Colos. 3. v. 11. last end of it.

But Christ is all in all.

March 28
1641.

It is not long since (as some of you may remember) that in this place that subject was handled of the Saints enjoyment of God, to be all in all, out of 1 Cor. 15. v. 28. and then I told you we had such an expression in Scripture but onely twice: applied to God in the happiness of the Saints enjoyment of him in heaven, and applied here to Christ, of what Christ is to them for the present. That which was handled about God's being all in all, is the end: this that is to be delivered concerning Christ being all in all, is that which brings the soul to that blessed end. Wherefore then, as Christ himself saies, John 14. 1. Ye believe in God, believe also in me: So I say, as God shall be all in all eternally to the Saints, doe you believe in that? believe also in this, that I am to deliver to you this day, that Christ be is all and in all.

The Apostle Saint Paul was a chosen vessel to beare the name of Christ, to carry it up and downe, in the world: and indeed his spirit was full of Christ, he desired to know nothing but Christ, to Preach nothing but Christ, to be found in none but Christ; the very name of Christ was delightfull to him; he seekes in all his Epistles to magnifie Christ, and in these words (that I have read unto you) he doth omnifie Christ; he makes him not onely great, but makes him all. There is neither Greake nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all; that is, there is no privilidge in the one to commend them to God, and no want of any thing in the other to hinder them from God; let men be what they will in their outward respects, what is that to God?
God? let them be never so mean in regard of all outwards, that cannot hinder them from the enjoyment of God: for God lookes not at these things, but Christ is all and in all to them; so farre as God seeth Christ in any, he acceptes of them: if Christ be not there, whatever they have, he regards them not. Christ is all in all, even in the esteeme of the Father himselfe: he was the delight of the father from all eternity, Prov. 8:30. and the father tooke infinite contentment in him upon his willingness to undertake this blessed worke of the redemption of mankind. God the father is infinitely satisfied in Christ, he is all in all to him: Surely if Christ be an object sufficient for the satisfaction of the father, much more then is he an object sufficient for the satisfaction of any soul.

But that which is the maine scope here of the holy Ghost in this high expression of Christ's transcendent excellency (that I may come presently to it) I shall deliver it in this doctrinall proposition, That Christ is the onely means of conveyance of all good that God the Father intends to communicate unto the children of men, in order to eternal life; he is all, and in all. This that I am now to Preach unto you, namely, God's communicating of himselfe in his mercy to mankind, through a mediatour, it is the very sum of the Gospell, the great mystery of godliness, 'tis the chief part of the minde and counsell of God, that he would have made knowne to the children of men in this world. This is the great embaillage that the ministers of the Gospell have to bring unto the sons and daughters of men, and 'tis the most absolutely necessary point in all Divinity.

I suppose in the first hearing of it, every one yeilds to the truth of it; 'tis true you will say, we can have no good from God, but in and by Christ. Well, there is a great deal in that you say, when you say all must come from God in Christ: in all your prayers and petitions you usually conclude them through Jesus Christ; but certainly this is many times spoken when we see little of the glory of God that there is in such an expression: and that which I shall this day endeavour, shall be to shew you somewhat of the glory of God shining in this truth that God doth communicate himselfe through a mediatour, through his son. This is the great point of Divinity that is absolutely
folutely necessary to be known to eternall life: it is possible to be ignorant of many other truths, and yet be saved; but there must be some knowledge of this, or there can be no salvation: the mistake in this very thing is the miscarriage, and the eternall undoing of thousand thousands of souls; many there are who believe that they have need of, and can never be saved but by Gods mercy, and this the light of nature convinceth us of: but that God is to communicate his mercy through a mediator, this they are ignorant of, and see not into the reallity of this truth; and miscarry and perish eternally with cryes to God for mercy, because they come to God, but not through a mediator. This is the sum of the Gospell, and the most supernaturnall truth revealed in all the book of God. It is a truth that was hidden almost from all the world for many ages; the Scripture faith, *The Princes of the world knew it not.* A truth we are not able to understand any thing of by the light of nature. 

1 Cor.1.21. *The world by wisdome knew not God, that is, by all their arts and sciences, by all their natural wisedome, they knew not God savingly; they did not know God in Christ.* There is no footsteps of this truth in all the works of creation or providence; therefore in Ephes. 3.8. Saint Paul layes, he was appointed to Preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; that riches that hath no footsteps: that is the propriety of the word; there is no footsteps of the riches of the Gospell in the creature; therefore you cannot trace it there; whereas many other points of religion have many footsteps in the creature, and by the light of nature much may be discovered about God: as that all our good consists in communion with God, that when we have offended God, we must seek to him for pardon and mercy, and the like; But that God communicates himself through Christ, and that not one drop of mercy in order to eternall life can be communicated from God, but through Christ the mediator, of this there is not one foot-step in all the works of God.

This is that which is so supernaturall, that *tis above perfect nature. Adam knew nothing of this in his perfect estate. Yea this is that which the Angels themselves desire to pry into, looking upon it as a mighty depth. 1 Peter 1. 12. the Angels stoop down (for so the word signifieth) *tis as if a thing should lie
lye in a deep pit, and when any would see it, they stoop down with their bodies to pry into the pit: that's the propriety of the word: so the Angels they see a mighty depth in the mystery of the Gospel, and they stoop downe to pry into it, that they may know what it is. Yea this is that which requires a worke of the Spirit, beyond the ordinary work of the Spirit of God, to reveale it to the soul, 1 Cor. 2.10. Speaking there of the Mystery of the Gospel, saies the Apostle, The Spirit that searcheth the deep things of God, &c. discovers this; that is, the Spirit of God in an extraordinary worke of his, as he is a Spirit searching the deep things of God, so he is a discovering Spirit of this truth unto us: and therefore seeing it is thus, it is not so light to be past over. I, you will say, 'tis true, it must come through Jesus Christ; well, you see a little Spirit, but there is much more in this truth than we are aware of. 'Tis a truth that is the most profitable: all the truths contained in the book of God: there is no growth up in godliness till we come to know God in Christ: the knowledge of God is something to worke upon the heart, and many labour against their sinne because they see it is against the law of God, and set upon duties because God requires them; and this is well; but till they come to understand indeed the mystery of the Gospel of Gods letting himselfe out unto his people through a mediator, they doe but bungle in the wayses of godliness, they doe not thrive and grow up in them; and therefore those Christians that live under such a ministry, where though they have many good truths revealed to them, yet having but little of the mystery of Christ, as the mediator, their way of Christianitie is very low, they doe not sanctifie God in their conversation. I remember a speech that Erasimus hath when they would have had him write against Luther, and promised him a great Bishopricke for it: he answers, Luther is greater then that I can write against him; for I am instructed more in one small page of Luther, then out of whole Thomas Aquinas, that was the great Schoolman. So certainly the understanding but some one truth, some one sentence in the mystery of the Gospel, in this way of Gods communication of himselfe unto us through his Christ, doth instruct the soul, and cause it to thrive and grow up in godliness abundantly.
dantely more then thousands of Sermons about mere moralities: and you have a most admirable Text for this, Ephe. 3. 17. and so on, That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge: mark what follows, That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God, v. 19. By coming to know God in Christ, that is, to know Christ to be the way of God's communicating himselfe unto us, we come to be filled with all the fulness of God: many Christians their hearts are very scant and empty, there is not a fulness in their spirits; and all because they know so little of God in Christ, in this mystery of the Gospel.

