

SERMON XVIII.

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THE TRUE BELIEVER'S UNION WITH CHRIST JESUS.

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.—
1 Corinthians vi. 17.

INTRODUCTION.

You have lately seen the portraiture of our Lord Jesus drawn, as it were, at length, both as to his person and offices; together with the means and manner how he hath dearly purchased redemption for us. Method now requires that we lay before you, how that redemption, and the benefits thereof, come to be effectually applied unto us. There we had the balm of Gilead, and the plaster spread: what remains, but that it be now applied? There we had a Bethesda, a healing fountain opened: but the pool of life heals not, unless the patient be put in, and the Angel of the Covenant stir the waters. Salvation for sinners cannot be obtained without a purchase; this purchase is not significant without possession; this possession, not to be procured without application; this application, made only by union; this union, clearly held forth in the text; namely, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

COHERENCE.

In the close of this chapter, our apostle seriously dehorts his Corinthians from that gross, that soul-polluting sin of fornication. His arguments, which he lets fly as so many barbed arrows at the fifth rib of uncleanness, are drawn,

1. Partly from *the end to which the body is appointed*: "The body is for the Lord." (Verse 13.) The body was made for the God of holiness; therefore [is] not to be prostituted to lust and uncleanness. The Holy Ghost's temple ought not to be converted into a sty for Satan. (Verse 19.) That is the first.

2. Partly from *that honour which by the Lord to our bodies is vouchsafed*: Know ye not that "your bodies are the members of Christ?" (Verse 15.) Believers' "bodies are the members of Christ," therefore not to be debauched so far as to be made "the members of a harlot." This second argument is backed and amplified by the words of the text: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." As if he had said, "There is a near and dear union betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers, muchwhat resembling that which is betwixt the head and members. Only here is the difference: *that* union is carnal; *this*, spiritual. 'He that is joined unto the Lord is one

spirit:’ that is, he is spiritually one, or one with the Lord in spirit ; therefore ought not to be one with a strange woman in the flesh.”

Having thus beaten up and levelled our way to the text, I shall not stand to shred the words into any unnecessary parts ; but shall extract out of them such an observation as, I conceive, strikes a full eighth* to the mind of the Spirit of God in them. And it is plainly this :—

OBSERVATION.

True believers are closely united unto Christ Jesus.

The word which we render “joined,” (*κολληωμενος, agglutinatus,*) imports the nearest, strictest, closest union. This truth I shall endeavour, *συν Θεω,* [“by God’s help,”] clearly to EXPLAIN, solidly to CONFIRM, practically to APPLY.

EXPLICATION.

I. For the EXPLICATION of this truth, it will be of consequence to lay before you,

QUERY I. *Whom we understand by “true believers.”*

SOLUTION 1. *Not such as are united unto Christ by a mere external profession, sacramental admission, or presumptuous persuasion.*—Such as these are said to “believe in” Christ ; (John ii. 23 ;) and yet they are such, so hollow, so false, that Christ dares not trust them. (Verse 24.) These are dead branches, (John xv. 2,) sapless stakes in the church’s hedge ; reformadoes and hang-by’s only in Christ’s regiment, whose names are not registered *in æternitatis albo* ; [“in the muster-roll of eternity ;”] wooden legs of Christ’s body ; such as have no true, spiritual, vital functions and operations ; such as “have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.” (2 Tim. iii. 5.) Sardis-like, they have indeed “a name that they live, but are dead.” (Rev. iii. 1.) With these our proposition meddles not.

2. But “true believers,” that is, *such as are united unto Christ by internal implantation.*—Living, fruit-bearing branches ; (John xv. 5 ;) such as have not only Christ’s picture drawn on their foreheads, but Christ’s Spirit quickening their hearts ; (Eph. iii. 16, 17 ;) Nathanaels, “Israelites indeed,” (John i. 47,) Jews “inwardly ;” (Rom. ii. 29 ;) such as are really and effectually by the Spirit and word of God called out of a state of sin, enmity, misery, into an estate of grace, union, reconciliation ; so that now Christ is in them, and they in Christ ; (John xvii. 21, 23 ;) they reposing themselves in Christ’s bosom by love, and Christ “dwelling in their hearts by faith.” These are the believers [whom] our observation intends.

QUERY II. *What kind of union it is that is betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers.*

SOLUTION 1. **NEGATIVELY :** *What kind of union it is not.*

(1.) *Not a gross, carnal, corporeal union ; not an union of bodies.*—Christ is in heaven, (Acts i. 11 ; iii. 21,) we on earth.

(2.) *Not a hypostatical, personal union ; such as is that ineffable*

* This mention of a musical octave contains a quaint allusion to the eight words which constitute the OBSERVATION that follows.—EDIT.

union of the divine and human natures in the person of our Emmanuel, the Lord Jesus.—It is indeed a union of persons, but not a personal union. Believers make not one person with Christ, but “one body ;” (1 Cor. xii. 13;) and that not one body natural, but mystical. True, indeed, the church is called “Christ :” (verse 12 :) but that is meant of the whole church, made up of Head and members, which is Christ mystical. Now it is not rational to apply that to any one single believer, which is proper only to the whole body. Besides, should there be a personal union betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers, then would there be as many Christs as believers. But to us, as there is but one Father, so but “one Lord Jesus.” (1 Cor. viii. 6.) Add, that then every action of believers would be of infinite value, as is the obedience of Christ’s human nature, by reason of its hypostatical union.

(3.) *Not an essential, substantial union ; not such an union as makes believers in any wise partakers of the substance of Christ’s Godhead.*—Those expressions of Nazianzen, *Χριστοποιεῖν* and *Θεοποιεῖν*, of old, and Englished by some of us of late, namely, “Being Godded with God, and Christed with Christ,” are harsh and dangerous, if not blasphemous. To aver that believers are partakers of the substance of Christ’s Godhead, is to ascribe that to believers which we dare not affirm of Christ’s manhood itself ; concerning which we say, that it was “inseparably” joined together with the Godhead in one person, but yet “without the least conversion, composition, or confusion.”* True, indeed, believers are said to “be partakers of the divine nature ;” (2 Peter i. 4;) but how? Not of God’s substance, which is wholly incommunicable: but believers, by the “exceeding great and precious promises,” as by so many conduit-pipes, have excellent graces conveyed unto them ; whereby they are made like to God “in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,” wherein “the image of God,” which was stamped on man at his creation, consists. (Eph. iv. 24 ; Col. iii. 10.)

