

SERMON VI.

ON THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE COMMUNION.

PHILIPPIANS III. 11, 12.

“ 11. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

“ 12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

YE have heard Paul's coss,* and quitting of all things to get Christ; and that from his example, a necessity is laid upon all to do the like, under the pain of not getting Christ. For if we love any thing better than Him, he cannot be our God, neither can we look for any comfort in him: if there be any idol tane in his room,—pleasure, riches, honour, life,—we shall not get him. Therefore we must needs lay down all things that we may gain Christ. If He get not the highest room with us, we may not look for any room with him; for it is impossible to be sincere, if all idols be not thrown down that would claim his seat. I grant, there will be great fight ere this be gotten done; for all our lusts will be on foot, to set up some idol in his room. But down must they all, that Christ may be set on his throne; for he has not redeemed us from the devil, that the devil should get a seat above him in our soul: but he must be above all; he must be our delight, our wisdom, our riches, our glory, our life; and if he be not in his room, he will not have a room in us at all. Therefore

* Exchange.

ye who would be Christians indeed, I lay a necessity upon you, to get Christ the highest room and chiefest seat in your heart, else ye shall not get him. And scorn him not with your sins and purposes, but let your aiming, industry, and endeavours bear witness of it, in lifting up your hands to his commandments, as well as unto prayer.

Here the apostle shews the way how to behave ourselves, and sets forth to us his own sense of shortcoming in sanctification, and his aim to have it better. He wished for a more near communion with Christ, more than for all things; and for it he shews himself content to be rid of every thing his soul affects, that he may feel it in the fruits of it.

“If by any means I might attain unto this resurrection.”—Here a fruit of his communion with Christ he would be at. Now, by resurrection from the dead, is not here meant the last resurrection at the great day (albeit I will not exclude that;) but by resurrection from the dead here, is meant the same as in Romans vi. 5. “If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” There he says, as Christ rose from the dead, so also we should rise from our dead works and ways, unto newness of life. So here, by resurrection from the dead, is meant complete satisfaction in newness of life. This is it which Paul here aims at, in quitting his own righteousness, and taking himself to Christ’s; for he has won to some measure of sanctification. But he would be farther on to a higher degree of resurrection from the deadness of his nature, to the life of Christ, and complete stature of a Christian man. In a word, he desires to be a complete Christian (verse 11). And because the

Philippians hearing the apostle say, that he wants of that measure of sanctification that he is striving for, might say with themselves, Would God we were as far on as he is! therefore he answers this their thought of him, and tells them, that he is not so far on in sanctification as they trow : for says he, I have not already attained it as if I were perfect ; but I am following fast on, if I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ: that is, I have tane a grip of Christ, to see if I can win to that measure of holiness wherefore he has gripped me. (Verse 12) Then he doubles* the same purpose, and says over again, Think not so of me, that I am come so far on in sanctification ; for I am not yet won to the mark that I would be at, but have many unmortified sins, many tatters and rags of sin hanging at me, which hold me that I cannot win forward. Yet I am labouring for it. I count nothing of any thing that I have done, there is so much yet to be done. I reckon none of by-gones, but I am reaching to those before me. I am assaying if I can win to the thing I would be at ; and what is not done, I am minting to it. This is set down in the similitude of a race (verses 13, 14). Then he bids all honest men be like-minded, and come on the same way that he is striving, (verse 15).

1. "If by any means."—In the former verse, he was seeking further communion with Christ : here, he is seeking further sanctification. Whereof we learn, that in quitting of our own righteousness that we may get Christ's, we may not quit a study to sanctification. But the more we grip Christ's righteousness, the more we should study to sanctification. But Satan has put a trick upon many men, that when they hear

* Reiterates.

there is no justification but by Christ's righteousness, then say they, My holiness or righteousness will not bring me to heaven ; and so, they run on in the devil's service. To whom I say, If thou be not holy, thou shalt never win to heaven. Therefore thou must so renounce, that thou also aim at righteousness or holiness in Christ ; for Christ has not bought thee to be Satan's servant, and not his. If He has bought thee to be his servant, wilt thou devote thyself to thy own sinful lusts, and so, serve Satan ? If he has bought thee from the slavery of Egypt, why dost thou not follow him into the Holy Land ? Beware lest thou be an unwashed dog, if thou be not aiming at sanctification ; and that thou be not deceiving thyself in looking to the blood which thou respectest not.