Lastly, there is no truth revealed in all the Scriptures whereby we can honour God so much as by this: this indeed is the great honour that God would have in the world, to be honoured in his Son, and in the great designe he hath of bringing forth glorious things by his Son; and therefore though we know never so much of God, and would honour him meerely as the Creator of heaven and earth, yet God doth not accept of that honour, that is but to honour him in a natural way; we never know what it is to honour God aright, so as to be accepted of him, till we come to honour him in an Evangelicall way, to honour him in his Son: and yet the greatest honour he hath from most in the world, yea from multitudes in the very Church of God, that heare the mystery of Christ opened to them, is tended up to him meerely in a natural way, and not in this spirituall Evangelicall service of God. You see now the consequence of the point, let us then fall to it.

And First I shall shew you the truth of it in Scripture. And Secondly how it comes to passe that there can be no good communicated to us from God in order to eternall life but by Christ.

And Thirdly, how Christ comes to be the meanes and way of conveyance of all good unto us from his father.

Fourthly, I shall instance in some speciall things, great things wherein most of the goodnesse of God is communicated to us, and shew you how in them Christ is all in all to us.

And
And Fiftly the reasons why God will have this way of communication of himselfe unto us through his Son, why he will not communicate himselfe immediatly to us, but through a mediator; these are the five things for the doctrinal part.

For the first, the course of Scripture especially of the new Testament runs this way; you know that of Christ, John 14. 6. I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me; there is no coming to the Father but by Christ, and Christ be is the way: and that in 1 Cor. 3. at the latter end, sayes the Apostle there: All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours. How is that? marke, All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's: God the Father he is the principle of all good; all firstly comes from him, but it comes not from him immediately: he doth not say, all are yours, for ye are Gods; because you have an interest in God, therefore all comes to be yours: no, but all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's; so that you see here how that Christ comes between yours and Gods.

All good is in God, true; but how shall we come to partake of that good? there is such a distance between these two terms, yours and Gods, that were not Christ in the middle, they would never come together. Yea, but Christs coming between, and joyning them together, then all are yours, because yee are Christ's, and Christ is God's; so that we may take the intent of the Holy Ghost here, in this similitude (though it be too low for the great mystery we are about to expresse.) Conceive God the father as the fountain of all good, and Christ as it were the Cisterne: and then from him, pipes conveyed to every believer; and faith, that sucks at the mouth of every pipe, and draws from God, but it comes from God through Christ. The Father he fills the Son with all good, and so it comes from the Father through the Son by faith unto the soul of every believer: we have a notable expression further of this mystery in the Epistle to the Ephes. in the second and third Chapters, in Chapter 2. verf. 12, having told them that they had been without hope, and without God in the world; but faith he verf. 13. Ye who sometimes were farre off, are made nigh by the bloud
blood of Christ: It is by the blood of Christ that you have any thing to do with God; but especially in Ephes. 3, 12. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him; in whom? in Christ, we come to have boldness and access: boldness, the word signifies liberty of speech that we can come with liberty of speech before God, and we have access: Manuduction, we are led by the hand of Christ to the father, there is no coming to the father but by Christ, and Christ he takes a believer by the hand and leads him to the father, and so he comes to have boldness: as if a Traytor should be banished, the Court, and afterward the Prince should be a means of his reconciliation with the King, and comes and takes the Traytor by the hand, and says to him, come, I will lead you in my hand to my father, and though you have provoked him, yet being in my hand, you need not be afraid, but may goe to him with boldness and confidence. Just the meaning of the Text here, In Christ we have boldness and access with confidence; and although before there was a dreadfull breach between the father and us, yet being led by the hand of Christ, there is access and freedome of speech for us: well the truth is cleare enough in the whole tenour of the Gospell.

If you would know now how it comes to passe, that though God be in himselfe the fountaine of all goodness and infinite mercy; that yet there is such a stoppage as it were that there is not one drop of this mercy can be communicated to the children of men but this way? that although we have to deal with God, who in his owne nature is infinitely mercifull; yet such is the case with man, and such are the termes between God and man, that there is not, I say, one drop of this infinite ocean can be expected to come for ever from God, but onely this way, It comes to passe thus:

First, because of the breach of the first covenant that God made with mankinde; for onely men and Angels, the humane and angelical nature, are capable of a covenant with God, to speak of a covenant properly: and because they are capable of this way of Gods proceeding with them, God would goe according to the nature of his creature; and therefore at first makes a covenant with them, and intended to convey
and communicate his goodness to them by that covenant, now this covenant being broken, and so there being a breach between God and man, there is a stoppage made by virtue of that breach: So that there is no good now to be had by virtue of the first covenant: and unless there be a second, there can be no good at all expected; the first being broken, and we being lost by that.

And further, there is such an infinite distance between God and us, that there can be no coming together; and that not so much in regard of God's excellency in himself, and our meaness, that we are such poor low creatures, as in regard of the infiniteness of his holiness, and our uncleanness and sinfulness, this makes the distance.

Besides, there is the strength of the law; the curse of the law is upon every soul naturally, and that stops: there was never vessel stopp'd closer to be kept from having a drop of liquor poured into it, than the curse of the law is close upon every soul, to keep mercy from it, so farre as God looks upon it meere in its naturals, and not through his Son.

Then there are the cries of infinite justice against men, which must have satisfaction: and till justice be satisfied mercy stirres not, unless it be in a way of providing satisfaction unto justice; so that put these together, the breach of the first covenant, the distance between God and man in regard of God's holiness and man's sinfulness, the power of the curse of the law upon man, and the cries of divine justice, that will never be quiet till it hath received satisfaction: these things, being rightly apprehended, we may come to see that we are farre off from receiving mercy from God, though he be an infinite fountain of mercy, except there be some strange way of conveying it to us. We know, according to God's dealing with the fallen Angels, there is no way of conveying mercy to them, but they are left to perish for ever; if the thousands of Angels that fell from God should be thousands of thousands of years crying out for mercy, they could not obtain one drop: why? because there is no mediator between God and them; and it would have been our case with them, had there not been a mediator between God and us. Many thinke
thine if they are sensible of their finnes, and can believe that
God is infinitely mercifull, they shall do well enough: but I
must tell you, that though there be infinite mercy in God, yet
if thou hast no interest in Christ, thou mayest be undone for
ever.

