

become his foot-stool, that he would strengthen you. (Psalm cx. 1; Col. i. 11.)

Are you full of fears because of Zion, the afflictions, dangers, enemies of the church? Remember, he is the Head over all things to the church. (Eph. i. 22.)

In a word: whatever your afflictions or troubles are, the mediation of Christ is a sufficient relief; and therefore sit not down dejectedly mourning, like Hagar weeping at the fountain-side. (Gen. xxi. 16, 19.)

SERMON XIV.

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OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION.

He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—Philippians ii. 8.

THIS chapter begins with one of the most pathetic and powerfully-pressed exhortations that we meet with in the whole scripture. The apostle is in one of his high strains and raptures of rhetoric, conjuring the Philippians, as it were, by all that they accounted dear and precious, unto brotherly unity and amity, and, to this end, to humility of mind, and a mutual condescension. "He that will lift up and embrace another that is fallen, must himself stoop down."* And because men are rather drawn by example, than driven by precept, he propounds to them a pattern beyond all parallel: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," &c. As if he had said, "Jesus Christ was as high as the highest, co-equal with God. It was his right to stand upon even ground with his Father, and, without any wrong to him, [he] might have pleaded his peerage; and yet he strangely humbled and abased himself. Here is your copy." How lowly should Christians be, seeing humanity, "the form of a servant," nay, death itself, was not accounted too low for their Lord! Christ himself hath just such another argument: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John xiii. 14.) Let no Christian stand upon his pantofles, seeing Christ "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

In which words we have,

* *Nullus jacentem suscipiat nisi inflexione sui.*—JOH. EUSEB. NIEREMBERGIUS.

1. *The depth of Christ's humiliation* :—(1.) *Specified* : "Death."(2.) *Aggravated* : "Even the death of the cross."2. *The manner of his humiliation* : where we may note these two remarkable circumstances :—(1.) *His voluntariness* : "He humbled himself."(2.) *His obedience* : He "became obedient unto death."

The scripture hath observed to us these three special steps of Christ's humiliation :—

(1.) *He stooped down to become a man.*(2.) *He condescended to put his neck under the yoke of the law.*(3.) *He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh.*

(1.) *He stooped down to become a man.*—He left the warm bosom of his Father, and took himself lodgings in the womb of a virgin. He stripped himself of his robes of glory, to put on the coarse, homespun, and thread-bare tatters of a frail humanity; and he that "thought it no robbery to be equal with God," submitted to an estate lower than some of his own creatures. This is the first riddle in the apostle's "great mystery of godliness:" "God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) And, sure, that the most magnificent monarch in the world should become a toad; that the whole host of angels should be degraded into worms; that this goodly frame of the creation should be unpinned and annihilated, or crowded into the narrow compass of one single atom; is infinitely a less wonder, than for God to become a man. Had Christ been made an angel, it had been infinitely below himself; and yet then he had remained a spirit, and stayed something nearer home. But he clothed his Divinity with a body: "The Word was made flesh." (John i. 14.) *Ἐαυτὸν ἐξέωσσε*, "He made himself of no reputation, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. ii. 7.) He emptied himself of his credit. To become a man, was so much beneath him, that, upon the matter, it undid him in point of reputation. The greatest step of Christ's humiliation was his incarnation; for, *that being man he should die*, is nothing so astonishing a wonder and inconceivable, as, *that being God he should be made a man.*

(2.) *He condescended to put his neck under the yoke of the law.*—"God," saith the apostle, "sent forth his Son, made of a woman;" and though that be very much, yet there is more added, "made under the law." (Gal. iv. 4.) Though every man that is born of a woman, every mother's child among us, be necessarily subject to a law, and it is no condescension, it is no whit below the greatest prince on earth that gives laws to many thousands; yet this was a very great submission in Christ. Adam, while he continued in a state of integrity and perfection, was then under a law, and did not yield or abate any thing of his right by it. The blessed and glorious angels continue under an obligation to obedience; and they do not by this lose any of their birthright; for a creature, as a creature, is indispensably subjected to the law of its Maker, by virtue of its creatureship and dependence; and should any one of them attempt a

disobligation, it were an essay toward a prodigious and preternatural antinomianism. But the Son of God, the eternal and independent Law-maker, did admirably abase himself, to come under the obediencial observance and poisonous malediction of that law, upon which there was only the print of his own authority; for though the human nature, abstractedly considered, is, as a creature, bound to the observance of a law, yet, being in conjunction with the second person in the Trinity, and assumed into the personality of the Son of God, it was exempted from obedience, and indemnified as to curse and penalty. Christ submitted to the ceremonial law in his circumcision; put his neck under the yoke of the moral law, to fulfil the preceptive part by his perfect obedience, and satisfy the maledictive part by his complete sufferings. All which subjection was not a debt that God could have challenged of him, but a pure voluntary subscription: "the law is not made," *in some sense*, "for a righteous man;" (1 Tim. i. 9;) but it is not made *in any sense* for the glorious God.

(3.) And, which is a step beneath both these, *he appeared as a sinful man, or "in the likeness of sinful flesh."* (Rom. viii. 3.)—Subjection to the law made him very low; but the similitude of sin, which is the violation of the law, was a far greater abasement. Christ's appearing "in the likeness of sinful flesh," must not be understood as though his flesh were only a likeness and appearance, or he had only an aerial and fantastical body, as some of old absurdly fancied and affirmed. He had true real flesh, though but the similitude and resemblance of sinful flesh.* The word *likeness* relates not to flesh, but sin; not flesh in likeness, but sin in likeness. A being under a law implies nothing of sin; it was the case of Adam and the angels, and both without sin, or any thing that looked like sin. But our blessed Lord condescended not only to subjection, but to the print and appearances of transgression. "He shall appear," saith the apostle, "the second time without sin unto salvation;" (Heb. ix. 28:) intimating, that the first time, he appeared with sin upon him. When he returns in glory, he shall have no dints of sin upon him; the smell or singeing of it shall not be upon his garments. But his first entrance was with many of those prints and marks that sin, wherever it is, uses to leave behind it. Sin was neither inherent in him, nor committed by him; but imputed to him. Sin never defiled him, but it defaced him. He had nothing of its impurity, but much of its penalty. He was not tainted with that plague, but he was pleased to take upon him the tokens. In the same chapter the prophet tells us, "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth; and he was numbered with the transgressors." (Isai. liii. 9, 12.) He trod not one step awry in sin, but many of the footsteps of sin appeared upon him: to instance in a few:—

(i.) *Poverty*.—He came in a low and mean condition; and that is the very likeness of sin, the great bankrupt that brought all to beggary.

* *Non in similitudine carnis, quasi caro non esset caro, sed in similitudine carnis peccati, quia caro erat, sed peccati caro non erat.*—AUGUSTINUS "He appeared not in the likeness of flesh, as though his flesh was not really flesh; but in the likeness of sinful flesh, because his body was flesh, but not sinful flesh."—EDIT.

“Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.) When he rode to Jerusalem, it was not in state, in a gilded coach with six horses; or mounted, like a lord mayor, with embossed trappings; but, as one might rather say, like a beggar that is sent with a pass from one town to another: “Sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” (Matt. xxi. 5.) “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head.” (Matt. viii. 20.) He was at such a very low ebb as to worldly riches, that once he, and one of his apostles, could not both of them make a purse for half-a-crown * to pay their tax without the working of a miracle. (Matt. xvii. 27.)

(ii.) Another likeness of sin was *sorrow*.—“He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” (Isai. lv. 3.) As antichrist is called a “man of sin,” (2 Thess. ii. 3.)—his very make and constitution is sin,—so was Christ a man of sorrows, and as it were made up of them; they were, in a manner, his complexion. We read oft of his weeping, but it is not observed that ever there was a smile upon his face. Now sin and sorrow are so near of kin, that the Hebrew language compriseth both in one word אָרַם; they are as like a smother and daughter, and both called by the same name.

(iii.) A third likeness of sin was *shame and reproach*.—Sin was the inlet of shame. When our first parents had sinned, their “eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together.” (Gen. iii. 7.) Why, they were naked before, and were not ignorant of it; but then it was no shame to them. (Gen. ii. 25.) Sin gave them a sight of their nakedness, so as they never saw it before. This similitude of sin was upon Christ, when he was called “glutton, wine-bibber, conjurer, blasphemer, devil,” and what not that might cause and increase contempt? “We hid as it were our faces from him,” saith the prophet, “he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” (Isai. liii. 3.) How vile and contemptible is that person, upon whom we turn the back in scorn, to whom we will not vouchsafe so much as a look, or the glance of an eye! “I am a reproach of men,” saith the Psalmist, in the person of Christ, “and despised of the people.” (Psalm xxii. 6.)

(iv.) Another similitude of sin was *the withdrawal of his Father, and clouding the light of his countenance*.—His Father’s forsaking him, whereof he makes that heavy heart-breaking complaint, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. xxvii. 46;) the frown of his Father, and brow-beating of his displeasure, was the very likeness of sin; for from that noisome vapour only arises a cloud to overcast the light of his countenance. Nothing but that builds up a partition-wall betwixt him and us: “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.” (Isai. lix. 2.) We hid our face from Christ; and in that there was reproach. But, alas! this was nothing in comparison. A prince need not trouble himself that he hath not the smile of his groom. What,

* Στατήρ, valet 2s. 6d. [“A stater, in value two shillings and sixpence.”—Marginal Reading.]

if all creatures in heaven and earth had hid their faces from Christ? He could well have borne up under it. But the hiding of his Father's face even broke his heart, as a burden intolerable.

(v.) And, lastly, Christ submitted to *death*; and that is another likeness of sin.—“Sin entered into the world, and death by sin;” (Rom. v. 12;) they came together, as it were, hand-in-hand. This was the penalty inflicted upon sin: “In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. ii. 17.) Now, in this respect, Christ abased himself to look like a sinner: “He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, the death of the cross.”

In the further amplification of this, I shall endeavour to show three things:—

I. *What kind of death Christ humbled himself unto.*

II. *In what manner Christ underwent that death.*

III. *Upon what grounds Christ thus humbled himself to death.*

I. *What kind of death Christ humbled himself unto.*—And this I cannot omit, the apostle having added such a remarkable emphasis, by way of reduplication: “Death, even the death of the cross.” It was not only a violent death; and there is much in that,—that he died not a natural but a violent death. Nor indeed could he; both because there was no sin in him to be the inlet of a natural death, nor would that have been satisfactory for the sin of others. It was not only, I say, a violent death; but such a violent death, as had in it a more than ordinary violence, a death by crucifying; which hath these three embittering circumstances: 1. *Pain.* 2. *Shame.* 3. *Curse.*

1. *Pain.*—The easiest death is painful. A death-bed, though a down-bed, is, for the most part, a little-ease. “O my gouty feet!” saith Asa. “O my cold benumbed body!” saith David. “O my leprous skin!” saith Uzziah. “O my pained, aching head!” cries the son of the Shunammite. But in the death of Christ there was the pain of many deaths put together. In the very dawning of the gospel, the very first time we find the death of Christ mentioned, it is set out by bruising: “It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;” (Gen. iii. 15;) namely, his human nature, that which could be bruised: “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief;” (Isai. liii. 10;) וְנִצַּב בְּרִיבָה בְּרִיבָה bruised him as with a pestle in a mortar. Hence was it he prayed so earnestly that “the cup might pass.” It was so full of wormwood and gall, and the pain so violent which he was to encounter, that he screwed up his request to the highest pin: “If it be possible.” (Matt. xxvi. 39.) Wise and resolute men do not use to complain of a little; they will not cry, “O!” at a flea-bite, or the burning of a finger; and some of the martyrs have borne up with such Christian courage and gallantry in death, that, being on the rack, they would not be loosed: “They were tortured, not accepting deliverance,” saith the apostle. (Heb. xi. 35.) The incomes and supports of divine grace made an abatement of their pains. O, but what shall we say of the bitterness of that death, where the Author of all their strength, God and man, bewrays passions? How much dregs was there in that cup which Christ was so loath to drink of!

Three things made Christ's death so exceedingly painful :—

(1.) *The piercing his hands and feet, those sinews and sensitive parts.*—Christ's body was all-over "excellently well tempered," * and so his sense admirably acute; but to be pierced and digged through hands and feet, parts so full of nerves and sinews, must needs aggravate and augment the smart. "They have pierced my hands and my feet," was the prophetic complaint of the Psalmist, fulfilled in Christ. (Psalm xxii. 16.)

(2.) Another thing that added much to the pain of Christ's death, was *the extension and distortion of his body.*—The cross was a rack to him, and he was stretched as upon the tenters; for when any persons were to be crucified, the cross, you must understand, lay all along upon the ground till the party was nailed to it and stretched out at his full length, and afterward erected: and to this the Psalmist had respect in that sad complaint of his: "I may tell all my bones." (Psalm xxii. 17.) He was so racked, that his bones were almost ready to start out of the skin.

(3.) The death of Christ was more painful, by reason of *its slowness, and gradual approach.*—Christ was from the third to the ninth hour in dying, from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon, six complete hours.† When bloody tyrants would make any man's death more than ordinarily painful, they have devised ways to cause a lingering death; and when news was once brought to one of them, that such an one was dead suddenly, he cried out, *Evasit*, "He hath made an escape!" When death comes, the slower its pace, the heavier its tread; the longer the siege, the fiercer the storm. But this is true of Christ, more than others: for when they are long in dying, they usually faint, and their spirits abate; they are brought step by step to death's door, and dead before death. But with Christ it was otherwise: he stood all that while in perfect strength; the vigour and acuteness of his senses was no whit blunted, or made less sensible of pain. That is a notable scripture: "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God:" (Mark xv. 37, 39 :) a very strange inference,—"This man dies, and gives up the ghost; and therefore he is the Son of God." The argument, one would think, were strong to the contrary. But here lies the strength of his reason,—"When he saw he so cried out," and died, he said he was the Son of God. He very well knew, that, in other men, strength abated leisurely; their speech grew low, and they used to fumble, and falter, and rattle in the throat. But as for this man, he gave such a cry at the last gasp as he never heard; and thereupon [he] infers, "Truly he was the Son of God."

