

## CHRIST'S DYING FOR SINNERS.

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*But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us—ROM. V. 8.*

The apostle having proved at large that we are justified by faith, in the former chapters, in this and the following, he draws several instances from that doctrine. First, for comfort to those that are justified, giving an account of the several comfortable effects of this privilege.

Ver. 1. Having pardon of sin and title to heaven, hereby we know the Lord is appeased and reconciled, &c.

Ver. 2. By Christ we have admission to this gracious state in which we are established, and rejoice in hope of a more glorious condition.

Ver. 3. We not only rejoice in our present happy state, and hopes of future glory, but even glory in our sufferings. Tribulation being sanctified, helps us to the exercise of patience, which, as other graces, grows and is increased by exercise, &c.

Ver. 4. Experience; in the exercise hereof we have experiments of the grace of God in us and toward us, of his favour and our own sincerity, and this raises and increases our hope.

Ver. 5. That hope which will not disappoint us, especially having our hearts replenished by the Holy Ghost, with the sense of the love of God in Christ.

Ver. 6. Which love was herein expressed wonderfully, that when we were in a state of sin and damnation, without any power to free ourselves from this misery, in the fulness of time Christ died, even for those who were without God and opposite to him.

Ver. 7. This was greater love than is to be found amongst men, for if perhaps one may be found who would die for a merciful, an obliging, an useful or public-spirited man, yet none can be found that would lay down his life for any other, though he were a just and righteous man. But who would die for those that are useless, or odious, as contrary to him, as sinners are to God?

But this is the glory and triumph of divine love. Ver. 8. By this the love of God appeared in its highest exaltation, that when we were so far from being good or righteous, that we were sinners; when useless and impotent, when loathsome and hateful, when enemies and haters of God; when there was nothing in us, that might move in the least to love us, when we were full of that which might oblige him to express his hatred and indig-

nation against us, even then he vouchsafed the very highest expression of love; then he gave his Son, even then Christ exposed himself to death for us. Herein both the greatness and freeness of his love appeared, to the wonder and astonishment of all that duly consider it.

Of the love of Christ in dying, I have spoken on another subject. It is his death I shall now consider, in these words, which offer this observation.

Christ died for sinners. This is the sum of the gospel, the foundation of Christianity, the root and spring of all our comforts and hopes, of all our happiness here and hereafter.

For explication, we shall inquire, 1, what death it was he died; 2, what the particle *for* imports.

As to the former, 1. It was a real death. He died not in appearance, but indeed; Christ himself, not another taken for him. An old impostor, Basilides, in the primitive times, held that it was not Christ who was crucified, but Simon of Cyrene in his stead; and thence inferred, that none are to believe in him that was crucified. Mahomet took up the conceit after him, and delivered it in his *Alcoran*, that it was not Christ but one of his disciples that the Jews crucified. This is an impudent fable, against the types and prophecies in the Old Testament, and the history of the New Testament, which, with the evidence of miracles too, declares that Christ himself was really put to death. He gave Thomas a sensible demonstration that he really suffered, John xx. 25. Hereby Thomas was convinced that he suffered indeed. And it was death that he suffered. Life is the result of the union betwixt soul and body. This union was really dissolved, and the soul separated from the body; though both, in the state of separation, continued united in the person of the Son of God.

2. A violent death. It is true he suffered willingly, Heb. x. 6, 7; John x. 18. The sacrifices under the law were led to the altar; but he offered himself to those who made a sacrifice of him.

When I call it violent, I mean, it was not natural. The thread of his life was cut off when nature might have spun it out much longer, Dan. ix. 26; and when he was at the point of death, he did not dismiss his soul out of the body, as he had power to do, but it was forced out by the pain of death. The violence which he suffered, destroyed the vital disposition in the body, which is needful to continue it in union with the soul, and hereupon life did not so much expire as it was expelled. It is true, it was in his power to have secured himself from that violence; but having willingly submitted to it, it had its effect upon him, and sooner than upon those who suffered with him, Mark xv. 44; John xix. 32, 33.

3. A cruel death, full of exquisite pain and torture; he was crucified. Tully calls it *crudelissimum supplicium*, the most cruel punishment. Nails were forced through the hands and feet, which, being the most nervous, are the most sensible parts, though least vital. The body was distended upon the cross with such pains as when all the bones are out of joint. That in the psalmist is meant of Christ, Ps. xxii. 14-17. In this torturing posture they continued on the cross, which made no quick despatch; the pain was prolonged. It was a lingering death, such a death as cruelty itself would have one die, *ut sentiat se mori*, that he might have all the sense of the pains of death, both a quick and lasting sense thereof. Such a sense Christ had of it, and was willing to have, and shewed it by refusing the wine mixed with myrrh and other poisonous ingredients, if they be right who think that this potion was given him to stupefy sense, or hasten death.

4. A shameful death. Crucifying was thought fit for none amongst the Romans but the vilest persons, for slaves, renegadoes, the worst of malefac-

tors, such as were counted pests of the earth. It was thought too ignominious a death for the meanest person that was a free man. When they would choose a death to shew their greatest abhorrence and detestation of any creature, this was it ; therefore the dogs, that by their silence betrayed the capitol, were crucified.

Christ, the Lord of glory, was willing to die such a death for sinners. There was a concurrence of pain and shame in it ; when he endured the cross, he endured the shame too, and made nothing of it, Heb. xii. 2.

5. A cursed death, Gal. iii. 13, 14. It refers to Deut. xxi. 23. He that was hanged is said to be accursed of God, not only because the sentence of the law (called a curse) was passed and executed upon him, but also to prefigure what was to befall Christ, who was to be crucified, as if he had been a cursed malefactor. The legal curse was a signification of that real curse which Christ was to undergo.

6. The same death, as to the main, which was due to us. The same death was threatened in the law as to the substance of it ; and as to the circumstances, that which was equivalent. The first and second death was the sentence of the law, and Christ tasted both.

The worm of conscience, indeed, did not touch him ; for that is the effect, not of imputed sin, but of personal guilt, wherewith he was not in the least tainted. Eternal sufferings are in the sentence of the law, not absolutely, but with respect to a finite creature, who could not suffer all that was due in less than eternity. But Christ being God, his temporary sufferings were equivalent to eternal ; he could pay down the whole sum at once ; what it wanted in duration was made up in the value. His sufferings for a time was of more weight and worth than the eternal sufferings of sinners ; and it was far more for the Son of God to suffer for a while, than for all creatures to suffer everlastingly.

But as to the substance, he endured the pains of the second death, so far as was consistent with the perfection of his nature. The sufferings of that death are punishments of loss and of sense. Punishment of loss is separation from God. Of this he complains, Mat. xxvii. 46, Ps. xxii. The personal union was not dissolved, but the sense and effects of divine love and favour were withheld. His Father appeared as a severe and incensed judge, and dealt with him, not as his Son, but as an undertaker for sinners.

Then for the punishment of sense, how grievous were his inward sorrows ! They were equivalent to the sorrows of the second death, Mat. xxvi. 38.