(4.) *Not such an union as mounts up believers to an equality with Christ in any respect.*—He is “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.” (1 Tim. vi. 15.) “In all things he hath,” and must have, “the pre-eminence.” (Col. i. 18.) The best of saints have but their ephah, their homer, their stint and “measure” of excellences and divine endowments: (Eph. iv. 16 :) but now Jesus Christ, in his human nature united to the divine, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure. (John iii. 34 ; Psalm xlv. 7 ; Heb. i. 9.) We have but our mites, drachms, scruples: in him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col. ii. 3.) Our Lord Jesus is his Father’s *gazophylacium*, “the great magazine and store-house of infinite excellences:” “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Chap. i. 19.) Yea, “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” (Chap. ii. 9.) Three gradations,—“the Godhead,” “the fulness of the Godhead,” “all the fulness of the Godhead, dwells in” Christ

* *Ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.*—*Concilium Chalcedonense.*

“bodily,” *σωματικῶς*; that is, not only *truly and really*, in opposition to the ark and temple, in which the Godhead was typically; but *personally*, to distinguish the indwelling of the manhood of Christ from all accidental, extrinsic, and integral unions.

Thus negatively.

2. POSITIVELY: *What kind of union it is that is betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers.*—Cyprian tells us in the general, “It is not such an union as speaks a conjunction of persons, or a connexion of natures; but a consent of wills, and confederation of affections.”* But this is too lax and general. More particularly, therefore, it is,

(1.) *A spiritual union.*—“He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;” that is, one with Christ, not in a gross and carnal, but spiritual, manner. As man and wife united make “one flesh,” (Gen. ii. 24,) so Christ and believers, united by the Spirit and faith, make up one spiritual “Christ.” Believers are made partakers of one and the same Spirit with Christ: Christ’s Spirit is really communicated to them, and abides in them.

(2.) *A mystical, deep, profound union.*—“This is a great mystery,” saith the apostle: “but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” (Eph. v. 32.) We read of three great mystical, dazzling unions:—of three distinct Persons united in one God; (1 John v. 7;) of two distinct natures meeting in one person, in our Emmanuel; (Luke i. 35; Col. ii. 9;) of two distinct natures and persons united by one Spirit,—that is the union betwixt Christ and true believers. “This is a great mystery,” a deep union. Hence it is that it is compared to the mystery of the very Trinity, as being like to the union of persons in the Divine Nature:—Christ in the Father, believers in Christ, and Christ in believers. (John xiv. 20.) So Christ prays: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” (Chap. xvii. 21.) Hence may be gathered a likeness, though not an equality, of union. In the union betwixt Christ and believers is shadowed out the union betwixt Christ and his Father. This is one of the great *arcana evangelii* [“secrets of the gospel”]: it is a mystical union.

(3.) *And yet it is a true, real union.*—Not a fancy only, not an imaginary union; not like the union of the mouth and meat in a dream. (Isai. xxix. 8.) No; but we are as really united unto Christ, as the members of the body are to the head. Hence are we said to be “members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” (Eph. v. 30.) As the head communicates real influences to the body, so doth Christ to believers,—communicates to us his Spirit, graces, fulness, spiritual light, life, strength, comfort. (John i. 16.)

(4.) *A close, near, dear, intimate union.*—Like that of the food with the body which it nourisheth. Hence believers are said to eat Christ’s flesh, and to drink his blood; (John vi. 54;) such an intimate union as that one possessive particle is not sufficient to

* *Nostra et ipsius conjunctio non miscet personas, nec unit substantias; sed affectus consocial, et confederat voluntates.*—CYPRIANUS.

express it: [it is] not said, "My vineyard is before me;" but, "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me." (Canticles viii. 12.)

(5.) *An inseparable, perpetual, indissoluble union.*—A marriage-knot which neither men, sins, sorrows, death, nor devils are able to dissolve. "Who," or what, can "separate us from the love of God?" (Rom. viii. 35.) The apostle clearly resolves his own question: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Verses 38, 39.) Believers are held in Christ's hand: he that would break this union, must first be too hard of fist for Christ; yea, and for his Father too: "No man shall pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John x. 28, 29.)

And thus we have dispatched the second question.

QUESTION III. *What are the efficient causes of this union?*

SOLUTION. The efficient causes of this union are either *principal*, or *less principal*.

1. *Principal.*—And so this great work of union being *opus ad extra*,* it is *indivisum* ["undivided"]; and so ascribed,

(1.) *In common to the whole Godhead.*—Hence we are said to be "called by God" the Father "unto the fellowship of his" dear "Son." (1 Cor. i. 9; 1 Peter v. 10; John vi. 44, 45; Eph. ii. 6, 7.) So likewise this union is ascribed to the Son: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John v. 25; x. 16.)

(2.) But *more especially the Spirit of God*, in a more peculiar sense, is said to be the principal Author of this union.—He it is that knits this marriage-knot betwixt Christ Jesus and true believers. Look: as creation in some respect is appropriated to the Father, (Acts iv. 24,) redemption to the Son; (1 Peter i. 19;) so the application of that redemption [is appropriated] to the Holy Ghost. It is "by one Spirit that we are all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) It is by the Holy Spirit, "the Comforter," that we are "convinced of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xvi. 7, 8.) It is by the Holy Ghost that we are renewed. (Titus iii. 5.)

2. *Less principal, or the means or instruments of union.*—These are twofold:—*outward; inward.*

First. *Outward.*—Generally all the ordinances of God. By the ordinances it is that we come to have "acquaintance," (Job xxii. 21,) that is, union and communion, with Jesus Christ. It is by these golden pipes that golden oil is conveyed to us from that golden olive. (Zech. iv. 12.) More especially,

(1.) *The word read, preached, meditated on, believed, improved.*—It is by hearing and learning of the Father that we come to Christ. (John vi. 44, 45.) The holy scriptures were written for this end,—that through them we might "have fellowship with the Father and

* "A work from within the Godhead externally toward the creature's."—EDIT.

his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.) The way to have Christ's company is, to keep Christ's words. (John xiv. 23.)

(2.) *The sacraments.*—Those spiritual seals and labels which God hath fixed to his covenant of grace.

(i.) *Baptism*: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Hence we are said to be "buried with Christ by baptism into death." (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) Baptism is styled "the laver of regeneration." (Titus iii. 5.) By baptism we "put on Christ." (Gal. iii. 27.)

(ii.) *The Lord's supper*: this is a great means of strengthening and evidencing our union, and advancing our communion, with Christ Jesus. We are "all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Hence that in 1 Cor. x. 16: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of" (means, arguments, evidences, of our communion with) "the body of Christ?" The wine which we drink, "is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" Thus much for the external means of union.

Secondly. *Inward, internal, intrinsical means of union on man's part.*—That is, faith. Not a bare historical, miraculous, temporal, dead faith: no; but a living, working, justifying, saving faith. Christ comes to "dwell in our hearts by faith." (Eph. iii. 17.) It is by faith alone that we receive Christ; (John i. 12;) that we come unto him, and feed upon him. (Chap. vi. 56.) It is by faith that a believer lives in and to Christ, and Christ lives in and for a believer. (Gal. ii. 20.)

