexed to both these.

Further, This is annexed to those that are persecuted, because such as are persecuted here in this world, their name is cast out as filth and vile; they are accounted to be wicked and ungodly men. Here the laws of kingdoms are against them, and the spirits of men that bear rule are ordinarily against them. Well, saith Christ to his disciples, be not troubled though here in the kingdoms of the world you suffer wrong, and are condemned as evil doers, you are followed as if you were the disturbers of the places where you live; be not troubled, yours is the kingdom of heaven. As I remember, Luther said in another case, when he heard of the determinations against him at Nurenberg: It is otherwise concluded in heaven than in Nurenberg. So may such as are persecuted comfort themselves in this, though the kingdoms of the world set themselves against us, yet ours is the kingdom of heaven. There is another court where all things shall be examined over again, and there the enemy shall be cast.

And then, secondly, Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. That is, whereas by persecution here you suffer the loss of your names, the loss of your liberties, the loss of your estates, the loss it may be of your lives; be not discouraged, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. It is the way to that kingdom which will require all. You shall have as much glory as ever you did endure affliction in suffering. There shall be a proportion of glory to your suffering. As I remember it is said of Caligula the emperor, Agrippa

having suffered before he was emperor in speaking for him in his cause, so as he was cast into prison, and had an iron chain laid upon him; as soon as ever he came to the empire, one of the first things was to release Agrippa, and he gave him presently a chain of gold, that did weigh as much as the chain of iron did weigh when he was in prison. So saith Christ, 'Yours is the kingdom of heaven;' look, according to what you suffer here in this world, so you shall have your reward in the kingdom of heaven. And thus you have the meaning of this blessedness opened to you.

Now then, there are these three points that are the principal points in this verse:—

First, That all the disciples of Christ, live they never so inoffensively in the world, yet they must expect to suffer persecution, and that for righteousness.

Secondly, That though they be brought to suffer persecution, yet they are and shall be blessed in this their suffering. They should not at all be discouraged and troubled at their sufferings; for in the midst of them all they are blessed, and shall be so.

Thirdly, That this is the great blessedness of the saints, and in a more special manner, the blessedness of such as suffer persecution, that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. They shall have the kingdom of heaven for their reward.

I had thought to have spoken of the first point, but I see I cannot go on in it. I will only open that text in Timothy, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.' Mark, here it is all that will live godly.

Why, they may be godly, you will say, and yet they are very indiscreet in their way, and have not wisdom to carry themselves, and so they may bring sufferings upon themselves. No, all that will live godly.

And then, all that will live godly—that is, if the heart of a man or woman be set upon the ways of godliness, that he is resolved upon it that he will live godly whatsoever comes of it—he must make account to suffer. Indeed, there is many a one in a family begins to think, my ways are not good, and these ways in the family are not good, and I would I did better. Oh, but then my master or mistress will hate me, my friends will hate me; therefore let me take heed what I do. And so the wife perhaps is afraid of the hard usage of her husband, though she hath some conviction of conscience. Ay, but all that will live godly; though I desire I might have the love of master, and mistress, and friends, but whatever I suffer, this I see to be the way of God, and I am resolved upon it, I will set upon this course.

And then, all that will live godly. The English word that we have for godliness is as significant as any to set out the nature and work of grace in the

heart; for it is to live from a principle of God, unto the glory of God, that is, to live godly. When men are resolved that the principle that shall guide them in their lives shall not be any carnal principle, principles of fleshly wisdom, but they shall be the principles of godliness, which they shall receive from God, and that that I shall aim at, it shall be that I may live to the praise and honour of God. I am resolved that though I have lived heretofore to myself, to provide for mine own ease, and all that time I lived quietly, but now I am resolved not to live any further to myself, but to God. All that will live godly.

And all that live godly. If men or women content themselves in bare wishes: Why, we may have a good heart to God; what need I trouble myself and make such shows in the world, so long as I keep a good heart to God? These may avoid persecution, but if they will live godly, that is, manifest it in their lives and conversations, they must suffer.