But how is Christ all in all to us in God's communication of
good to us?

The first ground of all is the covenant that God the Father
made with his Son from all eternity. Therefore in Titus 1. 2.
the Apostle speaks of the promise that was before the world be-
gan. Now this promise can be meant only of that covenant
that past between the Father and the Son: and therefore says
the Apostle in 1 Cor. 2. 9. 10. Eye hath not seen, nor ear have heard,
neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath
prepared for them which love him: but the Spirit which searcheth all
things, yea the deep things of God, hath revealed them unto us,
that is, the Spirit of God in the Gospel discovers what were the
eternal thoughts and purposes of God concerning us, and what
the transactions were between the Father and the Son in refe-
rence to man-kind before the world was. The covenant now
being between the Father and the Son, and the Father requir-
ing in this Covenant satisfaction to infinite divine justice,
Christ he yields to this.

And therefore in the second place, Christ he actually comes
to be the way of conveyance, by taking our nature upon him,
and so makes us reconcilable to God, by taking humane na-
ture into such a near union to the divine nature, to the se-
cond person in the Trinity; so as that there should be but
one person in them both, that there should be a personall union, which is the great mystery of the Gospell.
There are two great mysteries in the Gospell; the one, that
there should be divers persons in one nature; and this is the
mystery of the Trinity: the other that there should be divers
natures in one person; and this is the mystery of the hyposta-
atical union of our nature with Christ. So that Christ taking
mans nature into such a near union to himselfe, it was a
mighty preparative for God to have thoughts of peace to-
ward humane nature, rather then to the Angels: and it was
one
one part of his humility, and therefore hath a meritorious efficiency in this worke of reconciling God to man. But this was not sufficient.

Therefore in the third place, Christ was content now to come into the world, and be made the head of a second covenant between God and mankind; to performe what ever God the Father should require, for the satisfaction of divine Justice: so that, look as Adam by being the head of the first covenant, was the means of conveying all evil to us: so Christ by being the head of the second covenant, is the means of conveying all good to us; by his subjecting to this we come to receive all grace and mercy from God. And it could not have been otherwise; for though God would have thought of a second covenant, yet if he had left it to us to have performed the terms of it, we should as soon have broken that, as we did the first: but Christ undertaking to be the head of the second covenant, and performing whatever the Father required in it, by his perfect obedience to the law, and satisfaction to divine Justice, divine Justice had nothing to lay to the charge of those that Christ undertook to satisfy for: This was a mighty way of Gods letting out his grace and mercy to the souls of believers; for what is it that stops the current of his mercy? *is the curse of the law and cries of divine Justice: but now, Christ undertaking to undergoe that curse, and to satisfy divine Justice, God hath as much honour now by his suffering, as he had dishonour by mans sinning: so that mans sinne is made up in this; and that is it Justice requires. I have had dishonour by sinne sayes Justice, I must have this dishonour made up by suffering, and so much suffering as in which I must have as much honour as I had before dishonour in sinning. These are the conditions upon which God will be reconciled to man; and upon no other. I beseech you consider this, and herein you will see an infinite necessity of Christ: God is with us upon these terms: sayes God, you have sinned against me and dishonoured me; how doe you think to be delivered? why Lord, thou art mercifull: I, sayes God, but I am resolved upon this, I will have as much honour by suffering, as I had dishonour by
by sinning. And Lord what would have become of us, if we
had been left to make up this breach. This is the very reason,
why the damned in hell are there eternally, because they are
there upon these termes; saies God, I am infinite, and I am
dishonourd, and there they must ly here, till I have as much ho-
nour by their suffering as I had dishonour by their sinning.
Now after they have been there thousands of thousands of
yeares, still the honour of God calls for more: and therefore
they must lye there forever. But now, Christ who is the
great Saviour, he comes, and entering into covenant with
God, and fulfilling that covenant, he layes downe God such a
price, that God shall have as much honour in his suffering
for sinne, as he had dishonour before in the committing of
sinne. Now this being done, the current of mercy being
unstoped, and the passages of it opened, and God being infinite
in grace and mercy in himselfe, what a glorious way is
made for the streames of his mercy to issue and flow forth to
the children of men.

And (take in this one particular more, and then we shall
have done with this head) in this we may see, that God in
forgiving of sinne, and shewing mercy to sinfull creatures is
just; and goes in a way of Justice, as well as in a way of mer-
cy: therefore that Text Rom. 3.25.26. is very observable (a
Text that Luther for a while was exceedingly troubled about
the meaning of it) Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation,
through faith in his bloud, to declare his righteousness for the re-
mission of sinnes that are past, through the forbearance of God. To
declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just,
and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. This was that
which troubled Luther so much, that God should declare his
righteousness in the remission of sinnes: that God declares
his mercy every one knowes, but that God declares his righ-
teousness, and that Christ is set to be a propitiation, that
God might declare his righteousness, this may seem strange;
and then the Holy Ghost repeats it. To declare I say his right-
eousness: as if he should say, consider that God in the pard-
oning of sinne, doth not onely manifest his grace and mercy,
but declares his righteousness. That he might be just; and the
justifier,
justifier of him which believeth in Jesus; Not mercifull, but just: thus we see what way Christ takes to be the means of conveying God's goodnesse to us; by performing the covenant, and so satisfying divine Justice.

Lastly, he is the way of conveying good to us, as by his satisfaction, so by his intercession: for he is now, and shall for ever be, at the right hand of the Father in glory, making intercession for his people: that is, continually presenting before his Father the worke of his mediation, his merits, what he hath done and suffered, and as it were pleading with his Father for the conveyance of all needfull mercy and good unto the souls and bodies of his people whom he hath redeemed. As if he should every moment eternally speake thus to the Father: Father, behold here is my bloud, my merits, my death, all my sufferings; the worke of my humiliation, it is for these; yea for this poor soul, and for that poor soul particularly: for know that Christ thinks not only of the lumpe of believers in the generall, but particularly of every believer, and is continually presenting before the Father his infinite merits, to plead with him for supply of all grace and mercy to us: and thus he comes to be an infinite way of conveyance of good to the souls of his people, and so to be all and in all to them, both here and eternally: that is the third particular; how Christ comes to be the way of conveyance.