2. Another bitter ingredient unto the death of Christ was *shame.*—And this was much more than the former. There is nothing so sharp and cutting, so intolerable to an ingenuous and noble spirit, as shame.

* *Optimè complexionatus.*—AQUINAS.

† Compare Mark xv. 25, with 34.

The pain of a hundred deaths is more easily undergone by such, than the reproach of one. Now, in this respect, the thieves fared much better than he did. We read of no irrision, no inscription, no taunts or sarcasms cast upon them. They had only pain to encounter; Christ, both pain and scorn. The soldiers, the Jews, the very thieves flouted him. "He endured the cross," saith the apostle, "and despised the shame." (Heb. xii. 2.) The cross was itself an ignominious death, the death of a slave. No free-man, or man of fashion, was ever put to it; * and, to this day, we say of one that is hanged, "He dies like a dog." Yea, but Christ did not only die such an ignominious and reproachful death as this, but he was sold to it; and [it was] "a goodly price that he was prized at." (Zech. xi. 13.) The death itself was shameful, the death of a slave; and this was an aggravating circumstance of ignominy,—that he was sold to it as a slave. All the while he was dying, he stood naked upon the cross: now, nakedness is our shame. He was scorned and derided on all sides. They mocked and shook the head at him. All his offices were derided; his *priestly* office: "He saved others; himself he cannot save!" (Matt. xxvii. 42.) His *prophetical* office, when they blinded him, and bid him prophesy, who it was that smote him. (Luke xxii. 64.) His *kingly* office, when they put a robe upon him, and in mockery said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" (John xix. 2, 3.) Thieves and notorious villains were crucified with him; and he [was] put in the midst, as though he were worse than both of them, and all their villanies and misdemeanours had concentrated in him. They spit in his face; and that is a notable mark of infamy, such an one as God allotted for the reproach of him that refused to build up his brother's house. (Deut. xxv. 9.) And all this was acted "without the gate;" they thought him not worthy to suffer within the walls of their city, lest, forsooth, he might have polluted it. This the apostle takes special notice of: "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate;" (Heb. xiii. 12;) which, in the next verse, he explains, and calls "his reproach;" as, under the law, the blasphemer was by God's appointment to be stoned "without the camp;" (Lev. xxiv. 14;) and amongst us, at this day, the most base and villanous malefactors are carted away to Tyburn, and not executed upon Tower-hill, that is honourable.

3. The sting of Christ's death is yet behind, it was envenomed with a *curse*.—Though pain be bad, and shame worse, yet *the curse* is worst of all. "He that is hanged is accursed of God." (Deut. xxi. 23.) That was, it is true, a ceremonial curse; but it was typical, and had special relation to Christ, who was under a real, moral curse; and so it is applied by the apostle: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is

* *Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum; scelus verberari; prope parricidium necari: quid dicam in crucem tollere?*—CICERO in *Verrem*, actio ii. lib. v. cap. 66. "To bind a Roman citizen is daring wickedness; to inflict stripes upon him is a most flagrant crime; to kill him is almost an act of parricide: but what epithet sufficiently opprobrious can be invented to describe the base and flagitious deed of that vile wretch, who dares to affix to the cross a citizen of Rome?"—EDIT.

every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.) And here the apostle Peter puts a remarkable accent; speaking of Christ to the Jews, "Whom ye slew," saith he, "and hanged on a tree;" (Acts v. 30;) intimating that bare slaying him would not have been so much as hanging him on a tree. The Jews had many other ways of putting people to death, as stoning, strangling, burning, beheading; but only crucifying had a curse annexed to it. Christ was made sin for us, that he might meet with, and intercept, that wrath and curse that was due to us, and breaking out upon us. We read in the story of his passion, that, when Christ was going to wrestle with that dreadful agony in the garden, he passed "over the brook Cedron." (John xviii. 1.) And if we consult the history of the kings, we shall find that when any godly ones amongst them, as Hezekiah, Asa, Josiah, reformed and purged the city and temple of idolatry, they cast the abominable and cursed things "into the brook Kidron." (2 Chron. xv. 16; xxix. 16; xxx. 14.) Christ was, in his sufferings, to "drink of the brook in the way," (Psalm cx. 7,) to pass over and wade through a river full of curses.

II. *In what manner Christ underwent this death.*—It behoves us to consider the manner of our performing duties to Christ, for their acceptation; and it will be worth the while for us to ponder the manner of Christ's shedding his blood for us, both for our consolation and imitation.

Now as to the manner of his death, three circumstances call for our consideration:—he died, 1. *Willingly*, 2. *Obediently*, 3. *Humbly and meekly*.

1. *Willingly.*—He was a volunteer in death; and his offering up himself in sacrifice was a free-will offering. His Father's determination made it necessary; and thus, "Christ ought to suffer," (Luke xxiv. 26,) and "the Son of man must be lifted up." (John iii. 14.) But his Father's pre-ordination gave not his death the formality of a sacrifice. In regard of men it was violent: they "slew him with wicked hands." (Acts ii. 23.) This makes it not the sacrifice, neither: they were not the priests, but the butchers, of Christ. In respect of himself it was voluntary; that made the sacrifice: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm xl. 7, 8.) As if he had said, "My very heart is ready for the shedding of my heart-blood." "I lay down my life," saith Christ: "no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." Though the Jews took it away, yet not against his will: it was their murderous will to have it, and his gracious will to give it: "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." (John x. 17, 18.) As if he had said, "Were it not my pleasure to part with it, with all the power they could make, they were never able to wrest it out of my hands."*

* Χριστος ουκ αν ποτε ακων επαθεν, διο ως μη αλλως θανατω υποκειμενος ει μη μονον εκων.—THEOPHYLACTUS in locum. "Christ could never have suffered unwillingly, because he was no otherwise subject to death than as he was willing."—EDIT.

When one of Christ's followers struck off the high priest's servant's ear, Christ gave him a check. "Thinkest thou," saith he, "that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. xxvi. 53.) As if he had said, "I need not such weapons: I could commission twelve legions of angels to be of my life-guard. One were sufficient to do the business; as what a rout did one angel once make in Sennacherib's army! (2 Kings xix. 35.) But I could put twelve legions into battle-array for my rescue; were not I as ready to be crucified, as they are to crucify me." And when the soldiers came to break his legs, they forbore, because he was already dead. (John xix. 33.) Such was his forwardness to die, that he saved them a labour.* Nay, there was not a bare willingness, but, on his part, strong desires, to die: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke xii. 50.) His death was full of pain; but his heart was so set upon it, that he was in a manner pained till he came to die, and not to have died had been a death to him.