It was not the sense of his outward sufferings that so much burdened his soul ; it was immediately the wrath due to our sins, which were then laid upon him, Isa. liii. 10.

How comes it that Christ expressed a greater sense of these his sufferings than many of the martyrs did, when yet their outward torments were more grievous ? It was not because they could not endure\* more, but because they suffered far less ; no bitterness of the second death was in their sufferings. That which Christ endured in soul was incomparably more grievous than all outward tortures.

Thus much for the first thing propounded, what death this was. We are highly concerned to set it out in all its aggravations, that the greatness of Christ's love, and the horrid nature of sin, may be more apparent, and upon other accounts ; of which in the application.

Come we to the second : what is the import of this word *for* ? Hereby it will appear that the death of Christ was for satisfaction to divine justice.

\* Qu. 'could endure'?—ED.

A truth denied by too many, who, under the name of Christians, strike at the root of Christianity, and agree with the Jews and Turks, change together with the gospel the foundation of our faith and hopes, comfort and happiness.

When it is said Christ died for us, *for* denotes, not only that he died for our good or advantage, but in our stead. He died, not only to confirm his doctrine, and induce us to believe it, and to imitate his graces, but he suffered death in our stead, *i. e.* he suffered what we had deserved, that we might not suffer it. There was a substitution of Christ in our place; he, by compact with the Father, undertaking to suffer what should have been inflicted on us, that we might escape.

This the word *ἀντί*, here used, commonly denotes, so twice, ver. 7; when a good or righteous man is liable to death, scarce will any one die to save his life, *i. e.* die in his stead: 2 Cor. v. 15, 'If one died for all, then all died;' all died in the death of one, because that one died in stead of all, 1 Peter ii. 21, and iii. 18, and iv. 1. He suffered what we had deserved, that we might not suffer; that is to suffer in our stead. The just suffered what unjust deserved, &c., Heb. ii. 9. The cup of God's wrath, which our sins had filled, and which we should have drunk, was by the grace of God taken out of our hands, and put into Christ's, and he drank it up, when the bitterness of death was in it, that we might not taste it, *i. e.* he tasted death in our stead.

The word *for*, in all these, and many other places, signifies the same that it does in that expression of David, 2 Sam. xviii. 33, Would God I had died in thy stead, so that thou mightest have lived. So Pythias would have died for Damon, and Terentius for Brutus, *i. e.* instead of him, that his friend might live, *Valer. Magn. lib. iv. cap. 7.*

'*Ἀντί* is another word which the Holy Ghost uses in this business, which always signifies substitution, acting or suffering in another's stead, Mat. xx. 28, paid that which they were obliged to, did it in their stead, 1 Tim. ii. 6; so it is used, Mat. xvii. 27, *ἀντί ἐμοῦ*, pay this in my stead; and so it is rendered, Mat. ii. 22, *ἀντί Ἡρώδου*.

That we may understand more clearly and distinctly what the design of Christ's death was, let us observe those notions wherein the Scripture represents it. Three are commonly taken notice of: 1, as the punishment of our sin; 2, the price of our redemption; 3, a sacrifice for sin. In all which, satisfaction for us by his death is evident, though the word be not used.

1. Christ's death was the punishment of our sin. Christ in dying was punished for our transgressions. To clear this, let me shew, 1, the notion of punishment; 2, what evidence there is in Scripture that Christ in dying was punished for our sin; 3, how the proceeding was just and righteous, that Christ, though innocent, should be punished for those that were guilty.

The notion of the punishment will appear in the matter, form, and ends of it. Of which briefly.

(1.) In punishment there is an inflicting of some evil or suffering. That is the matter of punishment; it is something afflictive, whether in being deprived of something that is good, or undergoing something that is grievous. Christ suffered both ways; privatively, in the loss of what was most desirable; and positively, in bearing what was most intolerable and grievous.

(2.) Punishment is a suffering inflicted for some offence deserved by some sin. That is the form of it. If it be not upon the account of sin, it may be a calamity, but not a punishment. Christ's death was properly a punishment in this respect, because he suffered death for sin. Not his own; he

had none to deserve death, by the testimony of Pilate, Mat. xvii. 18, 19, 23, but ours.

(8.) The end of punishment is the common good ; the same with the end of laws and government, the good of the community, rulers and subjects. Partly in deterring and restraining persons from breaking the laws (and so securing the rights of all sorts, which good laws provide for) when they see that such as transgress must suffer the penalty. This is the proper end of those punishments, which are called *παράδειγμα*, exemplary.

Partly in asserting and maintaining of the honour and interest of those who have suffered by the breach of the laws, which is the end of satisfactory punishment.

Answerably, in the death of Christ, the severity there used is to restrain and deter all from transgressing the laws of God. In that respect it was exemplary punishment ; and thereby the honour and interest of God, as he is lawgiver and governor of the world, was to be vindicated and asserted, and a compensation made for the injury and dishonour he had by sin. In that respect his punishment was satisfactory.

But then, negatively, the end of Christ's death was not to satisfy the anger of God, as anger signifies a desire of revenge, and as revenge is taken for a pleasing one's self in the evils which another suffers, merely because they are grievous to him whom we are angry at ; for such a revengeful humour is not tolerable in men, much less is it to be ascribed unto God.

Now, of these particulars, it is the second we must\* stick at, who are against the satisfaction of Christ. They do not deny that he suffered grievous things ; they cannot deny, but if that he suffered the punishment which our sins deserved, his death would be satisfactory ; but they deny that his death was the punishment of our sins. And it is the second thing I propounded to shew, what evidence there is in Scripture, that his death was the punishment of our sins. Let me, for a more distinct view thereof, reduce it to some heads.

1. It is said, 'He bare our sins,' 1 Peter ii. 24, 25. To bear sin is to undergo the punishment due to sin, whether he be said to bear his own sin, or the sins of others, Lev. xix. 5, *i. e.* he shall be punished for it, Lev. xx. 17, where 'bearing his iniquity,' is to be punished, *i. e.* expressly to be cut off, ver. 18, 19, and ver. 20, to 'bear sin,' is to be punished for it, and the punishment specified by *childless*.

So to bear the sins of others is to be punished for others' sins, Num. xiv. 33, *i. e.* they shall suffer the punishment of your fornications, Num. xxx. 15 ; Ezek. xviii. 20, he shall not bear the punishment of his father's sins, *i. e.* as it is expressed, he shall not die ; so that when the apostle says, 'He bare our sins,' if we will understand it as the Holy Ghost leads us, by the constant use of the phrase, the meaning is, he bare the punishment of our sins when he died ; our sins were imputed to him, and so the punishment was transferred from us to him.

Answerable to this of the apostle is that of the prophet, Isa. liii. 6, 11, 12 ; that which is *iniquities* here, is *punishment*, ver. 4 ; that which he suffered, in being stricken, smitten, afflicted, bruised, wounded, slain, cut off. By all these phrases, and more, are his punishments expressed ; and that it was the desert of our sins, is clear in the connection. The Jews thought him stricken of God, justly punished for his own sins, such as they unjustly charged him with, ver. 4 ; but the meritorious cause of the punishment inflicted on him was indeed our sins, ver. 5 ; so that no other sense can be put upon this

\* Qu. 'they most' ?—ED.

phrase, but what is contrary to the natural and perpetual use thereof in Scripture.