But now the fourth, and that is, to instance in some speciall things we have from God, and to manifest that Christ is all in all in those things; As now first, in the point of justification and the pardon of our sinnes, the acceptation of us as righteous: that is the great thing we stand in need of from God, Christ is all in all to us here: this is the tenour of the Gospell, Rom. 3.24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Luther hath this expression concerning justification: says he, in the point of justification, there Christ and faith must be onely put together; they must be alone, and nothing else with them; but in our conversation, there indeed comes in good workes: just as it is between the bridegroom and the bride, the bridegroom and the bride are alone.
alone in the bride chamber; but when they go abroad, there they have their traine and servants attending them: so he compares justification to the bride chamber; none but Christ and faith must be there; but when they come abroad in their conversation, then all other graces attend them, and good works come in; but Christ is all in all here.

First, it is not all we have done; no, nor all that we can possibly doe, that can be our justification. You will say, true, we have for the present done but little: I, but suppose any of you should doe your utmost in any particular that God requires: you will say, I hope if I doe what I can, God will accept it of me: no, you mistake exceedingly if you thinke so; people are very apt to look upon God as if the termes between God and them were no other then thus: God he is a pitifull and a mercifull God; and 'tis true, we are weak and can doe but little: but yet doing, what we are able, God he will accept the will for the deed: no, God accepts not the will for the deed in point of justification. It is true, in those that are already justified, God in the performance of duty accepts the will for the deed, so as to take delight in them: but in point of justification, as to pardon of sinne and acceptance to righteousness, there he must have perfect obedience; and though we endeavour never so much, yet unless we can bring God a perfect righteousness, we are undone for ever; yea, woe to Abraham, and woe to Isaac, and woe to Jacob, and woe to David and Daniel, and to all the Prophets and Apostles, notwithstanding all their righteousness, if they had not had a righteousness beyond what was in themselves. If they had not had a perfect righteousness to tender to their Father, they had been utterly lost for ever: therefore it is not for thee to rest upon this, that thou dost what thou canst, and hast good wishes and desires, and the like; for were all the righteousness of all the righteous men that ever were in the world in one man, it would not be sufficient for his justification. I but it may be you will say, true I can doe but little of myself, but if God enable me, then he will accept of me. Nay further, it is not what God enables thee to doe, that can be the formallity of thy justification: such are the termes between God and thee.
thee, that there is nothing thou canst doe of thy self, or canst
be enabled to doe, that is accepted of him for thy righteousness
to eternall life.

But it may be said, it is true, though God should enable me,
yet there may be imperfections; but God is mercifull, and
will passe them by: therefore I adde another consideration,
that it is not only what thou canst do, or canst be enabled to
doe, but 'tis not Gods mercy added (if barely considered, as
the mercy of God as a creator to his creature, and not under
this consideration through Christ, and accepting a righteousness
beyond thy own) that can eke out thy justification. This
is a great mistake, many think that that which they have in
themselves and what they are able to doe, is but little: but
when they have done something, if God will come then and
adde his mercy to it, that they think will eke it out: no, it is not
that and mercy together that is thy justification, I say mercy
out of this notion we are speaking of.

And that you may understand it yet more clearly, consider
it thus: the work of Gods mercy in justification, it is not of
this use, that it should be our justification, or should eke out
what we are wanting in for our justification; but the work of
Gods mercy in justifying a soul is, to take him off from him-
selves, to unbottome him, and to make him see and be sensible
of his own unrighteousness and uncleanesse: this is a great
and mighty work of Gods mercy. I remember Luther sayes
of himselfe, that while he was a Papist, he was not obedient
out of worldly respects for a livelyhood, and the like; but he
did what he did out of conscience: and yet sayes he afterward, (after he knew God in Christ) That which I counted gain
was losse unto me. He did not think it enough to do what he did
out of conscience, and that Gods mercy should make up the
rest: no, he was taken off of that way. 'Tis not the work of
mercy to do this, but to discover to the soul a righteousness
of a higher nature, even of the mediator God, and man; and
to enable the soul by faith to tender up that righteousness to
God the father for satisfaction: this is the worke of Gods
mercy in point of justification. The mistake of the way of
Gods mercy having an influence into our justification is a ve-

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ry dangerous mistake; and we had need be very wary in this great point of justification, for all depends upon it. I remember Luther in this, says he, it is an easy matter to say we close with God's grace, and the righteousness of Christ alone in the point of justification, till the soul be brought to a conflict: and then 'tis the hardest thing in the world to do it, and the people of God have found it so in the time of trouble of conscience: that's the first, that Christ is all in all in point of justification.

Secondly, he is all in all in point of adoption, so says the Scripture, Gal. 3:26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and Chapter 4, v. 4, 5. 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: and especially that is very remarkable John 1:12. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. The word translated power, is another word in the greek. — He gave them authority to become the sons of God: 'tis a word that imports more than bare power. Every one will challenge a part in sonship, that they are the children of God; but only those that are in Christ have authority to challenge it as their due. If a stranger should say he was the King's son, and were heir to the Crown, it would cost him his life, because he is none of the King's son; but if one be declared by Act of Parliament to be the right heir to the Crown, then he hath authority to challenge it. 'Tis so here; when once we come to be in Christ, then we have authority to claim this privilege, to be the sons of God, and heirs of heaven. And this great privilege that is so mightily above us, we have it in Christ, not only by way of the redundancy of his merit, but by our union with him, we are married to Christ; and by union with his person, are made one with him; and so are sons by virtue of his sonship. And are therefore sons of God in a higher way then the Angels are; the Angels are sons by creation, but we are the sons of God in Christ, by virtue of our union in his sonship: as Christ is the son of God the second person in Trinity, and we made one with
with him, so we come to be the sons of God in a mysticall way of union with him, and Christ is all in all in that.

And then in point of reconciliation and peace with God, Christ is all in all there, Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 5.1. It is not all the created power in heaven and earth that can bring true peace to a troubled soul; there is no salve for a wounded spirit, but the blood of Christ applied unto it; tis he that is the brazen Serpent that is onely able to cure the string of conscience; as Luther sayes, it is a harder matter to comfort an afflicted conscience, then to raise the dead: few think it so, and wonder what people meane in being so troubled in conscience as they are: I tell you, were there not a mighty redeemer, the conscience of a man or woman could never be pacified that once apprehends the wrath of God against them; so that Christ is all in all there.