OBJECTION. But it will be objected, "Christ feared death: he prayed against it, (Heb. v. 7; Matt. xxvi. 39.) and therefore his will had a repugnancy against it."

ANSWER. This doth not oppose, but rather testify and evidence, Christ's willingness to die. For he may be considered as a *private* person, of the same natural affections, desires, and abhorrences with other men; and so the bitter cup was justly feared and declined: or in a *public* relation, as Mediator, a merciful and faithful High Priest; and so he most willingly submitted himself to it. And this willingness of Christ *ratione officii* ["in respect of his office"] was so much the greater, because *ratione naturæ* ["in respect of his nature"] he could not but have strong reluctances against it.

2. Christ humbled himself to death *obediently*.—It was his will to die; and yet he died not of his own will, but in obedience to his Father's. We have them both conjoined in Heb. x. 7: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." And in John x. 18: "I lay down my life of myself. This commandment have I received of my Father." "He became obedient unto death," saith the text. In respect of God, Christ's death was justice and mercy; in respect of man, it was murder and cruelty; in respect of himself, it was obedience and humility. "To obey is better than sacrifice." (1 Sam. xv. 22.) Christ's obedience was the best of his sacrifice: when he prayed to his Father that the cup might pass, it was with this clause of exception: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. xxvi. 39.)

3. Christ submitted himself to death *humbly and meekly*.—"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet opened he not his mouth." (Isai. liii. 7.) Not that he spake nothing at all; but he was silent as to murmurings and revilings: that was the work of his persecutors. Not a word passed from him that might argue passion or impatience,

* *Sufficiens spiritum. cum verba, dimisit, preventivo carnificis officio.*—TERTULLIANUS. "When crucified, he breathed forth his words and his life together, anticipating the office of the executioner."—EDIT.

as from one of the thieves that were crucified with him. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter:" he was not enraged or exasperated with all the injustice, cruelty, and oppression of his enemies; not one word in heat of blood, to them whose errand was to shed his blood. "Friend," saith he to Judas, "betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (Matt. xxvi. 50; Luke xxii. 48.) What meekness was here!* though, I confess, there was a tart rebuke in that kind compellation; and Christ, calling him "Friend," smartly checked him for his unfriendly carriage. When one of his disciples cut off Malchus's ear, "Put up thy sword," saith he: "We will have none of that club-law." He touches his ear, and heals it. (Matt. xxvi. 52; Luke xxii. 51.) "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." (1 Peter ii. 23.) His enemies "shot their arrows, even bitter words;" (Psalm lxiv. 3;) but they recoiled not upon them. Nay, he returned not only no ill words, but gave prayers in exchange for their taunts and revilings: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 34.) It had been meekness to have gone through his sufferings without murmuring; but it was a high and heroic act of meekness indeed, to pour out prayers for them that were such busy instruments in pouring out his blood. He was so far from biting the stone, that he kissed it, and the hand that threw it.

III. *Upon what grounds Christ thus humbled himself to death; what cogent necessity was upon him.*—For we may not conceive that Christ thus humbled himself to death upon trivial and impertinent considerations. As David said once of Abner, "Died Christ as a fool dieth?" (2 Sam. iii. 33.) No, sure! It was upon these six weighty grounds:—

1. *That scripture-prophecies and predictions might be accomplished.*—All which represent him as coming in "dyed garments from Bozrah." (Isai. lxiii. 1.) The first scripture that ever mentions Christ, shows him a bleeding and crucified Saviour. (Gen. iii. 15.) Now Christ was to make good to a tittle every thing that had been before written of him. In St. Matthew's Gospel this is very remarkable; who, above all the rest, hath most punctually observed the fulfilling of prophecies; with whom the burden and under-song of almost every event is, *Ut impleretur*, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the mouth of the prophets." Christ himself renders this account of his sufferings, in that discourse of his with his disciples upon the road: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" (Luke xxiv. 25, 26.) "The prophets have all spoken this with one mouth; and is it possible I should make them all liars?"

2. *That scripture-types might be fulfilled.*—Many whereof were to decipher and prefigure the death of Christ; as Isaac's being offered, the slaying of the sacrifices, the lifting up of the serpent. Now, had not Christ's blood been shed, and he lifted up upon the cross, there

* Ῥήματα ἰκανὰ καὶ λιθίνῃ μαλαζῇ διανοίαν.—CHRYSOSTOMUS. "Words sufficient to soften even a rocky heart."—EDIT.

had been no correspondency in the antitype: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up." (John iii. 14.) Had not Christ been made a sacrifice, most of the legal ceremonies and precedent prefigurations had either spoken lies, or at least nothing to the purpose.

3. *That his will and testament might be firm and effectual.*—In his life he had given many precious legacies; and they had been all void and to no more purpose than a deed without a seal at it, unless ratified and confirmed. Had not Christ given himself to death, all his other gifts, that he had bequeathed in his will, had been giftless. This is the apostle's argument: "Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no force at all while the testator liveth." (Heb. ix. 16, 17.) A man that makes a will doth not intend that any body should be the better by it, but upon his death. Suppose a man have a legacy of a thousand pounds given him: he is not one whit the richer, so long as his friend liveth; the will holds not good in law, nor can he sue for one penny of it. "This cup," saith Christ, "is the new testament in my blood;" (Luke xxii. 20;) "that new testament which is ratified by my blood." Christ's death gives life, not only to his people, but to his promises. "It is expedient for you that I go away," saith he: "for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." (John xvi. 7.) The sending of the Comforter was one principal clause of his last testament: but till the death of the Testator, the will could not be put in suit; it signified nothing, and was not pleadable. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John vii. 39.) "What! had they received nothing of the Spirit?" Yes; but not according to that plentiful proportion which he intended and promised in his will. The legacy was paid but in part, because the Testator was yet alive: he was no sooner dead, and got to heaven, but he makes all good to a tittle; as you may read in Acts ii. 2—4.

4. *That justice may be satisfied.*—The sentence upon sin was passed from the mouth of a righteous Judge. Now, though justice might admit of a change of persons, there was no room for a change of penalties: death was threatened, and death must be inflicted. If Christ will save sinners from death, justice will not let him save himself from death. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission:" (Heb. ix. 22:) Christ, undertaking to cross out and cover the black lines of sin, must draw over them the red lines of blood. What the chief priests said concerning Christ is true in some sense, though false in theirs: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." (Matt. xxvii. 42.) Justice was to have its pennyworths out of our Surety, and nothing could be abated of blood: "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins: that he might be just." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.)