2. We see, albeit communion with Christ, and the knowledge of it be sweet, yet the sweetness of it alone may not be sought that we may rest upon it, except also we seek for fruit and virtue out of it to renew us, so as we may glorify our Lord. Do not seek so to repose thy mind on Christ, as if only ease were to be sought in him ; but so must thou rest in thy conscience, that thou stir up thyself to draw grace from him, to glorify him in thy life and conversation : for as thou gettest life in him, so must thou labour in his vineyard, and labour for a new plantation of grace and virtue within thee. Think not, because thou hast been at the communion, thou may do as thou likest : but by the contrair, thou must be the more devoted to God's service, else thou hast eaten and drunken thy own damnation. Herein stands the difference betwixt true and counterfeit profession—the counterfeit goes from the communion as he came ; the true aims at holiness and reformation, and is set

more carefully to serve God. If thou hast gotten thy heart devoted to God's service, thou may be sure thou could never have done so, except the Lord had first accepted, and tane thee in his protection. If thy heart be consecrate to His service, thou may be sure he is become thy Saviour : if hereafter thou scunners* at sin, thou hast an evidence of a worthy communicant.

3. See the order he keeps. First, he would be at communion with Christ ; and next, he would be devoted to sanctification, to teach us to seek sanctification in this order : First, take us to Christ, renouncing our own righteousness ; then draw strength from him, and in his strength bring forth good fruits, and so be renewed ; come to Christ as a fool, a tint impotent thing that can neither think, say, nor do any thing of thyself, and get righteousness from Christ ; then crave new strength from him (for thou hast none of thy own), to be holy. Upon this order stands the contest betwixt God and his children : they not finding their own righteousness, they will not take Christ's, and take new strength, as fellowship, from his resurrection, sufferings, and death, and so get power to slay sin ; and they know not that all the righteousness that can be in man before he get Christ's is but mere hypocrisy and an outward lustre, when the heart within is rotten. But from once they come to Christ, then holiness begins at the heart's roots, by the new power given by Christ. That first righteousness they would be at, holds aye a man proud ; but this righteousness God would have them to embrace, holds them humble.

4. We see the apostle would be at farther resurrection after he is risen ; which lets us see, that there

* Shudders with loathing.

is a first and second resurrection, and the first resurrection has a progress of time and degrees. It is like regeneration, which is still in working till it be complete; for as the regenerate are in a great part unregenerate, so those who are risen to newness of life, are not enough risen; but Christ is both come in, and yet standing at the door, knocking, so that there are degrees and intervals betwixt the one and the other. When they rise out of the grave of sin, death hangs on all the powers and parts of the soul: as there is a quick part of the heart, so also a dead part: at all parts rottenness hangs; not only pieces of the grave-clothes, but lumps of rottenness hang on, so that there is rottenness in their words, in their mind, and endeavours. But the Christian man that is risen, is still raxing* himself, to have the lumps of rotten flesh shaven off him: he is elevating his heart to Christ; and aye as he comes up nearer Christ, the clouts and rottenness of the grave fall off; and still he rises higher and higher, and grows by degrees in rising, till his head be in heaven—and at the door-posts of heaven all his filthiness and rottenness are stripped off him. Look then to rise more and more out of the grave of sin, piece and piece to rise after Christ, and seek of him renovation and a new life; and albeit ye find the clouts of the grave hanging at you, discourage not, but aim still more and more to be freed of them.

“If by any means.”—It seems, that Paul makes a question in the matter. Was there any question but that Paul would attain to this resurrection? I answer, at the first he knew he would not get all his will, but yet he is still aiming at it—albeit he see it hard to

* Stretching.

be won to, yet he aims at it. It lets us see, that the difficulty or impossibility of attaining full regeneration or newness of life while we are here, should not discourage us, or slacken our bensil, but by the contrair, it should animate and encourage us to strive to be at it ; for albeit we attain not perfection at the first, yet by aiming at it, we get it in the end ; and if we run fast to be at it, Christ pulls us in his arms, and lifts us there at a loup.* As that ship wherein Christ entered, when the disciples had toiled long, was by and by at the shore, so are we carried to the race ; and when we are aiming, striving, rowing, running, Christ helps us a lift, and pulls us up to the shore. Yet is it only those who are running, contending, striving, and bachling† on in the way, whom he pulls in his arms, and sets forward. Therefore let difficulties stir us up to run forward, especially seeing we have such helps and encouragements. Albeit at the first we cannot attain to the fulness of that we would be at, yet there is possibility to get it in the end ; and if we win not so far on as we would, it shall make us go farther down in humility, and take a better grip of Christ for justification. And so if we miss our purpose, God misses not his, when we are more humbled, and grip Christ better.