Thus much for the explication of the terms of our proposition, for the fixing of it on a right basis. I now proceed to the second part of my discourse; namely,

CONFIRMATION.

II. CONFIRMATION. Now, that there is such a spiritual, mystical, real, close, inseparable union betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers, appears three ways:—

1. *From those many synonymical terms and equivalent expressions whereby the scriptures hold forth this union.*—Christ is said to "be in" believers, (Col. i. 27; Rom. viii. 10,) to "dwell in" them, (Eph. iii. 17,) to "walk in" them. (2 Cor. vi. 16.) So are believers said to "abide in" Christ, as he abides in them; (John xv. 7;) to "dwell in" Christ, as Christ in them. (John vi. 56; 1 John iv. 16;) to "put on" Christ, to be clothed with him. (Gal. iii. 27.) Each of these expressions clearly imports that near and intimate union that is betwixt the Lord Jesus and true believers. The King of saints hath two mansion-houses: one in heaven,—the throne of his glory; another on earth, a tabernacle of flesh,—the heart of a believer, which is the seat of his delight, (Prov. viii. 31,) his lesser heaven. (Isai. lvii. 15; lxvi. 1, 2.)

2. *From those several similitudes which the scriptures shadow out this union.*—Believers are said to be "lively stones;" (1 Peter ii. 4—6;) Christ, the living "foundation, the chief corner-stone," on

which they are built. (Eph. ii. 20, 21.) Believers are styled living "branches;" Christ, "the true vine," into whom they are engrafted, and in whom they bring forth fruit. (John xv. 1, 5.) Christ [is called] the faithful, loving, discreet Bridegroom; believers, his loyal, affectionate, obedient "spouse." (Eph. v. 31, 32; Canticles ii. 16; v. 1.) Believers are entitled Christ's "body," (Eph. i. 23,) "bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh;" (chap. v. 30;) Christ, the believers' "Head." (Chap. i. 22.) In a word, the Head and mystical body are called "Christ." (1 Cor. xii. 12.) In all these resemblances, he that runs may read the union betwixt Christ and believers, portrayed out to the life unto us.

3. *From that communion which there is betwixt Christ and true believers.*—*Omnis communicatio fundatur in unione*: "Communion, wherever it is, of necessity argues union;" as the effect necessarily implies the cause.

Believers,—they communicate with Christ in "*his fulness*:" (John i. 16:) *in his merits*; * which are as fully imputed to believers for justification, as if his sufferings had been by them endured, or the debt by them satisfied: (2 Cor. v. 21:) *in his life and graces*; by habitual and real infusion and indwelling of his Spirit to sanctification: (1 Cor. i. 2:) *in his privileges and dignities*,—such, I mean, as are communicable. Is he a King, a Priest? So are believers; "kings and priests unto God and his Father," (Rev. i. 6,) "a royal priesthood." (1 Peter ii. 9.) Is he a Son, a Heir, by nature? Saints are so by adoption, "joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. viii. 17.) *In his victories*: believers are "more than conquerors through him." (Verse 37.) In the midst of their enemies' insultations and their own distresses, yea, even in and by death itself, the victory is still theirs. *In his triumphs and glory*: they share with him in his throne. All that believers are, is from the grace of Christ; (1 Cor. xv. 10;) all that they do, is from the strength of Christ: (Phil. iv. 13:) so that they do not so properly live, as Christ in them. (Gal. ii. 20.)

On the other side, Christ communicates in the believers' graces, affections, duties. He gathers myrrh and spice out of their gardens, eats of their honey and honeycomb; (Canticles v. 1;) their mandrakes are laid up for their Lord. (Chap. vii. 13.) As they "live in the Spirit, so they walk in the Spirit." (Gal. v. 25.) They tune their souls to his key: their "voice is sweet" in his ears; their "countenance is lovely" in his eyes. (Canticles ii. 14.) All that believers are, is *from* Christ; and therefore all that believers have, is *to* Christ: what they receive in mercy, they return in duty. Thus, from this mutual communion, we conclude a close and dear union.

And now, our proposition being thus cleared and confirmed, I descend to the third thing promised; and that is,

* *Solus pro nobis suscepit sine meritis malis poenam, ut nos per illum sine bonis meritis consequeremur gratiam.*—AUGUSTINUS. "He alone underwent the punishment in our stead without ill deserts, in order that we, without good deserts, might through him obtain grace and favour."—EDIT.

APPLICATION.

III. APPLICATION; which I shall couch under these four heads; namely, *information, examination, consolation, exhortation.*

USES.

USE I. INFORMATION.—Are believers thus closely united unto Christ? Hence see,

(1.) *The crimson, Tyrian tincture, the scarlet dye of their sin, who oppose, oppress, persecute true believers.*—Poor souls! little do they think or know what they do; namely, that they wound Christ through believers' sides. Believers are united unto Christ: therefore, when the seed of the serpent bruises their heel, (Gen. iii. 15,) it must needs have an influence on Christ their Head; who, though he hath no passion, yet hath he much compassion, and "in all their afflictions is afflicted." (Isai. lxiii. 9.) In touching them, they "touch the apple of his eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts ix. 4.) So cries the Head in heaven, while Saul treads on the foot on earth.

(2.) Hence learn *the height, length, depth, and breadth of "the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge," to believers, beyond and above all others in the world.* (Eph. iii. 18, 19.)—O beloved, that the Lord should leave other plants in the woods and waste ground, let them alone in the wilderness, suffer them to grow up to be fit fuel for eternal flames; and make choice of them who by nature are as "wild olives" as the worst; (Rom. xi. 17;) and engraft them into himself, who is the true olive, and make them partakers of his fulness: that he should cull them out who are by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," and implant them into himself; "raise them up together, and make them sit together in heavenly places," with himself:—O, this speaks love beyond expression, beyond imagination! this argues "grace," "riches of grace," "exceeding riches of grace!" (Eph. ii. 1, 4—8.)

(3.) Observe hence, not only the love which Christ vouchsafes to, but *the high honour which he casts upon, believers.*—Was it an honour for Mordecai to be clothed with Ahasuerus's royal apparel, to ride on the king's horse, having the royal crown on his head? (Esther vi. 11.) What an honour, then, was it, for a poor Esther to be taken into the king's bed and bosom! (Chap. ii. 17.) If it seemed not "a light thing" in David's eyes, but rather a high dignity, to be son-in-law to a king; (1 Sam. xviii. 23;) what is it, then, to be united to a God? The highest pitch and pinnacle of honour [is] this; the *E-la*,* the *ne plus ultrà*, of true dignity; an honour not vouchsafed by God to those glistening courtiers of heaven, the angels. True, indeed, they are Christ's servants, subjects; not his members. To which of the angels saith he at any time, "Thou art bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh?" Christ "took not on him the nature of angels," but is united to "the seed of Abraham." (Heb. ii. 16.)