5. *That he that hath the power of death might be destroyed.*—
"Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that

is, the devil." (Heb. ii. 14.) Satan "hath the power of death," not as a judge, but as an executioner: and Christ's death hath "destroyed him;" not taken away his being, or undeveloped him; but shattered his forces, broken and subdued him. The crucifying of Christ was the devil's plot: he put Judas upon betraying him, the Jews upon accusing him, Pilate upon condemning him, the soldiers upon executing him. But our Lord out-shot him in his own bow, and cut off Goliath's head with Goliath's sword. It fared with Satan as it is storied of a certain soldier; who, being curiously inquisitive after the time of his death, went to an astrologer, who of a long time would make him no answer; till, at the length, overcome by his importunity, he told him that he should die within three days; whereat the soldier being angry draws his sword, and kills the astrologer; for which murder within three days' compass he was executed. And thus Satan, plotting the death of Christ to put-by his own ruin, promoted and procured it: our Saviour's death gave him such a death's-wound as he will never claw off. "The lion is terrible," saith Chrysostom, "not only awake, but sleeping: and so Christ, not only living, but dying, came off a conqueror; as Samson at his death pulled down the pillars of the house, and made a greater rout among the Philistines than in all his life." (Judges xvi. 30.) And therefore it is very observable, when the death of Christ approached, and, being in view, Satan perceived how great disadvantage was likely thereby to accrue to him and his kingdom, how he laid about and bestirred himself by all means possible to hinder it. He put Peter upon dissuading him: "Master, favour thyself, and let not this be unto thee." And Christ presently smelt him out in that advice; as appears by his rebuke: "Get thee behind me, Satan." (Matt. xvi. 23.) He buzzed dreams into the head of Pilate's wife; and thereby endeavoured to take him off and divert him from pronouncing the sentence upon him. (Matt. xvii. 19.)

6. *To take away the meritorious cause of death; namely, sin.*—And verily, had all the devils in hell been routed, and sin, that devil in the bosom, remained undisturbed, it had been an inconsiderable victory: "God sending his own Son in the similitude of sinful flesh, and for sin," that is, "by a sacrifice for sin," (we have such another ellipsis, Heb. x. 6,) "condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.) Christ by his blood wrote a bill of indictment and condemnation against sin: he sued it to an outlawry, and undermined it as to its dominion and damnation. "In that he died, he died unto sin once." (Rom. vi. 10.) The saints die unto sin; namely, by mortification: "Reckon ye yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin;" (verse 11;) but thus there was never any alive in Christ: but he died unto sin; namely, the utter ruin and undoing of sin: "The Messiah shall be cut off, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins." (Dan. ix. 24, 26.) There is a double finishing of sin,—by consummation, and by consumption. The meaning is not as though Christ completed that which sinners had left imperfect, or varnished over those sins which came out of their hands rude and unpolished; no, he could neither put a hand,

nor set a tool, to such work as this: but "to make an end of sin," [is] to eat into the heart and tear out the bowels of it. Such is Christ's hatred of sin that, rather than it shall live, himself will die.

APPLICATION.

Three USES may be made of this doctrine: *for*, 1. *Information*. 2. *Exhortation*. 3. *Comfort*.

USE I. FOR INFORMATION, in four particulars:—

1. *This lets us see the transcendent and inexpressible love of Christ to poor sinners.*—Let such as can entertain hard thoughts of Christ look upon him as nailed to the cross and shedding his blood; and then tell me if they do not think him in good earnest in the business of saving souls. O how was his heart set upon sinners, that would thus shed his heart-blood for sinners! The rabbins have a saying, that upon every *apex* or "tittle" of the law, there hangs a mountain of sense and doctrine: in every drop of Christ's blood there is an ocean of love: "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) The death of Christ was such a demonstration of love as the world never saw. When God made the world, he intended the evidence of his *power*. He ordained hell, digged Tophet, and filled it with fire and brimstone; and thereby manifested the severity of his *justice*. He humbled himself to death; and therein his purpose was, to demonstrate the transcendency of his *love*. This made the love of Christ of such efficacy and constraining influence upon the apostle Paul: "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." (2 Cor. v. 14.) When Christ once wept at Lazarus's grave, by-standers made this inference upon it: "Behold how he loved him!" (John xi. 36.) But if weeping at the grave for his death argued such love, what love was it, then, to die and go down into the grave for Lazarus!

It were an easy thing to lose ourselves in this delightful maze and labyrinth of love:—the righteous Judge of all the world unrighteously accused and condemned; the Lord of life was dying; the eternal and ever-blessed Son of God struggling with his Father's wrath; he that had said, "I and my Father are one," (John x. 30,) crying out in his bitter agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46;) he that "hath the keys of hell and of death," (Rev. i. 18,) lay sealed up in another's grave. Blessed and dear Saviour, whither hath thy love to sinners carried thee? Well might the apostle in a holy rapture and ecstasy express himself in an elegant contradiction, when he desired [that] the Ephesians might "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge!" (Eph. iii. 19.)

2. *Hence learn the horrible and cursed evil of sin.*—There is surely an abominable filthiness in that which nothing but the blood of God could purge and expiate. We may guess at the depth and breadth of the sore by the plaster that is prepared and applied. It is a desperate disease that requires such a desperate curc. Sin is an infinitely mischievous evil, which nothing could remove but infinitely precious blood. You that [would] view sin in its right features and propor-

tions, take a prospect from Mount Calvary; look through the perspective of Christ's blood; and seriously ponder the bitter and dreadful agonies of the Son of God, when he sweat and bled and groaned and died under the burden of it. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," saith the apostle, "striving against sin:" (Heb. xii. 4:) as if he had said, "You are not yet come to the hottest of the battle. It may be, you have gone through some light skirmishes, a few ill words or outward losses: but when Christ was challenged by this Goliath, and none durst take up the gauntlet, he 'resisted unto blood.'" And verily, the evil of sin is not so much seen in that thousands are damned for it, as [in] that Christ died for it.

If you should see a black vapour arise out of the earth, and ascend by degrees, till it covered the face of the heavens and obscured the sun in brightest noon-day lustre, you would doubtless conclude [that] there must needs be a strange and preternatural malignity in that vapour. What shall we, then, think of sin, that brought down the Son of God from heaven, darkened his glory, took away his life, laid him in the dust? "After whom is the king of Israel come out?" saith David to Saul; "after whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea." (1 Sam. xxiv. 14.) As if he had said, "Methinks, the king of Israel should never trouble himself about such a sorry and inconsiderable thing as I am. A dead dog cannot bite: when alive, indeed, he is a fierce creature; he may fly in a man's face, and tear out his throat: but death tames him; a dead dog needs no chain. And a flea cannot bite very much: the mark it makes is but a flea-bite." You that have slight thoughts of sin, do as good as say, that the God of Israel entered into the lists and armed himself for the battle against a dead dog; nay, that he lost the field, and was worsted by a flea. The evil of sin is not so much seen [in] that it is a knife that cuts our fingers, as [in] that it is a knife reddened over with the blood of our dear Redeemer.