(2.) Christ is said to be made sin and a curse for us, which do plainly import that he was punished for us, 2 Cor. v. 21; he was charged with our sin, and so punished as if he had been a sinner; he was made sin for us, as we are made the righteousness of God in him; his righteousness being imputed to us, the Lord rewards us as those that are righteous; and our sins being imputed to him, the Lord punished him as a sinner. Not for his own guilt, but for ours, was he punished; as not for our own righteousness, but for his, are we saved. The sacrifice that was slain, and so punished instead of the sinner for whom it was offered, is called by the name of sin, Lev. xliii. 29, Ps. xl. 6. The same word the prophet uses, speaking of Christ, Isa. liii. 10. Answerable to which is the apostle's expression, when he says Christ was made sin for us; he died and was therein punished instead of those whose sin he bare; as the sacrifice was killed, and so suffered instead of him whose sin was laid on it.

So he is said to be 'made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13. The curse of the law, in the former clause, is confessed to be the punishment of sin; and no reason is, or can be, given why it should not be in the latter. To be made a curse for us, is to be punished for us, as such malefactors were who are accursed of God.

(3.) He is said to suffer for our sins, Rom. iv. 25. He was delivered up to death for our sins. To suffer for sin, deserving it, is in a proper sense to be punished; and the particle *for*, when joined with sin and sufferings, does still denote the meritorious cause of sufferings, Eph. v. 6, Lev. xxvi. 28, Deut. xviii. 12, 1 Kings xiv. 18.

That Christ was punished for our sins, is likewise signified by those other expressions, 1 Cor. xv. 8, 1 Pet. iii. 18, Gal. i. 4; these plainly denote that sin was the cause of his suffering. And how can sin be the cause of sufferings, but as deserving them? and sufferings deserved by sin are properly punishments. This is enough to make it evident that Christ's death was the punishment of our sins.

3. As to the justice of the proceeding. Is it not unjust that an innocent person should be punished for the offences of others?

(1.) It is not unjust for the innocent to be punished for others' sins, when there is a conjunction betwixt the sufferer and the offender; such as is betwixt parents and children, princes and subjects; for in this case the Lord, the righteous judge of heaven and earth, punishes relatives for sins which not they but their relations acted; he threatens it, Exod. xx. 3. And this is not to be understood only in case they imitate their fathers' sins: for if they imitate them, God visits their own sins upon them, not their fathers'; so Ham's sons were cursed for his sin, Gen. ix. 25; and Saul's sons punished for his offence, 2 Sam. xxi. 8, 14; and Achan's children for his crime, Josh. vii. 24.

So he punishes subjects for the sins of their rulers: thus Judah is punished, in Josiah's time, for the sins of Manasseh, though then they were reformed, 2 Kings xxiii. 24; and the abominations taken away, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33; and the people before for David's sin, when he declares they were innocent, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 17.

Now, if the proceeding was just, upon the account of conjunction, in these cases, why not in this before us; when there was such a near conjunction betwixt Christ and those for whom he suffered; when he was not only of the same nature, but a king, a father, a head to many of them actually, to all of them in God's design?

(2.) It is just in case of consent; when he that is punished has power to dispose of that wherein he suffers, and puts himself freely under an obligation to be punished therein, and admitted by him who has power to punish. In these circumstances, by the verdict of God and mankind, it is righteous to punish a person for the offences of others, which yet he is not guilty of. Now there is a concurrence of these in the case.

[1.] Christ freely consented to die and undergo what was due to us. To compel one that is innocent to suffer for another's offences, when he has no mind to it, may be an injury; but in this case there was no constraint, no need of it. Christ offered himself willingly to become our surety, he freely came under the obligation, and became responsible to all that was due from us. He was not only willing, but earnestly desirous to suffer and die in our stead, Luke xii. 50, as desirous to see the travail of his soul, what pangs soever it cost him, as a woman near her time is to be delivered, Ps. xl. 7, 8; Cant. ii. 8.

[2.] Christ had absolute power to dispose of what he suffered in. One reason why a man is not allowed to lay down his life for another that deserves death, is because his life is not his own to dispose of. But Christ was absolute Lord of his life, and had full power to keep it, or lay it down, as he pleased, John x. 18.

[3.] The Father admitted Christ as our surety. He was content that his sufferings should stand for ours, and that we thereupon should be discharged. It was his will that Christ should undertake for us, Ps. xl. 7. They agreed in the design, and upon the way and means of our deliverance, Zech. vi. 13. The Father loves him, because he consented to it, John x. 17. So that in a case where all parties concerned had power, all were satisfied, none had cause to complain of injury; and so there was nothing of injustice.

[4.] Let me add another thing: Christ's loss in suffering was not irreparable; it was fully compensated. If an innocent person suffer for a malefactor, the community loses a good man, and may suffer by sparing of an evil member, and the innocent sufferer cannot have his life restored, being once lost. Though David wished it in a passion, yet it had been great wrong and damage to himself and the public if he had suffered death instead of Absalom.

But in this case all is quite otherwise. Christ laid down his life, but so as he took it up again, John x. 17, 18. He continued not under the power of death for ever, nor as others who suffer death must do, till the general resurrection; but rose again the third day; death was swallowed up in victory. By dying he 'prolonged his days,' Isa. liii. 10; his loss of life for a while was countervailed and outweighed by infinite advantages.

Then also those offenders, in whose stead he suffered, are, by virtue of his death, reclaimed, effectually changed, made useful and serviceable to God and man.

Briefly, here was no injury to any party whatever; not to those for whom he died: they have unexpressible advantage thereby. Not to the person suffering; he was willing, and endured nothing without his consent; he had that in prospect which made up all, Heb. xii. 2, and ii. 9. Not to God, nor any concerned in his government, for by Christ's death the ends of his government were all secured. His honour was hereby vindicated, the authority of his law preserved, and his subjects, by such an instance of severity in his own Son, deterred from violating it.

So that, upon the whole, in Christ's being punished for sinners, here is no appearance of injury to any, and so nothing at all of injustice upon any account.

This for the first consideration of Christ's death proposed in Scripture, as the punishment of our sins.

2. His death is also represented in Scripture as the price of our redemption. Redemption in general is a delivering of one from a calamity by a ransom, *i. e.* some valuable consideration, which comes under the notion of a price. To understand the nature of it more distinctly, as it is ascribed to Christ's death, and to free us from the misconstructions put upon it by the opposers of redemption by Christ, take notice of three particulars.

(1.) Man, by disobedience to God, was brought into misery, such misery as the Scripture often expresses by captivity. The Lord, for our rebellions, being the supreme judge and governor, did, as it were, commit us, deliver us to Satan, leave us under the power of sin and the world. Satan, as the gaoler, leads us captive at his will; he makes use of sin and the world as fetters to increase and continue this misery.