* The highest note in the musical scale.—EDIT.

(4.) Hence we conclude *the stability, fixedness, perseverance of the saints in their estate of grace.*—Here, here, believers, is a firm basis on which to build the saints' constant progress in the paths of holiness, till they fully arrive at their port of happiness. True believers are united unto Christ: they live in Christ, and Christ in them; their "life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 3.) Therefore, maugre the malice and power of all unruly corruptions from within, of all subtle temptations, violent assaults, decoying smiles, or threatening frowns, from without, they must and shall persevere. "Kept * they are," and shall be, "by the power of" that Christ to whom they are united, "through faith unto salvation." (1 Peter i. 5.) Whilst there is sap in Christ their root, it shall ascend into the true branches. (John xi. 26; iv. 14.) Let "the rain descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon" these living stones, these spiritual houses; they shall "not fall," totally, finally; for they are built on that Rock of ages. (Matt. vii. 25; Isai. xxvi. 4.) True believers are Christ's "members;" and should he lose the least of them, he would be a maimed, an imperfect, Christ. (1 Cor. xii. 27.) "Of those whom thou hast given me, I have not lost one." (John xvii. 12.) True believers are Christ's spouse, married to him; and whatever men have or may do, Christ will not give a bill of utter divorce. (Jer. iii. 14.)

(5.) See here *a rational, solid ground for the Protestant doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the merit thereof to true believers, against the cavils and calumnies of the pharisaical, self-justifying Papist.*—Our union unto Christ is the great foundation on which we build our communion with Christ. Christ is united to believers, one with them, their Head, their Surety; (who in *conspectu fori*, ["in the sight of the law,"] is but one person with the debtor;) and this by his own voluntary undertaking, the debtors' consent, and the Judge's approbation. Therefore it is rational, just, equal, that what our Christ, our Head, Representative, Surety, hath done and suffered for us,—and that, not only *bono nostro*, "for our good," but *loco nostro*, "in our stead,"—should by God our Judge be imputed to us: that since our Head and Surety was "made sin for us, who knew no sin, we should be made the righteousness of God in him:" (2 Cor. v. 21 :) that since "he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows;" since "he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;" it is but just that "our peace" should be obtained by his "chastisement," and that "with his stripes we should be healed." (Isai. liii. 4—12.)

(6.) If believers [are thus closely united unto Christ], hence we gather *a cogent and conclusive argument for the saints' blessed resurrection at the last day.*—Christ, the believers' Head, is risen; risen as their Head, risen as the Second Adam. From hence the apostle strongly argues for the saints' glorious resurrection. (1 Cor. xv. 12—23.) If the Head be got above, surely the body shall not always lie under, water. True indeed, the ungodly and unbelievers shall be

* φρουρουμενοι, "kept as by a garrison."

raised also; (Dan. xii. 2; John v. 29;) there shall be a general "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts xxiv. 15; xvii. 31; 2 Cor. v. 10.) But here is the difference: the bodies of the *wicked* shall be raised up in dishonour by Christ, as a powerful and offended Judge, (John v. 27—29,) to receive their just sentence and condemnation; (2 Thess. i. 6—9; Matt. xxv. 33, 41;) but the bodies of *believers*, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection, as their Head, shall be "raised in power," spiritual, incorruptible, and made "like unto his glorious body." (1 Cor. xv. 20, 22, 23, 42—44; Phil. iii. 21.) "Because he lives, they shall live also," (John xiv. 19,) and have livery and seisin given them of those joys and glories, which neither "eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive;" (1 Cor. ii. 9;) "and so shall they ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 17.)

Thus much by way of corollary for information of the judgment. I now proceed to the second use, which more immediately reflects on the heart and life; and that is an use of,

USE II. EXAMINATION.—*Whether there be really and indeed such a spiritual, close, intimate union betwixt our souls in particular and the Lord Jesus.*—To this purpose, give me leave to put the probe into your consciences, by a serious proposal of these five QUESTIONS:—

QUESTIONS.

QUESTION 1. *Hath Christ given unto you his Holy Spirit?*—"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit," saith the text. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. viii. 9; 1 John iii. 24.) Whatever member is really united to the head, hath a natural spirit; a soul, enlivening of it, and acting in it. So saith the apostle: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (1 John iv. 13.)

Now this Spirit,—wherever it is, it is,

1. *A praying Spirit.*—A "Spirit of supplication;" of faithful, sincere, fervent, constant, humble, supplication. (Zech. xii. 10.) Ask, then, thy soul, "Canst thou, dost thou, go to God, and cry, as a child, with reverence and confidence, 'Abba, Father?' (Rom. viii. 15.) Does this 'Spirit help thine infirmities,' (verse 26,) and enable thee to understand both for whom and what, and how, thy prayer is to be made? Does it work and quicken in thy heart (at least, at some times, in some measure) such apprehensions, affections, and graces, as are requisite for the right and acceptable performance of so heavenly a duty?"

2. *A mourning Spirit.*—It puts a believer into a dove-like frame, mourning for the loss of its mate; (Ezek. vii. 16;) yea, mourning for the offence of a gracious God, as for the loss of an only son. (Zech. xii. 10.) Tell me, then, poor soul: art thou apt ever and anon to strike on thy breast, with the contrite publican; to "smite on thy thigh," with broken-hearted Ephraim; (Jer. xxxi. 19;) and in a holy consternation of spirit, to ask thyself, "What, O what have I

done?" (Chap. viii. 6.) Do thy God's bottle, and thy tears therein for sin as sin, speak for thee?

3. *A sanctifying Spirit.* (1 Cor. vi. 11; 1 Peter i. 2.)—And that with respect to sins, graces, duties. (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

(1.) *Sins.*—The Spirit, wherever it is, "mortifies the deeds of the flesh." (Rom. viii. 13.) Speak, then: is thine "old man crucified" (at least as to dominion) with thy Christ? (Chap. vi. 6.) More especially, (not to speak of thy more gross, dangerous, dishonourable sins,) dost thou spit out the sweet morsel under thy tongue? Dost thou, with Samuel, hew thy delicate Agag in pieces? with David, "keep thee from thine iniquity;" (Psalm xviii. 23;) that iniquity to which thy constitution, custom, calling, interest, mostly incline thee? What sayest thou to thy Isaac, Benjamin, Absalom, Delilah, Herodias, the calves of Dan and Bethel? Tell me: art thou apt sadly to "remember thine own evil ways, and thy doings that were not good, and to loathe thyself in thine own sight for all thine iniquities and for all thine abominations?" (Ezek. xxxvi. 31.)