And then, lastly, All that will live godly in Christ Jesus. There is a kind of profession of religion that men have without any suffering—that is, for them to keep from gross and notorious sins in the world, may, but all that will live godly in Christ Jesus—that is, all that will live godly in the power of Christ Jesus, in the Spirit of Christ Jesus—all that shall manifest the power, and Spirit, and life of Jesus Christ in their carriages—all that will live godly in Jesus Christ: so that it seems there is a kind of godliness, which the world takes for godliness, that is not in Christ Jesus, there is no manifestation of the power and life and efficacy of the Spirit of Christ Jesus in it. But now, those that will live so godly, they must make account to suffer persecution, and the more eminent and forward they are, they must make account to suffer the more. Men that go on in a fair kind of way, as in former times, men that were so discreet in their way as that they were shy of suffering, and whatsoever came of it they would be sure to take heed of that; and they did not love these zealous men, and so they avoided persecution. But now, had their hearts been forward in the way of godliness, and their hearts zealous in the spirit of Christ, then they could not have avoided persecution. Those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution—all of them. This lesson Paul learned even from Christ himself; though he lived not in Christ's time, yet it was taught him by Christ. Christ appeared to him, and he had the Spirit of Christ, and no question knew of this sermon of Christ, that all the disciples of Christ were forewarned that they must make account of persecutions. And you shall find it, that as soon as ever Paul was converted, the first thing that was told him was, that he must suffer great things. Acts ix. 17. 'For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.' Why, Paul, a young convert, yet when

he was first converted, the very first time he gave in his name to Jesus Christ, the first thing that he must be told was this, what great things he must suffer for Jesus Christ. The Lord Christ will train up converts

at the very first in this point. This is, therefore, a very useful point for young professors of religion to consider of: that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer affliction.

SERMON XXXII.

OR,

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST MUST EXPECT PERSECUTION.

'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'—MAT. v. 10.

WE made a little entrance into the first point; and it was towards the close of the exercise, so that we went but a little way.

That all the disciples of Christ must expect persecution. This is the first lesson that Christ teaches any that come to him. 'If any will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me;' and in Acts ix. 16; as soon as ever Saul was converted, presently it was declared to him what things he must suffer for Christ's sake; and in 2 Tim. iii. 12, the apostle pronounces that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. We spent a little time in the opening of that text, shewing what an emphasis there is almost in every word. But I shall proceed for the farther opening of the point by Scripture, examples, and reason, and so apply it.

We read in the book of Joshua of the Jebusites, as soon as ever they had entered into covenant with Joshua and the people of God, the kings round about them rose up against them. They were quiet enough with their neighbours before, but when they had entered into covenant with Joshua, then they rose up against them. Though men may be quiet enough living in the world, before God works upon their spirits, but if they will give up their names to Jesus Christ to come into the covenant with him, then they must expect to suffer persecution, that all the world will be against them. In Gen. xv. 12, 17, see what the Lord tells Abraham concerning his posterity: 'When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.' (It was presently upon the covenant that God had made with him and his seed.) Ye shall find, in the beginning of the chapter, God appeared to him, and told him he was his shield, and his exceeding great reward; and in ver. 5 he makes

him a promise of his seed likewise: Look towards heaven, 'and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; so shall thy seed be,' and he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. It was therefore a covenant of grace that God made with Abraham, couched under some dark expressions. Yet Abraham knew it to be a covenant of grace, and therefore his faith was justifying faith, it was accounted for righteousness. Now as soon as he had made this promise, in ver. 12, God caused him to fall into this deep sleep, and a horror of great darkness fell upon him. To what end was that? It was to shew him, that though he had brought his seed into covenant with him, yet they must suffer great afflictions in Egypt. And ver. 17, 'It came to pass that when the sun went down and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.' That was presented to him to declare to him the sufferings of his seed in Egypt, which was a type of the sufferings of all believers to the end of the world. That text likewise from the New Testament may be instead of all: Acts xiv. 22, 'Exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.' You must expect tribulation in the entering into the kingdom of God; that is the godly man's text. The worldly man's text is in Job xxi. 13. There is a text that a worldly heart will close with: 'They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.' That concerns a worldly man; here he shall spend his days in wealth, though in a moment he goes down to the grave: but the godly, he must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of heaven. You find that Peter dared not pray against all persecutions for the saints. 1 Pet. v. 10: 'But,' saith he, 'the God of all grace,