(2.) We could not be redeemed from this misery, but by a ransom. Where there is freedom from a calamity without a price, it is deliverance simply, but it is not properly redemption. Our deliverance from this misery is still in the New Testament ascribed to a price, a valuable consideration, which, tendered to the Lord, and he being satisfied with it, does grant a discharge. The word ἀπολύτρωσις, used for redemption, 1 Cor. viii. 20, and vii. 23, signifies deliverance by a ransom. Hence the delivery of the Israelites from Egypt, though it be called redemption, as being a type of that great deliverance from spiritual bondage and misery, yet it is not redemption properly, because it was not procured by ransom.

(3.) The price, upon consideration of which we are delivered, is the sufferings, the death, the blood of Christ, Eph. i. 7, Col. i. 14. The price by which we are acquitted is the blood of Christ. Also Rom. iii. 24, 25, Heb. ix. 12, 1 Peter ii. 18, 19. The price, by which we were redeemed, was not so mean things as silver and gold, but that which is infinitely more precious and valuable. That is a price, by the laying down of which something is acquired; and when it is laid down for deliverance from misery and slavery, it is a ransom. So Christ's laying down his life is our ransom, Mat. xx. 28, Mark x. 45.

(4.) This price Christ paid in our stead. His sufferings were the price; and he suffered what we should have suffered, or what was equivalent thereto, that we might be delivered, 1 Tim. i. 6. Ἀντίλυτρον signifies a price or ransom paid instead of another, for ἀντί (as was shewed before) denotes substitution, when one is put in the place of another; and, in this case, not a thing instead of a person, but the sufferings of one person instead of the sufferings of others. Ἀντίλυτρον is such a ransom, in which the redeemer undergoes some such thing as the redeemed were liable to, which is fully expressed by the apostle, Gal. iii. 13. He redeemed us, how? by paying the ransom in our stead, *i. e.* by undergoing the curse which we should have undergone, and thereby discharging us from it.

(5.) The price was paid to God. Those that would have all that was done for us by Christ to be only a metaphorical redemption, confess that it would be properly redemption, and properly a price, if the price were paid to any; but since Satan detains us, it should be paid to him, if to any; and seeing it is absurd to have it paid to him, it is paid to none at all. We say it is God to whom it is paid, for the price is the blood or the death of Christ. This is sometimes set forth as a price, sometimes as a sacrifice. These are but one and the same thing, under several notions. Now the sacrifice was offered to God, and therefore the price, being the same thing, was paid to God, Eph. v. 2.

It is the great God, the supreme governor of the world, that detains sinners in this misery. Satan is but the instrument of his justice. It was for



the injury done to God that we are cast into this misery. The injury is transgressing of his law; the law cannot be satisfied, nor the injury repaired, but by suffering the death which it threatens. Christ suffered death in our stead, thereby the injury done to God is repaired, the law of God satisfied; and the Lord accepting of this, which the Scripture calls a price, tendered for his satisfaction, it was clearly paid to him, Rev. v. 19, which may as well denote that the price was paid to God, as that the people were purchased for him.

3. The death of Christ is proposed in Scripture as a sacrifice of expiation. So that, when he is said to die for sinners, we are to understand that he died as a sacrifice to expiate their sins. Now that ye may the better apprehend what a sacrifice for expiation is, and how his death is such a sacrifice, take serious notice of some particulars.

(1.) There were some sorts of sacrifices under the law, to which all those in use may be reduced.

[1.] Eucharistical sacrifices of thanksgiving, which were offered to signify their gratitude for mercies received of God; as acknowledgments of their own unworthiness, and his bounty and goodness to them. Such a sacrifice the death of Christ was not, it had another design and end, and was of another nature.

[2.] Propitiatory sacrifices for expiation. These were to atone God offended by their sin, to divert his wrath, and the punishment due to sin, when was offered what, by way of satisfaction, might appease God, and procure pardon of him, and favour or reconciliation with him, Lev. iv. 26, 31, 35. The design of these sacrifices in reference to God, was to make atonement, *i. e.* to appease him when he was provoked, to render him propitious when he had cause to shew his wrath. And in reference to the sinner, to obtain forgiveness, and prevent the punishment which his sin deserved. And such a sacrifice was the death of Christ, of this nature, and for this end.

(2.) Those sacrifices under the law did prefigure and shadow out the great sacrifice of expiation in Christ's death. The apostle so speaks of them, as of other things belonging to that administration, Heb. viii. 5, and ix. 9, x. 1. Those expiatory sacrifices had some resemblance of this, as the shadow has of the body, though obscure and imperfect. They are but shadows, the substance and perfection of expiation was in this sacrifice of Christ's death, Col. ii. 17. Whatever sacrifices were then offered for expiation,

[1.] They all prefigured and signified this of Christ, those especially which were sacrificed on the great day of expiation, of which there is an account, Lev. xvi. The apostle instances in those as figures, Heb. ix. 7-9, shewing how far the virtue of the sacrifice signified did transcend that of the signs and legal figures, vers. 11, 12, &c.

[2.] Likewise the trespass-offerings and sin-offerings did signify the same; צדקה, the word used for a sin-offering, is applied to Christ by the prophet, Isa. liii. 10.

[3.] The same was typified by the burnt-offerings of all sorts; whether they were stated, and the time for them determined by the law, or occasional, and such as they called free-will offerings, for both were for expiation, or, which is all one, for atonement, Job i. 5, Lev. v. 10; both the voluntary, Lev. i. 4, and the prescribed, Lev. xvi. 6, 10, 16, 18, &c. And burnt-offerings with the sin-offerings are reckoned by the apostle amongst those which were shadows of this most perfect sacrifice, Heb. x. 1, 6, 8. Both burnt-offerings and sin-offerings (expressly applied to Christ) were for expiation, with this difference, that the sin-offering was to expiate one sort of sin, specified; burnt-offerings were to expiate all sins.

[4.] The peace-offerings for the congregation seem to have been for expiation, and so of the like typical signification with the rest, because what is required in expiatory sacrifices is found in them, Ezek. xlv. 15, 2 Sam. ii. 10; the slaying of the beast, the sprinkling of the blood, and consuming some part of it upon the altar, Lev. ix. 18, 19.

[5.] The paschal lamb had something of expiation in its first institution. The blood of it secured the Israelites from wrath and punishment, which they had deserved, and the Egyptians suffered, Exodus xii. 13, Heb. xii. 24, 28. Through the blood of Christ, typified by that of the paschal lamb, the Lord is propitious and favourable to his people, so as not to destroy them, as he did the first-born in Egypt. The passover is referred to Christ by the apostle, 1 Cor. v. 7.