(2.) *Graces.*—Speak, believer: art thou "renewed in the spirit of thy mind?" hath the Spirit of God re-instamped that glorious image of God—namely, "knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness"—which thou [hast] lost in Adam? (Eph. iv. 23, 24; Col. iii. 10.) As thy clothing is of wrought gold, so, especially, is all thy glory, thy chiefest glory, within? Dost thou find thy graces stirred up, increased, and "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man?" (Eph. iii. 16.) Hath the north-wind so risen, the south-wind so "come, and blown upon thy garden, that the spices thereof flow forth?" (Canticles iv. 16.) In a word: dost thou more and more "grow in grace?" (2 Peter iii. 18.) "Beholding the glory of the Lord," art thou "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord?" (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Art thou still "perfecting holiness in the fear of God?" (Chap. vii. 1.)

(3.) *Duties.*—Wherever the Spirit is, it "causeth," effectually causeth, the man "to walk in God's statutes, to keep his judgments, and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 27.) It "worketh in" believers "both to will and to do of God's good pleasure;" (Phil. ii. 13;) to perform natural, moral, spiritual duties, to spiritual ends, in a spiritual manner. And that,

(i.) *Freely.*—"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) Christ's "people, in the day of his power, are a willing people," (Psalm cx. 3,) volunteers in his service. What sayest thou? Art thou dragged to duty, as a bull to a stake, as a swine to slaughter? or, rather, is it thy meat and drink to do thy God's will? (John iv. 34.) Do the ways of wisdom seem "ways of pleasantness" to thee? "and all her paths,"—dost thou look upon them as "peace?" (Prov. iii. 17.)

(ii.) *Regularly.*—Those that "live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit;" (Gal. v. 25;) that is, by the Spirit's light, according to the Spirit's rule,—the word of God, the great standard of truth. What then? dost thou "kindle a fire" on thine own hearth, and "compass

thyself about with thine own sparks?" dost thou "walk in the light of this fire, and in the sparks that thou hast kindled?" My meaning is, Dost thou forsake the law and testimony, God's cloud and pillar; and follow the guidance of that *ignis fatuus*, thy refined reason, or others' corrupt example, or a pretended tradition, or some ecstasical revelation, contrary to the word? All these will lead thee into bogs: and "this thou shalt have of God's hand; thou shalt lie down in sorrow." (Isai. l. 11.) But if so be the infallible word be thy rule, and thou walkest according to it, then "peace be upon" thee, as "upon the Israel of God." (Gal. vi. 16.) So much for the first query.

QUESTION II. *Dost "Christ dwell in thy heart by faith?"* (Eph. iii. 17.)—Namely, by such a faith as purifies the heart; as works by love to God, the word, saints, enemies; as overcomes the world, its Midianitish smiles, its Anakim-like frowns? If thou hast such a faith, remember it as an infallible and momentous truth,—that faith's application of Christ to a believer, if saving, is always joined with a believer's application of himself to Christ. If the spouse avers Christ to be hers: "My Beloved is mine;" she as freely acknowledges that she is Christ's: "I am his." (Canticles ii. 16.) It is with a believer and Christ in this case, not as with a man clasping about a tree, but as with two loving friends mutually embracing each other. Ask, then, thy soul, thy conscience, "Canst thou truly say, with David?—'Lord, save me; I am thine.' (Psalm cxix. 94.) Dost thou indeed, not only 'lean on thy Beloved,' but 'cleave to thy Christ with full purpose of heart?' (Acts xi. 23.) Does it content thee to apply Christ to thy soul only as a plaster to a wound, to have healing from him? or not rather as a seal to the wax, which takes an impression from it? Hath thy faith two hands? As with the one thou pretendest to lay hold on Christ, dost thou with the other resign up thyself to Christ? Art thou apt, with the Roman spouse, to say, *Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia*?* Art thou as ready, when he proposes the strictest precepts, to say, 'Lord, I am thine,' as, when he proclaims the sweetest promises, to say, 'Lord, thou art mine?' Art thou as ready to offer up thyself a burnt-offering, a holocaust, to God in obedience, (Rom. xii. 1,) as to tender for thyself thy Christ, as a sin-offering, for satisfaction? (Lev. v. 7.) O "examine" thy heart sincerely, whether thou art thus "in the faith;" (2 Cor. xiii. 5;) or rather, whether such a faith be in thee. That is the second.

QUESTION III. *Dost thou "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts?"*—They that are united unto Christ do so. (Gal. v. 24; Rom. viii. 13.) Dost thou detest, loathe, hate sin, all sin, in thought, word, deed; and that, not so much for its effects, as its nature? Dost thou "hate" it rather "as hell," (*αποστρυφουντες*;) than *for* hell? That is our duty: (Rom. xii. 9:) is it our sincere endeavour? Dost thou ever groan out under the sense of that intolerable burden, of that wolf that lies in thy bosom? Does it make thee cry out, as Paul?—"O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. vii. 24.) Dost thou,

* "Where thou art Caius, there am I Caia." On this nuptial formula, see the note in vol. iv. p. 269.—EDIT.

when thou appearest before the Lord in prayer or at his word or at a sacrament, put thy Uriah, thy dearest, darling sins, in the front of the battle; that when Christ discharges his keenest arrows, *they* may be sure to be hit and slain? When God sends a tempest, is it thy first, greatest care to throw those Jonahs overboard? When God seems to beleaguer thee with sharp and threatening providences, is it thy main endeavour to cast the heads of those Shebas over the wall? But,

QUESTION IV. *Art thou "a new creature?"*—He that is in Christ is so. (2 Cor. v. 17.) Hast thou a new head, heart, lip, life? Canst thou now properly say, *Ego non sum ego?** Is the lion become a lamb, the raven a dove, the wolf a kid, the persecutor a preacher, or, more, an adorer, of Christ Jesus? Dost thou act *from* new principles,—the Spirit of Christ, (Ezek. xxxvi. 27,) faith, (Gal. ii. 20,) constraining love, (2 Cor. v. 14,) filial fear? (Jer. xxxii. 40.) Dost thou act *for* new principles,—that thou mayest preserve them in thyself, and propagate them to others? (Acts xxvi. 29.) Dost thou now level at new ends,—the best, the highest ends? Is thy main scope and aim now not so much at a clod of earth, a vapour, a puff of honour, a tickling pleasure? No; but, rather, is it thy chiefest end, plot, design, to advance thy Creator's, Redeemer's, Comforter's glory; and, with it, the spiritual, eternal salvation of thy precious and immortal soul? Is this thy white, thy mark, thy centre? Canst thou in sincerity of soul say, with the Psalmist?—"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." (Psalm lxxiii. 25.)