3. Hence note the exact and impartial justice of God, and his most righteous severity against sin.—That, rather than that shall pass unpunished, his only-begotten and everlastingly-beloved Son shall shed his blood, and become liable and obnoxious to a curse. In the blood of Christ, as a mirror, is represented the most condescending mercy and inflexible severity that ever the world saw. "Son," saith God, "if thou wilt undertake for sinners, and undergo that penalty that is due to sin, thy blood must go for it, and nothing can be abated." He prays [that] the cup may pass, if possible: but justice was inexorable; he was upon such terms that it was not possible. "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness: that he might be just." (Rom. iii. 25.) One would have thought he would have said, "To declare his love and mercy: that he might show himself gracious." Nay, but (though there be a truth in that) the apostle pitches upon another attribute: "To declare his righteousness: that he might be just." If there were any respect of persons with God, or if exact justice could have warped and been drawn away with any accessory and

circumstantial considerations, doubtless Christ should have gone free, and an indemnity from suffering should have been the Son's privilege.

4. *This is sad and dreadful news to all impenitent and unbelieving sinners.*—What will be their doom that have no share in this blood of Christ; and not only so, but “trample it under foot, as an unholy thing?” Let them look to it; it will one day rise up against them as a witness for their certain damnation. For such there is a “much sorer punishment.” (Heb. x. 29.) Woe to those that have not the blood of Christ to plead for them! but ten thousand woes to them that have the blood of Christ pleading against them! And where it cries not for pardon, it cries out for vengeance with a witness. “They are the enemies of the cross of Christ,” saith the apostle: “whose end is destruction.” (Phil. iii. 18, 19.) And what better end could it rationally be hoped they should come to, that have an enmity against the cross of Christ? “If that which is light in them be darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matt. vi. 23.) If the healing, saving blood of Christ be destruction, how dreadful is that destruction!

The death of Christ is to a wicked man one of the saddest stories and most dreadful tragedies that he can read or hear of: because, having no interest in it, he understands what must certainly be acted upon himself; and if God would not hearken to the prayers of his Son, how is it likely he should be moved with the cry of rebels and enemies? When God sent the prophet Jeremiah upon his errand to the nations with the cup of his fury, that they should “drink, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more;” upon case of their refusal to drink, “Tell them,” saith he, “that, ‘lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished.’” (Jer. xxv. 27—29.) As if God had said, “Carry a cup; and if they refuse, tell them [that] Jerusalem hath been before them, and I am resolved it shall go round; my own people shall not drink unpledged, and they shall not be unpunished.” God hath prepared a cup for all Christ-rejecting sinners, warmed with fire, and spiced with brimstone; and if they wince, and make a sour face, let them know, Christ hath had it, God's only-begotten and beloved Son hath drunk deep of it; and how, or with what face, can they expect to escape? “What!” will God say to such an one; “behold, He whose judgment was not to drink of the cup hath assuredly drunken; and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? Thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it.” (Jer. xlix. 12.)

USE II. FOR EXHORTATION; and that in six particulars:—

1. Hath Christ shed his blood for sin? *Let us, then, shed the blood of sin.*—Let sin never live one quiet quarter of an hour in our souls, that would not let Christ live in the world. Christ “died unto sin” for satisfaction; let us die unto sin by mortification: “He died unto sin once: likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” (Rom. vi. 10, 11.) Every saint should be *συνφυτος τῷ ὁμοιωματι του θανατου αυτου*, as the apostle's phrase is in Rom. vi. 5, “planted together in the likeness of his death.” And he further

explains his meaning in verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

And verily, unless by the death of sin in you, you can have no comfortable evidence that the death of Christ was for you. Christ was crucified, and "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." (Gal. v. 24.) "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," saith the apostle. "I Paul say unto you;" (verse 2;) he affixeth his name, and sets to his hand: as if he had said, "I say it, and I will stand to it." And so, if your heart be uncircumcised, by not "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh;" (Col. ii. 11;) if you live in any one known, approved sin; Christ and the death of Christ "shall profit you nothing." Ah! revenge the blood of your dearest Lord upon your dearest lusts; and when Satan presents to you a sugared, spiced cup, tempting you to the commission of any sin, say, as David of the waters of Bethlehem, "Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of my Saviour, that not only hazarded, but laid down, his life for sin?" (2 Sam. xxiii. 17.)

2. Did Christ let out his blood for us? *Let our lives, then, run out for Christ in a vigorous activity, and unwearied exercise of grace.*—It is the apostle's argument, and it is very forcible: "We judge that He died for all, that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) Christ did not shed two or three drops of his blood only, or breathe a vein; and shall two or three duties, a few shreds and odd parcels of holiness, serve to return back to Christ? What can we think too much for him, that thought not much of his blood for us? The blood of Christ is as well for the purity as the purchase of his people. (Titus ii. 14.)

3. Did Christ thus humble himself to death for us? *Let us, then, prize him exceedingly, and raise him in our esteem above riches, honour, pleasure, father, mother, husband, wife, friend, yea, life itself, or any other thing that we are apt to account precious.*—How ought he to be prized and preferred above all things, that prized such inconsiderable nothings as we are at so high rates as his own blood! * If you put Christ into one end of the scale, be sure, he out-balances every thing that can be laid in the other: "Unto you that believe he is precious." (1 Peter ii. 7.) Other things may be rated according to that particular excellency that he hath put into them; but you will be careful to keep the highest room for the best friend, and say, "Come down, this and the other vanity; this friend must take place: whatever other things may make twelve, Christ shall be thirteen." To a carnal heart, nothing [is] so low-prized and undervalued as Christ; but with believers, that have an interest in him, and know the worth of him, he is in highest esteem. "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?" say the daughters of Jerusalem: (Can-

* *Quantò pro me vilior, tantò mihi carior.*—BERNARDUS. "By how much the lowlier he became for me, so much the dearer shall he be to me."—EDIT.

ticles v. 9 :) they have slight, low thoughts of him, and another (be it who it will) is to them as good as he. But what answer makes the spouse? "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." (Verse 10.) If there were a general muster, and all the sons of men stood together, Christ would be above and beyond them all. And Paul is of the same mind, who desired to "know nothing but Christ, and him crucified:" (1 Cor. ii. 2 :) as if he had said, "Let me but be acquainted with Christ and his cross," (such a superlative esteem he had of him, that) "I care not this, if I burn all my books." Whatever he had heretofore accounted excellent, when his judgment was biassed with wrong apprehensions, he now accounts dross, "dung," dog's meat, "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord;" (Phil. iii. 8 ;) all not worthy to be named the same day with Christ. Nay, Christ himself hath told us, *they* are unworthy of him, *that* do not think him most worthy. (Matt. x. 37.)