[6.] The lamb offered in the daily sacrifice was a burnt-offering; and burnt-offerings, as was said before, were for expiation, Lev. i. 4, and xvi. 24; to make atonement, to remove guilt, to cleanse from moral and legal impurities too, Lev. xiv. 12, Num. vi. 12, Lev. v. 6. In reference to lambs thus sacrificed for expiation under the law, Christ is styled, Rev. xiii. 8, the Lamb sacrificed, John i. 29, by whose blood the guilt of sin is taken away, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

So that all sorts of propitiatory sacrifices are referred to Christ, and shadowed out that most perfect expiation which we have in the sacrifice of himself. The most material resemblances betwixt them will appear in what follows. I have stayed the longer here, because it is a most delightful and comfortable prospect to one in love with Christ, to see him in those parts of the Old Testament which give an account of these sacrifices, which otherwise may seem dark, jejune, and useless to us.

(3.) That which was offered as a sacrifice for expiation was to be destroyed. Being a living creature, first it was slain, and the blood, part of it, sprinkled upon the horns of the brazen altar, or round about it, sometimes before the veil of the sanctuary, and some of it put upon the horns of the altar of incense; all the rest of the blood the priests poured out at the foot of the altar, Lev. iv. 18. The other parts of it besides the blood were sometimes partly burnt on the altar, partly eaten by the priests, sometimes wholly burnt upon the altar, Lev. i. 8, 9, as in the whole burnt-offering; or burnt without the camp, as in the sin-offering for the high priest and the whole congregation, Lev. iv. 11, 12.

Now the sufferings of Christ were correspondent to the burnings of those sacrifices, Heb. xiii. 11, 12, and his death to the blood of them. Indeed, it is the blood to which expiation is peculiarly ascribed, Lev. xvii. 11. It is the blood that makes atonement; and why so? The reason assigned is this, 'the life is in the blood,' repeated ver. 14. That sin might be expiated, the life of the sacrifice was to go for the life of the sinner; and the blood being shed, the life which is within the blood was given, and so the blood made expiation. Hence the apostle, to shew the necessity of Christ's blood to make atonement, Heb. ix. 22. Without blood there was no expiation, under the law or under the gospel; and all the effects of expiation are expressly ascribed to the blood of Christ, Rom. iii. 25, Eph. ii. 13, 14.

(4.) The sacrifice for expiation was slain instead of the sinner that offered it. There was a substitution here, one being put to death in room of the other, and suffering, that he might escape. This is of great consequence, to clear the nature and design of Christ's death, in opposition to those who would nullify it. Therefore I will insist on it a little, and shew what evidence there is for it.

Let me premise this, which is the observation of many. By the judicial

law, which was to the Jews their civil or common law, by which they were governed as a commonwealth or body politic, corporal death was the penalty of all disobedience to God, Deut. xxvii. 26. The curse is death, death corporal in the civil or political sense of it; death eternal in the spiritual sense, as the apostle applies it, Gal. iii. 10. Now the Lord, who was the king and lawgiver of Israel, relaxed the law as to many offences; and instead of the corporal death of the offender, accepted of the death of a sacrifice. Now that there was such a substitution, the life of the sacrifice being given for the life of the sinner, one suffering instead of the other, appears divers ways.

[1.] In that the blood is said to make atonement, Lev. xvii. 11. The reason why the blood was for atonement, is because the life was in the blood; and therefore when the blood was offered to make atonement for the offender, the life of the sacrifice was supposed to be given instead of his life.

[2.] The offender, bringing a beast for a sacrifice, was to lay his hand upon the head of it, Lev. i. 4, whereby is signified that he offered it in his stead; and so, says the text, it was accepted for him, *i. e.* in his stead, to make atonement, *i. e.* to satisfy for him, as suffering in his stead.

[3.] The sacrifice is said to bear the iniquity of the people, Lev. x. 17; and to bear iniquity is to be punished for it, which is to suffer what the offender should have suffered, to suffer death instead of them.

[4.] The sins of the people were confessed over the goat in the day of expiations, Lev. xvi. 21, which signified that the sin and punishment of the people were transferred to the goat, and upon his head, that he might bear them in their stead.

[5.] A heifer was to be slain when the murderer could not be found, and so to suffer in his stead, and secure the land from being defiled with blood, as if justice had been done upon the murderer, and himself had suffered, Deut. xxi. 1-4, 8, 9. The guilt that was to be put away by the death of the murderer, was put away from the land by the death of the heifer killed instead of him.

In short, the Hebrew doctors, as Buxtorf observes, lay it down as a general rule, that wherever it is said, Behold, I am for expiation, it is to be understood, Behold, I am in the place of another, to bear his iniquities.

Now this substitution of the sacrifice in the room of the sinner under the law, typified the substitution of Christ in our stead, in that great sacrifice of expiation when he offered himself on the cross. He was offered in our stead, he bare our sins, our guilt was transferred to him; he bore our punishment, and suffered it instead of us. His life went for ours. He died, that the death threatened in the law might not be inflicted on us; as the sacrifice was slain that the sinner might live. In this sense is he said to die for sinners in the text, as a sacrifice for them, suffering death in their stead. And that is the sense of the expression wherever he is said to die for us. It still implies substitution. Many instances I have given, to which add Luke xxii. 19, 20, John xi. 50-52.

(5.) The sacrifices for expiation were offered to God, and had an immediate respect to him. They were to atone God, and obtain forgiveness of him, as is frequently expressed, and had that effect, Num. xvi. 46, 2 Sam. xxiv. 25. I mention this particular, because the opposers of Christ his sacrifice and death contend that his death had no respect to God immediately, but only to man. It did not make our peace with God, nor incline him to pardon, but only disposed us for pardon of sins past, by leading us to amendment of life. And so they leave nothing of a priest to Christ, nothing of a sacrifice in his death. Whereas the apostle tells us, Heb. v. 1, gifts and sacrifices are things appertaining to God, being offered to him.

And so Christ our high priest offered himself for a sacrifice to God, Eph. ix. 14. What the effect of his death was in reference to God, shall be shewed hereafter.

(6.) The animal designed for expiation was sacrificed, not in the sanctuary, but at the door of the tabernacle, Lev. i. Indeed, part of the blood was sometimes carried into the sanctuary, sometimes into the most holy place; but that was not for sacrifice, but the application of the blood of the victim already sacrificed.

This I add, because the adversaries will have no sacrifice of Christ on earth; and though they make show of one in heaven, yet they assign nothing there which is like either sacrifice or expiation. Christ was sacrificed when he was put to death, and his blood shed. The Lamb of God was made a sacrifice when he was slain. If they make a sacrifice of him in heaven, either he was not sacrificed on earth, or he will be sacrificed more than once, contrary to all evidence of Scripture, Heb. vii. 27, and ix. 14, 25-28, and x. 10-12.

(7.) The effects of expiatory sacrifices, and answerably of the death of Christ, are divers. We may take notice of the virtue and efficacy thereof, in reference to sin, to God, and the sinner.