“Not as though I had already attained.”—The Philippians hearing Paul speak thus, might say, Before thou wast a Christian, thou lived blameless ; and now, being turned to Christ, and having converted millions to him, thy life seems like an angel for holiness. To this he answers, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect : but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which

* Leap.

† Shuffling as in slip-shod shoes.

also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." That is, I purpose not to sit down and rest me, for as forward as ye think me; for neither is all done: neither yet speak I of myself, as a man perfected; for I see more before me. Ye see me far on the way, but I see I must go far farther: ye think I have attained to mickle holiness, but I see far more to be sought after. It is true, when I was a Pharisee, I was a man of a blameless life, a man separated for God's service; but all these things I counted loss for Christ: and when I came to Christ, I saw I behoved to repent more, and cast away all these things, as a man casts wares out of a ship, which he cannot brook with safety of his life. So I am content to quit all both before and after my coming to Christ, that I may win into his hospital, and bide there to be helped of my evils; and so, I am not come out to that measure of holiness that ye trow.

1. That he gives this for a reason of his strife for a greater measure of sanctification, because he is not perfect, he lets us see, that he who strives not to mend his hand, and to win to a greater measure of sanctification, says he is perfect, and has attained the prize. How great evils lurk here, let any man judge. Is it not a foul shame for a lukewarm Laodicean, to say, "I am rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing?" The same say all those who sit down, as if they were holy enough. I say to such, Rise again, or thou shalt never win to heaven; for none will sit down, but the Laodicean, or main counterfeit. Some will say, What would ye have me doing? I pray twice a-day; I read two chapters every day; I keep the kirk all the preaching days. These men have a temper of their own, and draw godliness to their own

model, subordinate it to their own silly minds. They make God and religion serve them as they like, and not they Him as he likes, and so are right hypocrites. If any go beyond their measure, they call these, hypocrites and precisians; and if any be below their measure, they are profane, and themselves only are the honest men. But they are sitten down in the race; not like Paul, who will not sit down, till he be at the race-end. If a man in a race should draw bridle and sit down, shall ever he win the race? As there is no stay in a race, till one win over the score, so there is no stay in a Christian man's race, till he be in at heaven's door. Therefore make all to the way, ye who are late; start, run the faster, cry for the wings of faith, and lift up the hands of your Lord to help you. Ye who are run a piece of the way, sit not down; say not, I have done well; but still mend your hand, else ye will tine the race and reward; and shame and confusion of face, black burning shame shall come on you, for minting to go to heaven, and then sitting down in the way.

2. As a man would prove himself to be far from this pride, hypocrisy, and false deceit, so he must labour to make it known, by his study and endeavour to purge his mind from daffing,* and his life from rottenness; for it is the mark of an honest man ever to mend his hand, to grow up piece and piece, and to be still unsatisfied with himself. As contentment with a measure is a mark of hypocrisy and lukewarmness, so, discontentment with their case joined with an endeavour to more, proves uprightness; for that which is sown will still grow. As thou would be approuen for sound, stand never till thou be at Christ; for if thou

* Recklessness.

stand, thou dost that the apostle durst not do. If thou wilt sit down, or be perfect, thou sayest thou art perfect, and castest down all thou hast done.

“But I follow after.”—He proves, that he conceits not of himself as already perfect, by his diligence to amend his pace, to shew us, we should rule that foul conceit of being perfect, and prove it, by mending our pace, and striving to win to perfection. This following after, is a word borrowed from a chace, wherein the man still sees before him the thing he is chacing, and still follows on it, and is still ready to grip it, and yet still it is running before him out of his grips. The comparison lets us see, that God so holds out holiness in our sight, that he makes us to follow after it, and still it is out of grips, in the fulness of it, yet still so near, that it is within sight, and ready to be gripped. Christ still runs before us, and holds out to us the crown of holiness and happiness, and bids us run and have it; and when we see we must either run at it, or else not win into heaven, we follow on still. And so, He trains us into heaven, holding out before us all the way that which he will give us in the end. Here, the wisdom of our Lord, that he is our fore-runner in the race, and holds out in our sight the pearl we would fain be in grips with, and the prize that we would fain have, that we may run and get it. When ye see it, and cannot win to it, make not a claite* to it, a faird† only to be at it, and then leave it there; but still follow on, for it will fly no farther than heaven’s door, and there thou shalt not miss it. Say not, What wot I if God has ordained it for me? What if he *has* ordained it for thee?—let the one WHAT stand for the other. Never reason so, but go