And so he is all in all in point of all our sanctification, that is sanctification to life. There is a general kind of sanctification the Scripture speaks of, which comes some way from Christ; but now I speak of that sanctification which is our spiritual life. You know what the Scripture sayes, John 3.36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and John 1.16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. There is the fulness of Christ conveyed into the soul; so that our sanctification is not only from him meritoriously, but efficently, yea, and in a kinde materially too, for he doth not only merit it, and work it by his spirit; but through our union with him there is a kinde of flowing of sanctification from him into us, as the principle of our life: as from the Liver there flowes blood into all the parts of the body; so through our union with Christ, he having the fulness of the Godhead in him, from him as from a fountaine, sanctification flowes into the souls of the Saints: there sanctification comes not so much from their strugling, and endeavours, and yowes, and resolutions, as it comes flowing to them from their closing with Christ and their union with him; there may be a great deal of striving and endeavouring that may be utterly ineffectuall, for want of having recourse unto Christ as
the spring and well head of all grace and holinesse. I remember a Germane Devine professeth of himself, that before he understood the grace of Christ in the Gospel, he vowed and vowed, and covenanted and covenanted a thousand times, and could never overcome his corruptions till he understood God's letting out of his grace through Christ, and then he got strength against them: and the reason why we fail in point of sanctification is, because we think to get it all by maine strength; but the ready way is to close with Christ by faith, and then there will flow in life and grace to the soul: there may be many moralities by the light of nature, and the remainders of that light left in us; but that is not the sanctification that is to life. And hence it is, that there is so much beauty and glory in the sanctification of the Saints, because Christ is all in all in it; and that there is such power and strength in it, because it is of the strength of Christ; for Christ is all in all in it. And hence it is of an abiding nature, and an immortal seed; and therefore of a higher nature than that of Adam in innocency: that was lost, but so cannot this, because Christ is all in all in it; so that Christ is all in all in our sanctification likewise.

Again, he is all in all in the want of all things, whatsoever we want: do we want grace, do we want gifts, do we want outward comforts in the world? there is enough in Christ: it is Christ that is instead of all, that is better then all, and that will supply all in his due time. Those that know Christ; and have acquaintance with him, though they have this and that comfort taken from them, yet they know how to make supply out of Christ: they have that skill, and art, and mystery of godliness, that they can make Christ to be all in all in the want of all: and it is a great skill and mystery of godliness, to know how to make up all in Christ in the want of all.

Again, Christ to the Saints is all in all in the enjoyment of all: when they enjoy never so much of creature comforts, Christ is all in all in them; the satisfaction that their souls have, is not so much that they have the creatures, that they have larger estates, more friends, greater comforts then others;
but in this, that they know how to enjoy Christ in all, and can look upon it as a fruit of the covenant that God hath made with them in Christ; and as coming from the fountain of God's eternall love; and mercy in his Son. Zech.9.11. God saies there, As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. That which is spoken there of the deliverance of the prisoners, may be applied to all the mercies that a believer enjoys: whatever deliverance he hath from evil, whatever good he is possessed of, it is by the blood of the covenant; a believer can look upon every bit of meat he hath, and upon all the good he enjoys; and see it all come streaming to him in the blood of Christ; and so it comes abundantly the sweeter. As tis with the Sun, when it shines through the aire it is not so warm, as when it shines through a burning-glass. Take a burning-glass, and hold it between you and the Sun, and the glass will contract the beames of the Sunne, so that it shall have an efficacy of heat, even to burn again: So the goodnesse of God that comes to people through the generall bounty and patience of God, hath not such an efficacy to warm and heat their hearts; and to draw them to God; but now, Christ is as it were the burning-glass, that is held between God and the soule; and the mercy coming through this burning-glass, O how doth it warm and heat outward comforts! therefore there is no people in the world can enjoy outward comforts with so much fulnesse of contentment as the people of God doe, because they all come to them through Christ. Christ is all in all in the enjoyment of all. And so I might shew you how he will be all in all in Heaven to eternity.

But to give you one particular more: as he is all in all in the good we have from God, so he is all in all in whatever we tender up to God; as in descent from God to us, so in ascen from us to God. Christ must come in there, he must be all in all in our services, let our services be never so good; yet, though spiritually, yet they must finde acceptance with the Father through Christ. That Text is very remarkable for this, 1 Pet. 2.5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.
To offer up spiritual sacrifices. But though the sacrifice be spiritual, that is not enough to make it acceptable, but Christ he must come in; therefore he adds, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Many people offer up sacrifice, and they think that is enough; but the people of God they rest not only in the duty, no, nor in the spirituality of the duty, though that be counted a great matter: but they goe one step higher, and so must you in all the duties you tender up to God, and that is, not only to be carefull that your duties be spiritual, but you must tender them to God in the hands of Jesus Christ, and expect acceptance through him. When thou haft to deal with God in all thy approaches to him, be sure thou doest not omit the work of Faith, in laying hold upon Christ and carrying him along with thee; or else thy service will not be accepted. We know the sacrifices in the law, though they were never so good, yet they were not accepted unless a man brought them to the Priest, and the Priest he must offer up the sacrifice, and then it was accepted. Now what was that to signify to us, but Christ's Priestly office: this is the very work of the Priestly office of Christ, to take all our sacrifices that we tender up to the Father, and to offer them up for us: for we must not presume to offer them our selves; and though they offered a sacrifice that was never so good, yet if they did not offer it upon the right Altar, it was not accepted: so Christ he is the right Altar upon which we must offer up all our sacrifices to the Father; we must look towards the Temple, towards Christ, in all that goes from us unto God, Christ being all in all for acceptance of our duties.

And thus we have done with the fourth particular, shewing wherein Christ is all in all.

But now it may be demanded; how it comes to passe that God will have this way of communicating himselfe to mankinde, and will not goe in that other way, that we by the light of nature and reason would think he should goe? true indeed, we are sinners: I, but God is mercifull, and we will seek, and cry to him for pardon and mercy, and deliverance from our sins; and what needs there more? why will not God
God save us this way? I will not stand now to dispute about the possibility of this, but we know this is not the way.

We are therefore now to enquire why God should rather take this strange way, then goe any other way? and indeed it is a wonderfull way, if we rightly consider it: there is nothing in the world that works so much upon a mans heart to adore and admire God in the mystery of the Gospell, as the understanding of this, that God should have a peculiar way of communicating himself to man, different from Angels, and from all other creatures; that it must be through the second person in the Trinity; and he must take mans nature upon him, and suffer, and dye, and all the mercy we have must be through him: this is a wonderfull mystery of godliness; and should take up our serious thoughts in the consideration of it.