[1.] The efficacy thereof in reference to sin is to expiate the fault, or, which is all one, to satisfy for the offence. *Piars* is *luere* (as Grotius), to expiate is to bear punishment, to undergo the punishment due to the sin; the very same, or what is equivalent, is to satisfy. When this is suffered, the law is satisfied, and that which justice requires is done, whether it be suffered by the offender himself, or by one legally admitted in his stead. Satisfaction was made by the sacrifice, substituted in place of the sinner, suffering what was due to him. The offender deserved to be punished, the sacrifice bare the punishment; the offender deserved to die, the sacrifice was put to death in his stead. Hence the sacrifice is said to bear his sin, Lev. x. 17. To bear their iniquity, is to bear the punishment due to them. In correspondence hereto the apostle says, Christ bare the sins of those for whom he was offered, Heb. ix. 28. In being sacrificed, he bare their punishment, suffered what was due to them for their sins, and so satisfied for their offences, which is to expiate their sin.

Both the words used in the old Testament for expiation, *כָּפַר* and *חָטָא*, import satisfaction, 2 Sam. xxi. 3; atonement, *אָסַף*, the word is, 'Wherewith shall I expiate?' the sense is, Wherewith shall I make satisfaction? so Gen. xxxi. 39, 'I bare the loss,' is, I made it good. The word is *חָטָא*, I did expiate; the sense is, I made the satisfaction for it. This was the end of Christ's death, this was the effect of it, to expiate sin, to satisfy for it. What God lost by sin, Christ made it up; what injury he had by sin, Christ gave satisfaction for it by being made a sacrifice for expiation.

[2.] The efficacy of those sacrifices in reference to God is to atone him, *i. e.* to appease him and divert his wrath. Making atonement is frequently ascribed to the legal sacrifices that were for expiation, Lev. i. 4. Answerably we have atonement by Christ, Rom. v. 11, *i. e.* by his death, ver. 10, by virtue of his sacrifice.

Upon this account those sacrifices are said to be a sweet savour unto the Lord, as being thereupon well pleased, no more angry, Lev. vi. 8. Such a sacrifice was Noah's, a placatory sacrifice, and the effect of it so expressed, Gen. viii. 20, 21; it is rendered *odor quietis*, a savour of rest, a word which comes from *נָח*, used, ver. 4, where the ark is said to rest, and denotes that the Lord's anger did now rest; he ceased to be angry; he would no more let out his wrath against the world in such a way.

Such was the effect of Christ's death and sacrifice, and so expressed by the

apostle, Eph. v. 2. The Lord was well pleased with Christ, and upon the account of this sacrifice well pleased with those for whom it was offered. Now he says, 'Fury is not in me.' By virtue of the blood of this sacrifice the Lord becomes propitious and gracious; hence Christ is said to be set forth, Rom. iii. 25. He exhibits himself as on the mercy-seat, on the throne of grace, to which we may come with confidence, &c., 1 John ii. 2.

[8.] The effect of these sacrifices, in reference to the sinner, is forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt; hence it is often said upon the offering of such a sacrifice, it shall be forgiven him, Lev. v. 10, 13, 18, Num. xv. 27, 28.

Answerably by the blood of Christ sacrificed for us, we are said to have forgiveness. Eph. i. 7, Col. i. 14, Mat. xxvi. 28. It is by virtue of this sacrifice that we are said to be freed from guilt in variety of expressions. Hereby we are 'purged,' Heb. i. 3, Heb. ix. 22, 26, guilt is uncleanness, Lev. v. 2, 'washed,' Rev. v. 11, 'cleansed,' 1 John i. 7, 9, 'sprinkled,' Heb. x. 21, 22, which are such expressions as other authors, Greek and Latin, use for their expiations.

Both these sacrifices procured freedom from guilt; but there is a great difference in this respect betwixt the expiations by the legal sacrifices and that by the death of Christ. Which that we may understand, there are three sorts of guilt to be taken notice of, civil, ceremonial, and spiritual. Guilt is an obligation to punishment. To be guilty is to be bound over or made liable to some punishment or other, which being various, guilt is accordingly distinguished.

1. Civil guilt, when an Israelite was liable to corporal death for some transgression of the law, for which death was to be inflicted, Deut. xxi. 9.

2. Ceremonial guilt, when he was to be debarred from the tabernacle, and joining with the congregation in the ceremonious worship then authorised, for some legal pollution, Lev. v. 2, 3. Spiritual guilt, when one is liable to eternal death for some sins against God, who has made eternal death the wages of sin. Now, the legal sacrifices might free those under the law from the two former sorts of guilt; but the death of Christ and his sacrifice alone frees from the third, spiritual guilt.

1. The legal sacrifices might and did free those for whom they were daily offered from civil guilt, and saved them from corporal death; for when this is supposed to have been due for disobedience to God, and was to be inflicted by the magistrate, the Lord (as was said before) relaxed the law, and admitted the death of the sacrifice which he appointed instead of the death of the offender, so that the offering of such sacrifice dissolved the obligation to this penalty, cleared the delinquent from this guilt, and freed him from corporal death.

But, then, a sacrifice would not quit the sinner in all cases from civil guilt and penalty. There were some crimes for which no sacrifice was appointed, none would be admitted: such were, wilful idolatry, murder, adultery, &c. Accordingly some understand Ps. li. 16. Those crimes of David were of that nature that no sacrifice could expiate. Such were wilful sins, done in contempt of the law, as the apostle intimates, Heb. x. 26-28; and herein the sacrifice of Christ far transcends the legal sacrifices, expiating those sins spiritually which those sacrifices could not expiate (or procure pardon for) so much as civilly, Acts xiii. 38.

2. Those legal expiations could free them from ceremonial guilt. If he had contracted some legal uncleanness, he was not suffered to come to the tabernacle till he was cleansed, and that impurity expiated; but having made use of the means prescribed for expiation in such cases, he was freed from this ritual guilt, and admitted to join in public worship with the congregation

at the tabernacle, or afterwards at the temple; an instance we have hereof, Num. xix. 13, 16. If one had touched a dead body, or one slain, or a bone, or a grave, he was unclean, contracted such guilt thereby that his coming to the tabernacle before it was expiated (or, as the Dutch render it, before he unspined it), was counted a defiling it. The way of unspinning or expiating such uncleanness is described there: a red heifer burnt to ashes, water was put to the ashes, and with hyssop sprinkled upon the unclean, ver. 17, 18. David refers to it, Ps. li. 7; and this the apostle calls a 'sanctifying to the purifying of the flesh,' Heb. ix. 13, an external sanctification, an expiating of them only as to the flesh, not as to the soul and conscience, and so comes infinitely short of that expiation which is to be had by the blood of Christ, as he shews in the next verse.