4. *Christ humbling himself thus low, should teach us highly to prize our souls.*—By the price that was paid for them, we may conceive at what a rate God values them. If God should have said concerning any soul, "I so esteem it that, rather than it shall perish, I will dissolve and unpin the whole fabric of heaven and earth," that, you will say, had evidently demonstrated a high valuation of souls. But the course [which] God hath taken, shows a much higher esteem of them. Now let this dear-bought ware be precious. Ah! let none of us adventure a soul for the satisfying of a base lust; let not any sin steal that away upon easy terms, which put the Lord of glory to such expenses. Christ, that best knows the worth of souls, (for he paid for them,) so values them, that he tells us [that] the gain of the world were no sufficient or satisfactory compensation for the loss of but one of them; (Mark viii. 36 ;) and a man that should make that bargain, (as too many do,) might put all his gains in his eye, and see never the worse after it. What the civilian saith of a free-man, is much more true of an immortal soul: "Nothing can be valued with" it.* Tradesmen know, that buying dear and selling cheap will undo them; but it will much more undo you, to sell cheap that which Christ hath bought so dear. Do not pawn your souls to Satan; that is, do not adventure upon the commission of any sin with this reserve, "I will repent before I die, and then all is well." That is as if thou shouldst say, "Here, Satan, I give thee my soul to pawn in lieu of the pleasure or profit of this or that sin; and make it in my bargain, that if I repent, I will have it again; till then, I deliver it into thy custody: and if I never repent, take it; it is thine own for ever." Nay, but ask Satan, when he comes thus higgling for thy soul, and bids thee pleasure, profit, preferment, or any such toys and trifles, "But canst thou, subtle tempter, give any thing equivalent to the blood of God, the price that hath been already paid for it?" Our souls "were not redeemed with silver and gold;" (1 Peter i. 18 ;) and let us never sell them for that with which Christ could not purchase them.

5. Did Christ humble himself to the shedding of his blood? *Let us,*

* *Ingenui hominis nulla est aestimatio.*

then, be willing, if need be, to shed our blood for Christ.—We needed Christ's death; and possibly Christ may need ours, though not for merit and satisfaction: no; that was our need, for which his death was abundantly sufficient, and needs not ours to make any additions, or heaped, overplus measure. But Christ may need our death to seal his truth, and credit his gospel. The apostle Paul "counted not his life dear, so that he might finish his course with joy, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts xx. 24.) And the Holy Ghost gives an honourable character of some heroical, noble-spirited Christians,—that "they loved not their lives unto the death;" and the blood of the Lamb animated them to such valour, that they overcame and conquered by the loss of their lives. (Rev. xii. 11.) "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," saith the apostle; (Heb. xii. 4;) but how soon it may come to that, ye know not: it is your duty, and will be your wisdom, to prepare for such a black, bloody day as that. There are two things in the death of Christ that may animate and embolden us into a willingness to die for him:—

(1.) *A motive*: one good turn requires another.

(2.) *A pattern*: "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:" (1 Peter ii. 21:) a place very much abused by the Socinians, as though there were no more in the death of Christ than an example. But one end of Christ's death must not exclude another: in the blood of Christ there is both a price and a pattern; he hath set us a copy, and, upon his call, we should be ready to write after him with our blood.*

6. *By faith and a hearty acceptance of Christ, let us put-in for a share, and get an interest, in the blood of Christ.*—He hath, it is true, died for sinners; but, without faith, what is all this to you, though ye be sinners? Without blood Christ could not save you; and without faith the blood of Christ cannot save you: "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." (Rom. iii. 25.) The conscience is "purged by his blood," (Heb. ix. 14,) and the heart "purified by faith." (Acts xv. 9.) This precious blood of Christ doth no other way purify, than as applied and sprinkled by faith. Every man was, under the law, to lay his hand on his burnt-offering of atonement; he must own it for his sacrifice: (Lev. i. 4:) thou must stretch out a hand of faith, and put it on the head of thy sin-offering, owning Christ as thy Lord and Saviour; for it is not Christ's blood as barely shed upon the cross, but as received into the heart, that justifies and saves: "The Son of man is lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." (John iii. 15.) Universal causes act not but by a particular application; as Adam's sin pollutes no child, till applied by the generation of the parent; the sun, though it enlightens the whole world, helps no man to see till its light be received into the eye. Suppose the blood of Christ were as extensive and universal a cause of salvation as any men pretend to

* *Verbi verba sunt nobis documenta; Verbi facta sunt nobis exempla.*—AUGUSTINUS. "The words of the Word are lessons to us: the deeds of the Word are examples to us."—EDIT.

and contend for; it could produce no such effect till faith hath wrought a particular application. A great gift enriches not the beggar in the rich man's hand, but in his own, having received it.

USE III. Here is abundant COMFORT to all them that have by faith applied and interested themselves in Christ crucified. Here is blood that will interpose between you and harms. Christ's treading the wine-press leads you into the wine-cellar; though to him it was very painful, to you it is very comfortable; that which he felt as blood, believers may taste as wine. Never was there such a cordial for drooping and disconsolate souls as that which came from Christ's heart, when his side was broached and set running upon the cross. Comfort in five particulars:—

1. *Your enemies are foiled.*—A believer hath many enemies: this blood of Christ hath either reconciled or disarmed them; either made them friends, or left them impotent enemies. To give a short list of a few of them:—

(1.) *The justice of God,—that is satisfied.*—Out of Christ, it hath a dreadful quarrel and implacable controversy; and poor believers are many times afraid under their misapprehensions that exact and inexorable justice will either nonsuit or give a verdict against them. But they are more afraid than hurt: this blood hath made justice their friend. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God;" (Rom. v. 1;) and in Christ he now sits with a rainbow about his throne. (Rev. iv. 3.) God once drowned the world in wrath: but, "smelling a sweet savour of rest" from Noah's sacrifice, he purposed and promised never to do so any more; and as a badge and token of his favour and the firmness of that covenant of peace, he put his rainbow in the clouds. If you can upon good grounds say that Christ is yours, there is a rainbow about God's throne; his bench of judicature and condemnation is turned into a mercy-seat; justice will set hand and seal to your acquittance, and be so far from pleading against you that it turns your advocate: and Christ having shed his blood, because God is just, the believer must be justified. (Rom. iii. 25, 26.)

(2.) *The law is fulfilled.*—To be under the law, is a state full of danger and terror; and saints are many times afraid that it will be put-in as a black bill of indictment against them. But the blood of Christ hath scratched the curses out of the roll. He "hath redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them." (Gal. iii. 13.) They "are not under the law, but under grace:" (Rom. vi. 14:) "not under the law," as to its envenomed curses, inexorable severity, and intolerable penalties. The law itself to every believer is, as it were, nonsuited by the death of the Law-maker. It "is not made for a righteous man:" (1 Tim. i. 9:) it was given to Adam when he was righteous, and yet strongly obliges such as are righteous; but it "lies not against a righteous man," (so the word, *οὐ κείται*, signifies,) as to his condemnation; it is not laid as an axe to the root of the tree.