QUESTION V. *Dost thou bring forth fruit?*—Every branch in Christ is a fruit-bearing branch. (John xv. 5.) Art thou "filled with all the fruits of righteousness," (Phil. i. 11,) first and second table fruits? Art thou "fruitful in every good word and work?" (Col. i. 10.) Dost thou bring forth fruit suitable to the means vouchsafed? or does the seed of a homer bring forth only an ephah? Dost thou remember, that where much is given, not a little is required? (Luke xii. 48.) Briefly: dost thou bring forth fruit, like the land of Egypt, "by handfuls?" (Gen. xli. 47.) Hast thou any bunches of pomegranates to show? Is thy soul a spiritual Eshcol? And then, too, art thou so desirous of bringing forth more, that thou lookest on the vintage of thy attainments only as gleanings? In a word: dost thou "bring forth fruit" constantly, every month, "in old age?" Art thou ever "green and flourishing?" (Psalm xcii. 14.) Do not those apples of Sodom, bitter fruits of apostasy, in principles, in practices, spring from thee? Are not thy grapes turned into thorns, thy figs into thistles? Art thou not like Orpah, that the other day kissed and complimented, but now forsakes? But rather, like Ruth, dost thou resolve and say concerning thy God, thy Christ, "Whither thou goest, I will go; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried?" (Ruth i. 16, 17.)

If thy heart and conscience can give a comfortable answer to these

* "I am no longer my former self."—EDIT.

queries, then, believer, open thy mouth, open it wide, that thou mayest suck and be satisfied with the next use of our point; which is a breast of,

USE III. CONSOLATION.—“True believers are closely united unto Christ Jesus:” O what marrow, what fatness, drops from this truth! what a Hybla is it in the mouths, what music is it in the ears, of true believers! How blessed are the people that are “in such a case!” (Psalm cxliv. 15.) Their happiness will more distinctly appear, if we reflect on it either with relation to *Christ* or *believers*.

1. *With relation to Christ, to whom believers are united.*—On their union with him, there redounds to them a peculiar interest in his person, properties, promises, providences, all.

(1.) *In Christ's person.*—Christ himself is theirs; (Jer. xxxii. 38; Isai. ix. 6;) a Christ that is not like creature-comforts, those γλυκονικρα, “bitter-sweets;” like the panther, which has a sweet scent, but an ugly face. No; but he is an ocean of sweetness, without the least dram of gall. Christ, that perfect beauty, without the least spot, “that fairest of ten thousand,” that “altogether lovely” one; (Canticles v. 10, 16;) this Christ is theirs. Christ, that indeficient, never-failing good, is theirs. (Heb. xiii. 5.) True, indeed, creature-comforts and earthly interests, like Absalom's mule, are apt mostly *then* to fail us, *when* we most need them. Yea; but Jesus Christ is such a “Sun of righteousness,” that he knows no setting, no declining. (Mal. iv. 2.) He is a fountain of life, ever-running. In a word: Christ, that full, filling, sufficient, all-sufficient person, “in whom centre all the scattered excellences of the whole creation;” * in whom is completely treasured up whatsoever an angry God can require for his satisfaction, or an empty creature desire for its perfection; (Gen. xvii. 1;) this is the person in whom saints by union have a real interest.

(2.) *In Christ's properties.*—“My horses are as thy horses, my chariots as thy chariots,” said Jehoshaphat to Ahab; (1 Kings xxii. 4;) all his counsels and forces [were] devoted to his service. “Son, all that I have is thine.” (Luke xv. 31.) Believers, has Christ an arm of power? It is for your protection. Has he an eye of knowledge, depth of wisdom? It is for your direction. [Has he] a stock, a treasury, of perfect righteousness? It is for your justification. [Has he] a Spirit of holiness? It is for your sanctification. Has he rolling, yearning bowels of mercy? It is that he may show you compassion. [He has] a lap of all-sufficiency for your provision; arms of grace, a heaven of glory, for your reception. (Psalm lxxiii. 24.)

(3.) *In Christ's promises.*—In all those “great,” rich, “precious,” gracious promises; (2 Peter i. 4;) wherein all they want, and infinitely more than they can desire or imagine, is made over to them. (2 Cor. i. 20.) Christ's promises are the believers' *Magna Charta*, to the confirmation whereof God has been pleased to add both his oath and blood for seals. (Heb. vi. 17, 18.)

(4.) *In all Christ's providences.*—Let them seem never so black

* Quæ faciunt divisa beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt.

and gloomy. The hottest furnace [that] they are thrown into, does but loose their bonds ; and the scorching flames become a warm sun. (Dan. iii. 25.) "This is the fruit" of God's sharpest rods,—the "taking away of their sin." (Isai. xxvii. 9.) The lion affords them meat ; the Anakim himself proves * their bread. "All things work together for their good." (Rom. viii. 28.) Every wind, though it blow never so cross, speeds them to their port. Not a stone thrown at them, but it is to them a precious stone : not a thorn in their crown, but it turns into a diamond : not a twig in their rod, but is sweetened and sanctified. The saddest providences, like the snow, falling on them, and descending to the hem of their garments, there freeze into a gem to deck them.

(5.) *In all.*—That is, true believers have such an universal interest in all that Christ is, hath, could speak, suffer, or can do, that the apostle, going about to take an inventory of their large revenue, and, as it were, despairing to give-in an exact account of the particulars, is fain to couch them in one sum-total : "All are yours." (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) Wherein are observable,

(i.) The believers' *portion.*—The fullest imaginable : "All are yours."

(ii.) Then *the term.*—For "life and death" too ; in possession and reversion ; "things present, or things to come."

(iii.) Lastly. *The tenure.*—The surest, the highest, that can be : they hold *in capite* ; for their better assurance, their demesnes are entailed on the crown : "All are yours ;" because "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Thus you see what comfort flows from this doctrine of union with relation unto Christ. There is yet another dug which swells with consolation ; and that is to be drawn,

2. *With respect to believers themselves.*—In a threefold regard ; namely, of their persons, graces, duties.

(1.) *Their persons.*—Believers being united unto Christ, they are, they cannot but be, his Father's Jedidiah, Beulah, Hephzibah, dearly "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) They are also his own delight. (Prov. viii. 31.) He rejoiceth over them, as a bridegroom over his bride. They are to him as the "seal on his arm," as a signet on his right hand. (Canticles viii. 6.) He carries their names on his breast continually. (Exod. xxviii. 29.) And as for the Spirit of God, *that*, like Noah's dove, finds nowhere to rest the sole of his foot, but the soul of a sincere believer ; of whom it says, "Here is my rest : here will I dwell for ever ; for I have a delight herein." (Psalm cxxxii. 14.)