Now if you would know the reason of it; the first is this, That hereby God might manifest to all the children of men, what a dreadfull breach their sins had made between God and them: we cannot imagine any way how the breach between God and man could have been so clearly set out, as by this means; when we understand that such was our condition by nature, and such our apostacy from God, that there was no way of communication of any good from God to us, but by this strange and wonderfull way of a mediator between God and man: that he should obey and suffer, and dye for us; we must needs apprehend now, that certainly there was some mighty difference between God and us: and that mans estate was very low, and his condition very desperate, that must have such a remedy as this is. And this is that which God would have men to know, even what that breach is between him and their souls: and its such a breach that few think a right of it. If I should open the law to you, with all its curses, and set the sorments of hell before you, all this could not set out the dreadfulness of the breach between God and you, so as this point doth, when I tell you that it was such as requires so strange and wonderfull a way of Gods being reconciled and pacified towards you.
Secondly, God takes this way, because he sees it the most advantageous way for the manifestation of his glory; first the glory of his mercy: that is no way that could have been devised by men or Angels to set out the glory of God's mercy in man's salvation, so as by this way: if God should have said to mankind, You poor creatures have sinned against me, but I am merciful and will pardon you; God had been glorious in this: but now there is infinitely more mercy shewed when God shall say, Your miserable creatures have sinned against me; and such is your condition, that except the Son of my bosom be made a curse for you, there can be no mercy for you: well I am content that he shall not be spared; but shall be given to be a curse to prepare mercy for you: here is glory indeed. Therefore when Christ was born, the Angels sung, glory to God in the highest, Luke 2. 14. As if they had said, this is the highest pitch of the glory of God, in providing such a way of reconciliation with the children of men; and God was so set upon this work of shewing mercy to mankind, that though it cost the death of his Son, he would have it, and that shewes it to be infinite mercy and love, indeed, when it breaks through such mighty difficulties; there is the glory of his mercy.

And then secondly, there is the glory of his Justice: God sets out the glory of his Justice here, more than if all mankind had been eternally damned: God's Justice would not have been honoured so much in that as in this way of God's reconciling man unto himself; and that in these two regards: First, because in Christ God's Justice is glorified actively; whereas if all men had eternally perished, it should have been glorified but passively: and this more to have it glorified actively, then passively: and as God delights more in active obedience than in passive, so he delights more in the active glory of his Justice than in the passive, (though there is a kind of activeness in suffering, and so in Christ's suffering: therefore that distinction of active and passive is needless; for his active obedience was passive, and his passive obedience had activeness in it.)

But secondly, God's Justice is now glorified perfectly; the debt is fully paid: whereas if all mankind had been damned.
the debt should have been but a paying, and not have been paid to all eternity. As suppose a poor man oweth a thousand pounds, and he payeth two pence a week, he may be paying of it, but cannot pay it in all his life: but now if a rich man shall come, and at once lay down the money for him, the debt then is paid: and this is a great deal more then if it should have been always paying. So I say, if all mankind had been damned eternally, God should have had his debt but paying; but the debt would never have been paid: but now Christ comes and layes down the payment at once upon the borde, and asketh Justice whether it hath enough or no; so that Justice is more glorified this way.

And Thirdly, the infinite glory of his wisdom appeares in reconciling Justice and Mercy together: that God should be infinitely mercifull and just both in one thing; this is that that no Angel in Heaven could ever have imagined: suppose God should have said thus to all the Angels in Heaven, Mankind is in a lost and undone condition, yet I am willing to save him, but so as that I will have infinite mercy and Justice reconciled: if all of them should have gone and consulted together, they could not possibly have told how this should be. Now the infinite wisdom of God, and nothing but infinite wisdom could finde out such a way; as that God should be infinitely mercifull, and infinitely just too.

And Fourthly, the infiniteness of Gods holiness is hereby manifested: if God in a generall way should have thrown his mercy as it were up and down in the world without any more ado, Gods holiness, and hatred of sinne, would not have appeared as now it doth, when nothing can expiate sinne but the death of his Son; if God should carry any of you to the brinke of hell, and there let you see all the miseries of the damned, and heare all their yellings under the fruits of divine wrath, O you would say, how doth God hate sinne! but be it known to you, in the sufferings of Christ there is a greater manifestation of Gods hatred of sinne then in all the torments of hell: You that would know how infinitely hateful sinne is to God, come and behold Christ, God and man swetering under the wrath of his Father; look upon him in the
garden, sweating drops of blood: come and follow him to the Croffe, and heare him cry out in the bitternesse of his soule that dolefull cry, My God, my God, why haft thou forsaken me? behold Jesus Christ, God man, who was God blessed for ever, made a curse for sinne, and for thy sinne; look upon sinne in this glasse, and here see Gods hatred of sinne. There are two glasses wherein we see the evill of sinne; the bright christall glasse of the law, and the red glasse of the sufferings of Christ: and this latter doth more fully, more sensibly (I am sure) set out the nature of sinne, and Gods hatred of it: and by this you may see the meaning of 2 Cor. 3.18. where the Apostle speaking of the mystery of the Gospell sayes, But we all with open face (marke) beholding as in a glasse the glory of the Lord, &c. We behold but Gods back parts in his works: as God sayes to Moses; we behold but the footsteps of God in his workes: but when we behold him in Christ, we behold him with open face. Now look what difference there is in knowing a man when we only see the print of his foot upon sand, and when we look him in the face, so much difference there is between the knowing of God and his glory as it shines in the workes of creation, and as it shines in the face of Christ; that God therefore might manifest his glory, he would not pardon sinne so freely as to say, you have sinned, but yet I will pity you, and pardon you, and there is an end; no, though he would pardon sinne, yet he would doe it this way.

A Third reason why God would bring things about this way, is this: because God saw there could be no such way to draw poor sinners to himself as this. When God shall reveal to a sinner that he is not only a mercifull God, but that he hath provided such a strange way to convey his mercy: this hath a mighty efficacy to draw the soul to God: for the poor soule apprehending its own guiltiness, and Gods hatred of sin; and understanding withall, that the heart of God is set upon such a way of mercy; is by this as by a mighty argument prevailed with to draw neer to God in a way of dependance upon him: for thus will the soule argue, Well, I heare that God, to the end he might let out mercy to poor sinners, hath of his own infinite wisdome provided such a strange way of convey-
conveyance as this is; and when God hath made it appeare by revealing to me the mystery of the Gospell how his heart is set upon this way of shewing mercy to sinners, I conclude now, that the Lord is willing to be reconciled to me, and why then should I be unbelieving any more? why should I have hard thoughts of God any more? why should I remaine in my doubting condition any longer? thou canst not be more desirous of the salvation of thy soule, then God is of magnifying his grace and mercy: and God hath done more for thee then thou canst possibly do for the salvation of thy soule. Besides, 'tis a mighty drawing argument; for by this meanes the infinite distance that conscience apprehended to be between God and the soul, is taken away: for when the soul sees it hath to deal with an infinite deity, that is so farre above it, it stands shaking and trembling, and dares not draw nigh to God. What have I to doe, faith the soul, with such a God as this is, who is so infinitely above me? but now when thou knowest that Christ is between God and thee, then this distance needs not scare thee; yea now all thy guiltiness, and all the filthinesse and pollution of thy soule, and all that the law hath to say against thee, need be no discouragement to thee, when thou seest thou hast to deal with God through Jesus Christ. Therefore no soul can stand off and say, how doe I know it belongs to me? doe but take this one rule, for that there is nothing can interest the soul in Christ but Christ himself: there is no preparation to Christ, but Christ must be all in all in it: therefore stand not off, and say, how shall my heart be wrought to these and these preparations: and work thus and thus, before I have part in Christ? no; puzzle not thy self about thy preparations, but set before thy soule the mystery of the Gospell in this glorious way of Gods communication of himself to thee, and of reconciling man unto himself: and the very efficacy of these truths will have a power upon thy heart to draw thee unto God, in this way of reconciliation; and that is the way of true comfort.