(3.) *Satan is subdued.*—Christ's bruised heel hath broken his

head. He "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross." (Col. ii. 15.) The whole host of hell, with all their train of artillery, was led captive by him on the cross, and tied to the chariot-wheels of this triumphant Conqueror. When the door-post was sprinkled with blood, the destroying angel passed away: the blood of Christ sprinkled on the conscience, is a choice antidote and preservative against this devouring Abaddon. Not but that he still may be a tempter and a troubler; but he shall never be a conqueror, never a tormentor. Christopher Haasse, a Swedish senator, being at the point of death, the devil appeared by his bed-side, with pen, ink, and paper. "Come," quoth he, "reckon up thy sins in order, as thou hast committed them; that I may carry them in a catalogue to God's tribunal, whither thou art going." "Well, Satan," saith he, "if it must be so, let the catalogue be under this head and title: *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head.*" And away flew the devil in a great rage. Ah, sirs! had we but the right art of pleading the blood of Christ, it would make this roaring lion more to tremble than the lion doth at the cock-crowing.

(4.) *Sin is abolished.*—And that is a far worse enemy than the devil. Many a saint is able and apt to say, "Were it not for sin, I would not much care for Satan: I could defy and bid him do his worst." It is the devil within that makes the devil without so formidable.

Now, plead but this blood, and the guilt of sin is done away, either as, (i.) *Imprinted on the person to condemnation*; or, (ii.) *Reflected by the conscience in accusation.*

(i.) *Sin is done away by this blood, as it binds over to wrath and punishment.*—It is a spiritual *aqua fortis*, that eats off the soul's prison-shackles. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus:" (Rom. viii. 1:) sin may remain, but it shall not condemn. And whence believers have their discharges, the apostle there shows: "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* (Verse 3.) If the channel of Christ's blood runs through thy soul, thou hast shot the gulf as to condemnation: this scripture brings thee in "Not Guilty;" and that is the verdict of a thousand juries.

(ii.) *The blood of Christ abolishes sin, as reflected by the conscience in a way of accusation.*—As it raises tumults and turmoils in the soul, and arms a man against himself. It is a malignant and mischievous property of sin, that it doth not only put the soul into hell, but puts hell into the soul. Conscience is to sin what the burning-glass is to the sunbeam; [it] twists all together, till it scorches, smokes, burns, and flames: but Christ's blood hath that in it which is abundantly sufficient to silence and stop the mouth of an angry, accusing conscience. It is a sovereign balsam, to cure that cancer in

* *Suscipiendo pœnam et non suscipiendo culpam, et culpam delevit et pœnam.*—AUGUSTINUS. "By taking on him the punishment, and not partaking of the guilt, he abolished both the guilt and the punishment."—EDIT.

the breast ; a mollifying ointment and cooling fomentation, for those envenomed, sin-rankled ulcers that fester and bleed inwardly. "The blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 24.) Abel's blood was very clamorous in Cain's conscience; he carried a hue-and-cry within himself; conscience, as a blood-hound, hunted him at every turn; and its continual cry and echo in his ears was, "Vengeance upon the murderer!" But the blood of Jesus hath in it a pleasant and peaceable voice, and hushes all unquiet and tumultuary janglings. Applied by faith, it saith to the soul's rolling billows, that "cast up mire and dirt," what Christ once said to the raging sea: "Peace, be still;" and there is "a great calm." (Mark iv. 39.)

(5.) *And the last enemy whose enmity the blood of Christ hath slain, is death.*—Not that death is so destroyed to believers, that they shall not die: but [it is] unstinged, that it shall not wound in the vital parts, or at once kill bodies and souls. The apostle's triumphant *ἐπινίκιον* ["song of victory"] is very remarkable: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.) When a bee hath fastened its sting in a man's flesh, and thereby lost it, it ever after (they say) turns a drone: death once fastened its sting in Christ, and hath ever since, to them that are in Christ, been like a drone, that can hum and affright, but not sting and hurt, them. Death now drives a poor trade amongst them: it may destroy the body; and when it hath played that prank, it hath done all its feats: as a fierce mastiff, whose teeth are broken out, it can bark, or rend and tear the tattered and threadbare coat; but it cannot bite to the bone. How feeble an enemy is death, since it travelled, and took a walk to the top of Mount Calvary!

2. A believer's enemies are not only foiled, but through the blood of Christ *his person is accepted.*—"He hath made us accepted in the Beloved:" he "hath begraced" us in Christ; that is the proper importance of the phrase, *εὐχαριστήσεν*. "In whom we have redemption through his blood." (Eph. i. 6, 7.) If thou art sprinkled with the blood of Christ, God will know his own mark upon thee; thy person is accepted, and services cannot be unacceptable.

3. If [thou art] a believer, here is comfort, in that thou mayest be assured that *Christ is willing to do any thing for thee.*—He is ready in heaven upon all occasions to plead this price, and solicit thy further affairs. Show but Christ's blood, and I dare warrant the golden sceptre held out. The apostle's reasoning is unanswerable: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32.) Saints need never fear putting Christ to too much trouble in any thing [that] they have for him to do; for the shedding of his blood (and that he hath already done) hath been more troublesome and chargeable than any thing [which] they can set him about for the time to come. Thou needest not fear his denying any thing to thee, who hath thus far denied himself for thee.

4. Here is comfort to a believer, in that *his grace shall be preserved*.—Such a soul is too costly a purchase for Christ to lose. He paid so dear, that he may be trusted to demand and challenge the making good of his bargain. If true grace could be totally and finally lost, it might be said, “Christ pays the price, and the devil gets the prize.” “He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil. i. 6.) And it lies Christ in hand so to do; otherwise he will come off a loser. Christ is “the good Shepherd, that giveth his life for the sheep; and giveth unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish.” (John x. 11, 28.) Ah, how little do *they* consult Christ’s honour or the comfort of souls, *that* tell us, “Believers may perish in sin, like rotten sheep in a ditch!” If so, how then shall Christ save his stake, that hath been thus much out of purse upon them?

5. Here is yet further comfort to a believer, in that *by the blood of Christ heaven is opened, and we have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.”* (Heb. x. 19.)—Man had no sooner sinned, but God sent an angel, to stand sentinel, and keep him from Paradise with a flaming sword. The blood of Christ hath opened that passage, at once blunting the sword and quenching the flame. Christ gave up the ghost at the ninth hour, at three in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice; and at the very instant the veil of the temple, that parted the holy place and Holy of Holies, was rent asunder; so that the priest who was then ministering in the holy place, had on the sudden a fair and free prospect into the Holiest of all: which excellently typifies that the death of Christ hath removed and rent away all obstacles and obstructions that might interpose betwixt believers and the blessedness of glory. The rivers lead to the sea; the stream of Christ’s blood, if thou beest embarked by faith, runs directly into the ocean of endless, boundless, bottomless happiness. If thou hast opened the door of thine heart to let Christ in, the blood of Christ hath opened and unlocked the door of heaven, and thou canst not be shut out. A crucified Christ, entertained, will one day make glorified believers: his humiliation is the ready road both to his and his people’s exaltation.