8. The legal sacrifices could not free them from spiritual guilt, could not secure them from eternal death, to which they were for sin bound over by the sentence of the law. The life of a beast, or of many, was not of sufficient value to satisfy for men's sins, which deserved everlasting wrath and endless sufferings; these could not be a compensation for the injury sin had done to God; this could not vindicate the holiness, truth, justice, authority of God, which all suffered by the violation of his law, which yet must all be fully asserted and vindicated, or else the Lord was engaged in justice to execute the sentence of the law, and inflict eternal death on transgressors. Nothing less than the death of the Son of God could do this, whose blood was of infinite value. The legal sacrifices were of no such value, of no considerable worth or virtue, for such an effect. Hence the apostle: Heb. x. 4, 'Impossible they should take away sin' as to spiritual guilt; not possible they should free the sinner from the obligation he was under to suffer eternal death. The same he signifies Heb. ix. 9. They could not perfectly satisfy the conscience that sin was pardoned, the spiritual guilt removed, and the sinner secured from everlasting death by such offerings. The conscience could not have any sufficient or perfect ground of assurance that justice was satisfied by such sacrifices; and the sinner, being conscious that he is exposed to the justice of God, cannot be perfectly satisfied by anything but that which will satisfy justice.

But did these legal sacrifices only respect civil and ceremonial guilt? Were they not at all considerable as to spiritual guilt? The apostle shews how far they were considerable as to this, when in this verse he calls them figures. They did prefigure that which would remove this spiritual guilt; they themselves did not, could not remove it. They freed the sinner from civil and ritual guilt really, but they only typified that which was alone sufficient to free from spiritual guilt. They had no virtue of themselves to do it, but only signified and shadowed out the sacrifice of Christ, by which it was perfectly done, ver. 13, 14. These legal expiations, which cleansed them from ceremonial impurities, signified that the sacrifice of Christ would do more; this being of infinite value, since it was offered 'by the eternal Spirit,' *i. e.* by virtue and power of his own Godhead, would 'purge the conscience from dead works,' *i. e.* free the soul from spiritual guilt, the guilt of those acts whose desert was eternal death. Thus you see the difference betwixt the legal expiations and that by Christ: the one freed but from temporal death, the other wrought eternal redemption; the former cleansed from legal impurities, the latter purges the conscience, &c.; the former did but typify that expiation as to spiritual guilt, which the latter did really effect.

*Use.* 1. This should teach us to admire the love of God, who gave his Son, the love of Christ, who gave himself to die for sinners. This is the use the text leads us to in this, &c.

Here the glory of this love shines forth most admirably, both in the greatness and freeness of it ; the greatness of it, in that he died ; the freeness of it, in that he died for sinners.

1. The greatness of this love, that appears wonderful in the expression of it. What greater expression of love was the world capable of, than that the Son of God should die for sinful men ? What greater expression of love could the great God vouchsafe, than to deliver his Son unto death ? What greater expression could Christ make of his love to us than to die for us, and to die such a death, and in such a capacity, in our stead, in the stead of the vilest malefactors ? How wonderful is it that God should become man, when man at his best estate is but vanity ; that he should take the nature and innocent weakness of man, who is but a worm, and the son of man that is but a worm ; that he should become man, not to enjoy any comforts of human life, but to undergo all the sorrows and sufferings of life and death ; that he who gave life and being to all things, and sustains all in life and being by the word of his power, should die ; that infinite glory should suffer a shameful death, should endure the cross, and despise the shame ; that God blessed for ever should become a curse, and die a cursed death, the death of accursed malefactors, hanging on a tree ; that he who was the God of all consolation, the fountain of all comfort and happiness, should expose himself to the rage and cruelty of men, and the incensed wrath and justice of his Father ; should suffer most exquisite pains and tortures in body and soul from men, and God too ; the pains and sorrows both of first and second death !

That he who was the righteous lawgiver, the supreme judge, the almighty governor of the whole world, should not only suffer, but be punished in our stead, and bear the punishment of our crimes in his body too !

That he who was more valuable than ten thousand worlds should give himself a ransom for us, and not think his life, his blood dear, but lay it down freely as a price of our redemption from hell and wrath !

That he to whom angels, men, and all creatures owe themselves a sacrifice, should sacrifice himself to expiate our guilt, should make his soul a sin-offering, that he should love us, and wash us from our sins in his own blood !

Oh how is everything herein—every notion, every consideration of Christ's love expressed in his death—astonishing and full of wonder ! that which may amaze heaven and earth, that which may transport the angels, that which we should never speak of, never think of but with admiration ! Oh the height and depth, &c., Rev. v. 9–13. Heaven and earth owes all honour to Christ for his wonderful love ; and those that have any sense of it will be giving him the honour due to his name, to his love. And this is one special way to honour him for it, by admiring it.

2. Not only the greatness, but the freeness of this love is most wonderful ; that which we should eternally admire, as being, of all things that the mind of man can consider, most worthy of admiration. That love is most free which is expressed to those that are most unworthy ; but of all creatures in the world, none so unworthy of any love from Christ, as sinners. And yet, which the text shews, it was sinners that Christ loved, it was sinners to whom Christ expressed his love, and gave the greatest expression of it that was possible, so as to die for them. Sinners are to Christ the most unworthy of love ; for in that they are sinners, they are impotent and worthless ; have nothing, can do nothing to deserve love, nothing any way to engage his affection, or to move him in the least to express any love to them. In that they are sinners, they are hateful to him, and were so far from deserving any love, as they on this account deserved all his hatred.

3. In that they are sinners, they are haters of God ; and upon that ac-

count so far from expecting any sign of love that there remained nothing for them but a fearful expectation of acts of wrath and enmity. Now, he that could love such as these must love freely; his love expressed to sinners must be wonderfully free.

(1.) Sinners are impotent. Sin has divested them of the image of God, primitive holiness and righteousness, which was both the strength and beauty of their souls; and so they have nothing, can do nothing to excite love. This impotency implied here is expressed ver. 6. When they were 'without strength' either to relieve themselves, though extremely miserable, or to apply themselves to him for relief; when they did not so much as expect to\* desire it, he was found of those that sought him not; when they had no strength to make any answerable return for his love, any considerable acknowledgment of it; when they could do nothing, speak nothing worthy of his love, and such an expression of it. He that loves such creatures as these must do it freely; yet so impotent were sinners when he loved them, and so expressed his love as to die for them.

(2.) Sinners are hateful to Christ, the only objects of his hatred in the whole world. All other things, as being the works of his hands, are good, and so he likes them, and is pleased with them; but sinners, as such, are evil, and so hateful to him; they deserve his hatred and nothing else, as being contrary to him who is holiness itself. And they are actually hated by him: Ps. xlv. 7, v. 5. Now, could he love that which is hateful, that which he is of purer eyes than to behold without loathing and detestation? It is true, he could not delight in them as such, but he would bear them good will and pity them; and had such compassion on them, as to expose himself to wrath and misery, yea to death itself, a cruel, a cursed death, for their sake. Sure such love, to those who were so hateful, must needs be free, wonderfully so.

(3.) Sinners, as such, are haters of God, enemies to Christ, hate him, as David complains, 'cruelly,' Ps. xxv. 19, 'wrongfully,' Ps. xxxviii. 19, 'without a cause,' Ps. xxxv. 19, which is the most provoking and intolerable kind of hatred.