(2.) *Their graces.*—True believers' graces are in themselves very defective and imperfect ; the eye of their faith, like that of Leah, a blear-eye ; the hand of their confidence, like that of Jeroboam, much withered and blasted ; the fire of their love, like that of green wood, apt soon to expire ; the anchor of their hope, very much cracked ; shoulders of patience, sorely bruised ; feet of obedience, like Mephibosheth, lame. Yet, because united unto Christ, all [are] accepted,

* Probably a misprint, instead of *provides.*—EDIT.

all hold scale and weight in heaven, though not as to merit, yet as to acceptance. (1 Peter ii. 5.) "There is much alloy in the metal: however, I see my Son's stamp and picture on the coin; and therefore," saith God, "it shall pass for current in heaven."

(3.) *Their duties.*—O the defects of saints' duties! How often do they pray, as if afraid to be heard; hear, as if afraid to learn; learn, as if afraid to do; do, as if afraid to please! And yet, being united unto Christ, how acceptable are their persons and performances! Their weak prayers sound like melody; their broken sighs smell like incense; their very stammerings seem rhetorical. (Canticles ii. 14.) Not a good word falls from their lips, but it is recorded; (Mal. iii. 16;) not a tear drops from their eye, but it is taken up and bottled. (Psalm lvi. 8.) Mites [are] received as if they were talents; cups of cold water, rams' skins, goats' hair, (Exod. xxv. 4, 5,) any thing; desires instead of performances; the will for the deed; grief for want of will, for the will itself: (2 Cor. viii. 12;) and all, because from such as are united unto Christ; in whom the Lord is so "well pleased," (Matt. iii. 17,) that he looks on the very smoke of his saints' performance, mixed with Christ's merits, as a sweet perfume.

Having done with the consolation arising from this truth, we proceed to the last use, which is of,

USE IV. EXHORTATION.—In it I shall address myself, first, to sinners, then to saints.

1. *To sinners, that are as yet "without Christ, God, hope in this world."* (Eph. ii. 12.)—O, be you yet persuaded to give your eyes no sleep, your eye-lids no slumber, till you are really and closely united to Christ Jesus! Methinks, poor, forlorn creature, thou shouldest not need a spur. If thou dost, consider,

(1.) *The dreadful, dismal danger of thy present estate.*—A soul not united unto Christ, lies open to all danger imaginable. It is in the very suburbs of destruction: it walks in the valley of the very shadow of wrath, death, damnation. True, it may be, thou perceivest it not: but that speaks thy security, not thy safety; and thou art secure, because hood-winked; thy security is not from want of danger, but [of] discerning. Alas! how dreadful is thy condition, that liest every minute exposed to the cruel courtesy of every devil, lust, temptation, judgment! The sentence is passed against thee: in the next scene expect the executioner: "He that believeth not is condemned already." (John iii. 18, 19.) Poor soul, a deluge of wrath is pouring down in full streams upon thee, and thou art as yet shut out of the ark. The avenger of blood is at thy heels, and thou [art] not yet got into a city of refuge. A shower of brimstone [is] falling on thee, and thou hast no Zoar to fly unto. The destroying angel with his drawn sword [is] at the threshold, and the lintel-posts of thy door [are] not sprinkled with blood. But,

(2.) If the wind do not, let us see whether the sun cannot, prevail. Poor, self-destroying caitiff, look yonder on that amiable Jesus Christ, for a marriage between whom and thy precious soul I am now wooing. Do but observe *his condescending willingness to be united to thee.*—

That great Ahasuerus courts his own captive Esther. The Potter makes suit to his own clay; woos thee, though he wants thee not; is infinitely happy without thee, yet is not, cannot be, satisfied but with thee. Hark how he commands, entreats, begs thee to be reconciled; (2 Cor. v. 20;) swears, and pawns his life upon it, that he desires not thy death; (Ezek. xxxiii. 11;) seals this his oath with his blood. And if, after all this, thou art fond of thine own damnation, and hadst rather be at an agreement with hell than with him; see how the brinish tears trickle down his cheeks: (Luke xix. 41, 42:) he weeps for thee, that dost not, wilt not, weep for thyself. Nay, after all this obdurate obstinacy, [he] is resolved still to "wait, that he may be gracious;" (Isai. xxx. 18;) stands yet, and knocks; though his head be wet with rain, and his locks with the dew of the night. (Canticles v. 2.) Fain he would have thee "open the door," that he may come in and sup with thee, and thou with him. (Rev. iii. 20.) Thus much for a whet to sinners: my next address is,

2. *To saints, that are indeed united unto Christ Jesus.*—Four words of advice I have for you. O that they might stick as goads, as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies!

(1.) *Be very fearful of that which may in any sort weaken your union with Christ.*—Beware of committing, of approving thyself in the least compliance with, any the least sin. Say not, as Lot of Zoar, "Is it not a little one?" (Gen. xix. 20.) Sin approved is that very Delilah that cuts off the locks, and makes a believer a prey to every Philistine. Sin is *that* that "separates between us and our God," the great make-bate between heaven and earth. (Isai. lix. 2.) It is true, a saint shall never be left so to himself or sin, as that sin shall bereave him of his jewel,—his grace or God; but [it] may, and doth often, steal away the key of his cabinet, his evidence, his assurance: "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." (Canticles v. 6.) Sin is *that* that will soon "grieve away that Holy Spirit, by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.)

(2.) *Wisely improve this your union with Christ.*—"It is not enough to have, unless we use," Christ: * not enough to have a "well of salvation;" but we must "draw water," and drink it too, if we intend a benefit by it. (Isai. xii. 3.) It was the looking on the brasen serpent that cured those that were stung. [It is] not enough for saints to have faith by which to live; but they must "live by the faith" that they have; (Gal. ii. 20;) that is, they must by faith draw continual supply of grace, comfort, strength, from Christ, as the branch does sap from the root, as the members do influence from the head, as the pipe does water from the fountain. This your union, then, must be improved,

(i.) *Under the fear and sense of wrath.*—When God begins to thunder, and to write bitter things against thee; now, now let faith recollect itself, and say, "Why, I am united unto Christ; in whose wounds is room enough to hold, and in whose heart readiness enough

* *Frustra est potentia, &c.*

to receive, all that fly unto him. (Matt. xi. 28.) True, indeed, there is a terrible storm of justice gathering over my head, ready to fall upon me; but my Christ, to whom I am united, is my shelter: (Isai. xxxii. 1, 2:) a flood of vengeance [is rising]; but I am got into the ark: destruction [is] near; but Christ is my passover, my little sanctuary; 'able, willing, to save to the uttermost,' with all kinds and degrees of salvation." (Heb. vii. 25.)

(ii.) *In solicitations unto sin.*—When sin comes like a Potiphar's wife, and offers deadly poison in a golden cup; now, now let faith answer, "I would consent, but that I am united unto Christ. 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against my Christ?' (Gen. xxxix. 9.) 'I could easily do this and this, if I were not Alexander.' But now I cannot gratify this lust, but I must needs be disloyal to my Christ, my Husband to whom I am married. If I take the cold in my feet, it will immediately fly up into my head. Every sin is an affront to my Christ."