The Gospell itself, though there be no preparation before, yet hath an efficacy to draw the heart to Christ; for Christ is all in all in that. And doe not say, I am a poor mean creature.
true, I can doe nothing, I cannot remember a Sermon, I cannot pray, or performe any good duty as I ought: why, remember soul, Christ is all in all: true, if any thing were required of thee in the business of salvation, it were somewhat; but know that God hath laid help upon one who is mighty; therefore tis not thy weakness, nor the distance between God and thee, that can hinder, if thou rightly apprehendest God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

Another reason might have been this: God doth it to indeare his mercy to his Saints for ever; for indeed nothing indeares Gods mercy to them so much as this, that they see it come to them in such a way of conveyance; and that which will indear mercy to the Saints in heaven to all eternity, and for which they shall be full of the praises of God, shall not be so much for the good things they enjoy, as for that strange and wonderfull way by which they come to enjoy them. This I say is that which shall take up the hearts, and be a great part of the work of the glorified Saints in Heaven to all eternity, even their admiring, adoring, and praising God in Jesus Christ.

And then God delights to honour his Son, and that he might set him up, he makes him to be the means of conveyance of all good to those he intends it to; as if a King were to honour his Son, what way can he take to doe it more effectually then this, that all the favour he means to shew to any shall be only through his Son? So when God the Father would honour his Son, he appoints from all eternity, that all the grace and mercy that any shall have from him shall be only through his Son. Therefore as Christ faith, All judgement is committed to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father: So I may say of the work and dispensation of Gods grace, that all is conveyed to Christ, and by him communicated to those that have interest in him, that the Son might be honoured to all eternity.

I shall conclude in a few words of application, to work upon you this that hath been said.

First, if it be thus, let us stand a while and admire at the depths of the counsell of God, and the infinite glory of the riches of his grace.
grace to mankinde; that God should ever have such thoughts
towards such poor worms as we are, that he should not ra-
ther have let such despicable creatures eternally perish, then
go in such a strange way to shew mercy to them: Truly bre-
thren, God hath done more in bringing a poor soul to him-
sell then in creating Heaven and Earth: the work of creating
Heaven and Earth is but a low piece of work in comparison
of this wonderfull way of Gods conveying his grace and mer-
cy to the children of men through his Son: this is the master-
piece of the workes of God, which he hath already done, or
will ever doe to all eternity: and God therefore is to be ad-
imred and adored in this. We are to glorifie God in every
creature, but how is God to be glorified then in his Son,
wherein so much of his glory doth appeare? If it be a sinne for
us not to sanctifie the name of God when we behold his glory
in his meanest workes, O what a sinne is it not to sanctifie the
name of God in beholding the mystery of the Gospell and his
glory shining in the face of Jesus Chrift! God expects (brethren)
that those who live under the Gospell, should spend their dayes
and thoughts, and talk, about that glory which he hath mani-
ifested in his Son. O you that have such chaffy droolly spirits,
that can spend your precious thoughts upon such poor things
as you doe, know that here is an object to take up your
thoughts; and your sinne is abundantly the greater in this, that
you spend your thoughts about such vanities, when God sets
before you so glorious an object to raise up your hearts unto
himself; and you that spend a great deal of your lives in vani-
ty, know, that this day you have heard of a truth that above
all things in the world should take up your time and thoughts
in the contemplation of it.

And you that have more time and greater estates then others,
and are not put upon it to get your bread as others are, and
so have greater opportunities for the worship and service of
God, and for searching into his truth, yet how doe you spend
your time in vanity and light things, as if there were no grea-
ter matters to take up your hearts! It is a signe of a vaine and
frothy spirit, that when God propounds such glorious things
to you, that yet it should be the content of your souls to baffle
out.
out your time in vanity; and things that will not profit. Well, if you would have an evidence to your souls, that Christ is all in all to you, and shall be to all eternity, take it in this: if ever God hath opened thine eyes to see his glory in the mystery of the Gospel; and that thy heart is taken with it, and overcome by it, it is an argument that thou art indeed the soul which God hath received to mercy in his Christ; but saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4:3. If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. There are a great many to whom the Gospel is preached, and yet it is hidden to them; and it is hidden to you if you speak of Christ only in a formal way, and think it enough to say, I hope to be saved by God in Jesus Christ; but dost thou see that in the Gospel which raises thy heart with admiration, and that darkens all the glory of the world? dost thou see more of the glory of God shining in that one sentence, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whatsoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, then thou seest in the whole frame of the creation of Heaven and Earth? thou hopest thou mayest to get to Heaven; but what wouldst thou do there? the work of Saints and Angels in Heaven joyed together, is to magnify God for this great work of his: doth thou then begin this work here, and give God his glory, for the great things he hath done for the children of men.