It is strange for any to love those that are hateful, but more wonderful if that hatefulness be accompanied with hatred. Yet there was a concurrence of these in sinners, when Christ loved them and died for them, Rom. v. 10. He would die to make our peace with God when we were enemies to him. Oh what manner of love was this! John xv. 13. Greater love than this the world never knew, till Christ appeared in it; but in him the world had an instance of greater love than this, a love more free, more wonderful, when Christ laid down his life for enemies, when he loved those more than his life, who hated him. No love can be more free, more wonderfully free, than the love of Christ to sinners; so weak and impotent, so hateful and loathsome, yet so much enemies to him. Oh give him the honour due to this love, by admiring it, by adoring him for it.

*Use 2.* This engages us to love Christ. This shews we are infinitely obliged to it. Shall we not love him who loves us? That is an intolerable, an inhuman temper, that will not return love for love. The worst of sinners will do this in reference to one another, Mat. v. 46. The return of love for love is so due, that it deserves no thanks, no rewards; the very publicans, counted the worst of men, will do this. And shall we be worse than they? Shall we deal more disingenuously, more unworthily with Christ, than the worst of men do with one another?

2. Shall we not love him, whose love has prevented ours? John iv. 19.

\* Qu. 'or'?—ED.



He does not require that we should love him upon any other terms, but because he loved us first. If he had resolved not to love us, till first we loved him, he should never have loved us; for we would never have begun to him. But since he began to us, and propounds it as a motive to love him, that he loved us first; how great will our sin, how great will our condemnation be, if we do not answer the love of Christ with a return of love, 1 John iv. 10. Herein was the height of his love, and not to answer it with affection will be the highest provocation, and that which ourselves count most intolerable from others.

3. Shall we not love him who loved us freely, when we were sinners, when we were so far from deserving any love, as we deserved all hatred? Did he love us when we were utterly unworthy of it, and shall we not love him who infinitely deserves all our affection; him who is not only altogether lovely, entirely, infinitely amiable, but is as affectionate to us as he is lovely in himself, and has expressed his love to us in such a way as is most obliging; by dying for us that we might live, when the sentence of eternal death was passed upon us, that we might be happy in the eternal enjoyment of the fruits and expressions of his love? Did he love us when sinners, when we had nothing in the least to engage him to it? and shall we not love him, when he has laid infinite engagements upon us to do it? If we would not fall under the greatest and most inexcusable guilt, the heaviest and most dreadful condemnation, let us love Christ with,

(1.) An ardent love. Such was his love to us, a love strong as death, Cant. viii. 6, 7. Death itself could not give any check to it, he would love us though he died for it. Many waters could not quench it, the sorrows of death could not extinguish it, nor any floods or sufferings abate the fervour of it, though all the waves and billows thereof went over him, and seemed to overwhelm him. Oh, can we be content, that our love to Christ should be weak and remiss? No; let us have such an affection for other things, the things of the world; let us love them, as though we loved them not. But let us not deal so with him who loved us so as to die for us. Let it be a greater shame and affliction to us, that we have so little love for Christ, than that we have little worldly wisdom, little wealth, little power, little interest, little respect, or little of any thing that men naturally desire. Let little in any thing be more tolerable to us, than little affection to Christ, to him who loved us so much as to die for us, and suffer the pains of first and second death in our stead. Kindle this love by all means. And that it may kindle effectually, bring it to the flame, lay your hearts under the serious consideration of this love of Christ; if this will not influence them, they are hearts of stone.

(2.) A transcendent love. Love him more than all persons, than all things; love him above all, for so he loved you. He loved you more than he did the sinning angels; they tasted not of redeeming love, this run out in full streams to sinful men.

He loved you more than that which is dearest to you, and which naturally is most loved. He loved you more than riches, 2 Cor. viii. 9, more than honour and repute, Philip. ii. 7, exposed himself to scorn, reproach and shame.

More than the comforts of life: he became a man of sorrows, and lived a life of sorrows, afflictions, and sufferings.

More than his own blood, Rev. i. 5.

More than his life: he 'counted not his life dear,' but laid it down as the price of your redemption, Matt. xx. 28.

More than blessedness: would be made a curse, Gal. iii. 13.

More than his own body: he gave up that to be scourged, pierced, wounded, crucified, hanged on a tree.

More than his soul, Isa. liii. 10.

More than himself, Gal. ii. 20; 1 Tim. ii. 6. When he had no greater thing to give, he gave himself.

After all this, shall any thing, any person whatever be loved more than Christ, or equally with him? Your own hearts must needs pass sentence against this, as most accursed ingratitude, as that which is worthy of the dreadfullest curse, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. If any man love not him above all, for to love him less, is not to love him at all.

When any thing would come in competition with Christ, or take place of him in mind or heart, throw it down with indignation; say, This place is reserved for one more worthy, for him who loved me so as no creature ever loved; who did that for me, who has given that to me, who purchased, suffered that for me, which none in all the world, which no man or angel, can or will do.

(8.) An effectual love, 1 John iii. 18. Christ loved indeed. He shewed the reality of his love by such expressions, as may be the astonishment of heaven and earth. He counted nothing too dear to part with, nothing too grievous to suffer for us. Shew that you love Christ by real expressions. He requires nothing that need seem great or grievous to us. It is only this, to comply with his will in order to our own happiness. When Christ was to do his Father's will, not in order to his own, but our happiness, he applied himself as cheerfully to it, as a hungry man would do to his meat and drink, John iv. 34. Shall not we be willing to do the work of Christ, and do it cheerfully, when the end of it will be eternal life? If we love Christ indeed, we must do his will, John xiv. 15, 21. When obedience is proposed in general, every one will be ready to profess a compliance, God forbid that I should not obey Christ. But when it comes to particular instances, and some duty is pressed on us that seems difficult, or chargeable, or reproachful, or hazardous, here is the trial of our love. Then he that loves Christ indeed, will say with David, 'Shall I serve the Lord with that which costs me nothing?' Oh if Christ had done thus in reference to me and other lost sinners, what had my condition been? If he had been willing to have undertaken some small and easy things, but declined that which was difficult, and reproachful, and hazardous, and painful, he had never been obedient to the death of the cross, he had never died for me, and then I had never been pardoned, I had never been saved, I had been a child of wrath now and for ever, I had been a son of eternal death, I had been without hope to escape it, nothing had remained for me but a fearful expectation of judgment, &c.

But did Christ think nothing too hard, nothing too grievous to perform for me? And when he calls me to a duty, which intrenches upon my ease, or repute, or estate, or safety, shall I stick at it? shall I decline it? shall I spare myself in opposition to Christ's will, and neglect of his command, as the flesh and the world would have me? Oh, then, how can I say that I love Christ? Indeed, those that accustom themselves to do thus, let them say what they will concerning their love to Christ, their practice confutes their sayings.

Use 3. This engages us to live unto Christ, not to others, not to ourselves. This was the end of his death, and we are as much concerned to live unto him, as we are not to defeat his design in dying, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. He 'died that we might live.' Therefore we owe our life to him, it is his, and should be employed for him. We were sentenced to die, he ransomed us from death. His blood, his death was the price which bought and purchased our life. Therefore we and our lives are his, as that which he has bought and paid for, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.