(iii.) *In the use of all ordinances.*—Let faith use them frequently, reverently; but not in the least rest on them, or be satisfied with them, any farther than they advance our union and communion with Christ. Look on prayer without a Christ, as mere words and sounds; sacraments without a Christ, as empty vials without a cordial; hearing without Christ, as a cabinet without a jewel. Be only so far satisfied with the ordinances, as thou findest them to be golden pipes, conveying golden oil into thy soul. (Zech. iv. 12.)

(3.) *Labour more and more for a frame of spirit suitable to this union.*

(i.) *An humble, self-abasing frame.*—Say, "Alas, Lord! what am I, what my father's house, that so great a Christ should so far stoop beneath himself, as to be united to so poor a worm, a clod of earth, a mass of sin, a nothing, a 'less,' a worse, 'than nothing?'" (Isai. xl. 15, 17;) that strength should be united unto weakness, light unto darkness, life unto death, heaven unto earth, unto hell? that incorruption should marry itself unto corruption; immortality to mortality; the King of kings, the Lord of lords, to such a captive, unpared, unwashed, unshaven captive, as I? (Ezek. xvi. 4—6.)

(ii.) *A trusting, relying, depending frame of spirit, for supply of all temporals.*—"He that hath given thee his Son, what can he deny?" * (Rom. viii. 32.) He that hath given thee an ocean, will not deny thee a drop. If thou hast the kernel, thou shalt not want the shell: if thy Father vouchsafe thee bread, manna, the ring, a kiss, he cannot well deny thee husks. If thou hast his Benjamin, thou shalt be sure not to go without thy mess, thy five messes: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things" *προσθησεται*, "shall be added," (Matt. vi. 33,) that is, cast in as paper and pack-thread to the bargain.

(iii.) *A loving, affectionate frame.*—Believer, thou art married to

* *Qui misit Filium, immisit Spiritum, promisit vultum, quid tandem denegabit?* "He who hath sent his Son, who hath infused his Spirit, who hath promised his countenance,—what can he now deny?"—EDIT.

Christ Jesus : that relation calls aloud for union of hand, heart, spirits, all. He is "bone of thy bone, flesh of thy flesh;" therefore to be dearly loved: count all that thou art and hast, too little for him.* Love him dearly for what he is, for what he hath, for what he hath done, suffered, purchased, promised. Love him more for what he is, than for what he hath; more for his person, than for his rings, bracelets, jewels, jointure. Love him with a cordial, active, conforming, constant, transcendent love. (Psalm cxvi. 1, 2.)

(iv.) *A truly noble, heavenly frame.*—Such a frame whereby thou mayest truly contemn this poor dunghill-world. Believer, being united unto Christ, thou art indeed "clothed with the sun;" and therefore thou shouldst, like thy mother, tread "the moon under thy feet." (Rev. xii. 1.) We should never fix our hearts on that whereon our God would have us put our feet: such eagles as believers should not stoop at flies. It is not for persons united unto Christ to be fond on these beautiful vanities, fair-faced nothings, chases in arras, handsome pictures drawn on ice: such are all enjoyments on this side Christ. Believer, thy Head, thy Husband, thy treasure is above; there let thy heart be also.† Having Christ for thy portion, let a little, a very little, of the world serve thee for thy passage.

(v.) *A pitiful, compassionate frame, to those that are not as yet united unto Christ.*—That are yet without hope, because without Christ. O, "as the elect of God, put on bowels of mercies" toward such! (Col. iii. 12.) Poor souls! they are sinking, drowning; thou art safe on the shore, got into the ark. They are frying, burning in Sodom; thou [art] safe in Zoar, a brand plucked out of the fire. O, pity those that do not, will not, cannot pity themselves! That is the third advice.

(4.) And lastly, *walk worthy of this union.*—Let your conversation be suitable to your condition. This I shall dispatch in these three particulars:—

(i.) *Walk zealously.*—Be wisely zealous in and for the promoting [of] the honour of this Christ to whom you are united. (Gal. iv. 18.) Make it your only plot and business to advance his honour: it is your own peculiar interest so to do. Be jealous of any thing that doth or may eclipse or sully his glory. He that toucheth him, his person, natures, offices, days, ordinances, ministers, servants,—let him be thought to "touch the apple of thine eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) Let "the zeal of his house" even "eat thee up." (Psalm lxxix. 9.)

(ii.) *Walk fruitfully.*—So it becomes every branch engrafted into Christ, the true vine. (Phil. i. 11.) Thy fruitfulness adds much to thy Christ's honour; the plenty of the crop sets a gloss on the husbandman's care; the fully-laden branch reflects an honour on the root. If men "see our good works," our fruitfulness in every good work, they will then "glorify our Father." (Matt. v. 16; John xv. 16.)

(iii.) *Walk lovingly, tenderly, toward believers, fellow-members.*—

* *Εἰ ᾤλεον εἶχον, ᾤλεον εἶδον.*—GRÆCUS AUG. "If I had had more, I would have given more."—EDIT.
† *Anima illic potius sit ubi amat, quam ubi animal.*
"Let your soul be rather where it loves than where it lives."—EDIT.

They that are so happy as to be united unto one Head, should be very careful to be of one heart. Believers formerly were so "of one heart and of one soul," (Acts iv. 32,) as if animated with one and the same soul; suitable to the philosopher's description of true love: *Μία ψυχή δυο σωμασιν ενοικουσα*.* Formerly believers were like Scilurus's bundle of arrows,—so trussed up together [that there could be] no breaking of them. But, alas! now it is sad to see how those that agree in one common faith, should yet disagree, as implacable foes. O, beloved, that brethren—Joseph and Benjamin, Moses and Aaron, Abraham and Lot—should fall out, especially when the Canaanite is in the land! Shall Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, and the Philistines,—shall these agree? and shall Ephraim and Judah be at variance? Shall the wolf, lion, bear, leopard, associate? and shall not lambs and doves? O, let such their sin and shame never be published in Gath, nor spoken in the street of Askelon. (2 Sam. i. 20.) Believers, you have heard the fable of the contest between belly and members: the moral of it bids you consult, if not your duty, yet your safety. By your divisions, you do but dig your own graves. Remember, saints, we are all one by spiritual relation; why should we not be one in our affection? (1 Cor. xii. 13, 27; i. 9, 10; 1 John iv. 12, 16; Gal. iii. 28.) I shall close all with that of the apostle in Eph. iv. 3—6, wherein he draws this arrow to the very head: "Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Why? Because "there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Let me add, You are one with Christ the Head: it is your duty, therefore, and it will be your privilege, honour, safety, to be one with one another.

* ARISTOTLE. "One soul inhabiting two bodies."—EDIT.