The Second use should have been this: If Christ be thus all in all, then let us bless God that ever we knew Christ; and that the mystery of the Gospel hath been revealed to us: for otherwise we had been without God in the world; and what would have become of us had not this grace of God in the Gospel been revealed to us? could you ever have thought of it your selves? could it ever have entered into your hearts? certainly no; nor into the heart of any creature in Heaven or Earth: therefore blessed are your ears, that hear the things which you heare: and blessed are your eyes, that see the things which you see: and know, that when you come to live under the Ministry of the Gospel, you enjoy the greatest mercy that ever you enjoyed since you were borne: the coming
under a powerful Ministry, that reveals Christ and brings the day of salvation to the soul, it is no other then the fruit of the prayer of Jesus Christ for that soul: compare Isaiah 49. 8. with 2 Cor. 6.1.2. and you shall see this. Isaiah 49.8. Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, &c. Now it is apparent by the context, that this is to be understood of Christ: that God the Father speaks there to his Son: well, what is this acceptable time and day of Salvation in which Christ is heard? look 2 Cor. 6.1.2. in the chapter before he had told them, That they were ambassadors for Christ. We then as workers together with God, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain: Now what is this grace of God? tis the Ministry of the Gospel, For he saith I have heard thee in a time accepted: and mark how he applies it, Behold now is the accepted time: bebold now is the day of salvation. As if he should say; the acceptable time and day of salvation in which God the Father hath heard Christ, is now: now that we the ambassadors of Christ come and open the mystery of the Gospel to you; now is the time wherein God the Father hears the Son for you: what a mercy is this? and what an engagement upon you, that when you hear any thing of the mystery of the Gospel opened to you, you are to look upon it as the fruit of the prayer of Jesus Christ: and so when God sends a faithfull Minister to any congregation, tis the fruit of the prayer of Christ. Christ prays, O Father, that there might be an acceptable time for such a people, for such a man and woman; it may be they have gone on a long time in ignorance and prophaneless; I but Christ hath been praying to the Father for them, and when this acceptable time comes, then God disposes of them, that this man shall go out of such a wicked family, and shall live in a godly family, or shall come to such a Sermon, and there shall hear the wonderful things of the Gospel opened to him; and shall come to understand this great mystery of God's letting himself out through Christ unto his people: and there the Lord will renew him by a work of grace, and bring his heart over unto himself, this is the acceptable time, when God
God reveals the mystery of the Gospel to any soul: therefore bless God for this.

Thirdly, this shews how dear Jesus Christ should be unto us. O how should we delight and take contentment in him that brings the Treasures of grace from the bosom of the Father, and opens them unto us: and not only opens the minde of God the father to us, but comes and lets out the treasure of Gods goodnesse to us. It was shpft before, but Christ he opened as it were the flood gates, and lets the current of grace and mercy in upon us. O how dear therefore should Christ be unto us? it was the speech of that Martyr, Master Lambert, None but Christ, none but Christ. Yea when he suffered Martyrdom for Christ, then none but Christ was dear to him; because he saw that Christ was the way of conveyance of all good unto him: as if God now make a man a meanes of conveyance of a great deal of good to a nation, every man will be ready to have his eye upon that man: I, but there was never such a way of conveyance of good to us as Christ is: therefore how should our hearts love him, and prize him, and rejoice at the very thoughts of him? If you have a friend, and God makes that friend an instrument of mercy to you, O how doth it increase you to that friend: if the husband be an instrument of good to the wife, or the wife to the husband; if a Minister to his people, or people to their Minister, and so in all relations: when we can look upon others as a meanes of conveyance of Gods mercy to us, it is a mighty argument to knit our hearts unto them, and indeed this is the way to obtain love. It may be the wife complains, she hath not love from her husband; or the husband complains he hath not love from his wife: Why now, be as instrumentall as you can to convey the goodnesse of God to them, and this will mightily increase and knit them to you; and if it doth so between man and man: how should it doe so much more between us and Christ, who is indeed the husband of his Church, and through whom the fulnesse of God is let out unto his people? O how dear and precious therefore ought he to be unto us!

Fourthly,
Fourthly, is Christ all in all? then if we have an interest in him, it should satisfy and content us, though we have nothing, or be nothing in our selves: Why, because if we have Christ, we have all; though thou wantest parts, friends, estate, outward comforts; yet know Christ is to be thy all, and is not he enough? as he said, am not I better to thee then ten sons? so sayes Christ to the soul, what dost thou want? thou wantest this comfort, and the other comfort, but am not I all in all to thee, and better then all? yea, be willing to be made nothing, for all is made up in Christ.

Again, it should have put us upon this, to be willing to give up all we have to Christ; alas, our all is but a poor all: yet give it to Christ; our parts, estates, interest, names; let Christ have all because he is our all.

And let him be the rule of our prizeing all things: so farre as we see any thing of Christ, prize it suitably: as tis reported of Master Bucer, if he could see any thing of Christ in any man or woman, though they were never so poor and mean, his heart would close with them. And tis said of Austin, that before his conversion, he took great delight in reading of Cicero's workes; but afterward, sayes he, I finde not the name Christ in all Cicero; and that he took off his heart from him: so in all thou dost enjoy, look how much thou seek of Christ in it. So farre let thy delight and esteem be carried out towards it, and no farther.

Again, with what mighty intention of spirit should the heart be put forth toward Jesus Christ above all things! what though God give thee an estate and honour in the world: if thou hast not Christ thou hast nothing, thou hast not that that makes way for thee to eternity. Therefore be not satisfied with any thing without Christ. As Abrahams sayes, What wilt thou give me Lord, seeing I goe childlese? So say thou, Lord, thou hast given me a portion in the world, thou hast given me credit and repute amongst men; but Lord, what is all this to me, if I goe Christless, and have not him that is the conveyance of grace unto my soul, that is all in all? O Lord, thou hast this day taught.
taught me, that such is the distance and breach between thee and me, that unless it be made up through a mediator, I must eternally perish: therefore give me Christ, whatever thou denyest me. O satisfy not your selves with any thing, without Christ. Many hypocrites they satisfy themselves with gifts: if they have gifts, then they are contented. Consider that parable in the Gospell, Matt. 13. 45, 46. The merchant-man sought after goodly pearls; but when he had found the pearle of price, then he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Now gifts and parts, and other attainments are these goodly pearls: I but Christ he is the pearle of price: therefore whatever thou hast, be willing to part with it for him: if God have discovered to thee the pearle of price, let no goodly pearles satisfy thee. Many souls perish eternally because they are satisfied with goodly pearles, and doe not endeavour to obtaine this pearle of price.

Againe, the application should further have been, to have endeavoured to work this upon you, that in your seeking after God, you would be sure to take Christ along with you.

I will give you onely this note, if it were your last time to pray to God, and your everlasting estate did depend upon God's mercy, should you now seek God never so earnestly, yet if it were onely in a naturall way, as your creator, your condition would be very dreadful, and you would perish eternally. If God should lay any of you upon your sick beds, or death beds, and you should cry to God, mercy, mercy Lord, be sure you take Christ along with you, and look upon God through Christ, or else all your cries will be to no purpose. It is a speech of Luther, that God lookt upon out of Christ, is most dreadful and terrible; and it argues a great deal of ignorance in us, when we think we can goe to God, and shall finde mercy with him, without considering him as a God that will be reconciled to us only through his Son. To conclude all, as Christ sayes, If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto
unto me: so this is the work of our Ministry, we have spent time amongst you that we might labour to lift up Christ to you: and O that God would be pleased to draw all your souls to him.

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Hebr.