* Snatch.

† Bustle.

thy way, and do that which is clearly commanded; then thou may be sure, thou shalt not miss the thing promised; for Christ says, "Those whom the Father has given me, will come to me; and those who come to me, I will not cast out." Therefore come thou to Christ, and fly from unholiness, so shall thou be made to know that God has purposed to call thee to a crown. Secret things belong to the Lord, revealed things to thee.

"That I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended."—This lets us see, that no man sets himself to the course of sanctification; but that we are gripped by Christ, before we can grip him, or aim to grip sanctification through him; and that whom Christ has gripped to draw to salvation, that man will grip Christ to win to sanctification. Wouldst thou know if Christ has gripped thee to salvation? Thou shalt know it by this—if thou be gripping Him for sanctification. If thou had rather be at holiness, than any thing, not caring what thou lose or gain if thou win to holiness, then, be sure that Christ has gripped thee to salvation. Therefore from this gather strength to look unto Christ, for if thou be set to have all known sin purged out, Christ has tane a grip of thee. As Paul was first apprehended, and then seeks to apprehend, so art thou. Christ has gripped and loved thee first, for all the work begins upon his side.

"For which I am apprehended."—One of the ends of Christ's apprehending of Paul, was to make him a holy man, and to give him life eternal: and it lets us see, that one of the ends wherefore Christ grips us, and calls us from wickedness and vileness, is to make us holy. This serves to strengthen thee who aimest at holiness. Albeit thou, for weakness, cannot win to thy purpose, yet Christ shall not fail in his pur-

pose ; for having gripped thee for that end, he will not shed with his grip, till he have made thee holy, and caused thee to grip him. Here is an encouragement to labour and not to loiter. Christ and thou shall not come short of his aim.

Christ's aim and Paul's aim are one, for both of them aim to make him a vessel of honour. It lets us see, that Christ's aiming about us, should be our aim also. Aims Christ at this—to have us strong in the faith, to encourage us against doubting, to give us victory over foes, joy in crosses?—wherever he looks, look we.

“Already made perfect.”—He changes the similitude of apprehending in a race, to a proper speech ; and the active word in attaining, is changed into a passive of being perfected, lest he should seem to take the glory to himself. It lets us see, that we are so employed in this work, as that there is another's hand to be looked to from whom the strength is gotten. We are so workers, as we are also wrought upon ; we so run in the race, that we are also carried, that we may not glory in our own strength, nor lean unto it, but may give glory to God in all that is done.

Verse 13. “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.”—Here he expounds the similitude of a race in more clear words ; and because the Philipians would hardly believe that he is come so far short of his purpose as he says, therefore he says, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.” As if he said, Keep what thought ye will of me, yet I have no such thoughts of myself, that I am so far forward as ye think. While he calls them BRETHREN, he ranks or matches himself with them, albeit they were behind him ; whereby he shews his humility.

It tells us, that true Christians associate themselves to all who seek God. A truly holy man is humble, according to the measure of holiness, and aye the holier the humbler : as he grows up in holiness, so he grows down in humility and conceit of himself.

“ I count not myself.”—There is a token of his humility. Whatever estimation others have of him, he labours to keep a true estimation of himself. It lets us see, that a truly godly man will be loath to foster any other body’s conceit of him, as if he were that which he is not. The proud man has clear evidence of hypocrisy ; but the humble man, let others commend him as they will, he thinks the less of himself. Therefore the same apostle (2 Cor. xi.) is loath to bring out his revelations, lest any should think of him above that they see or hear of him. That foolish conceit that others have of a large measure of holiness in some of the godly, the godly have no will of it, lest, if their imperfections kythe, they discourage those who counted so highly of them. As for those who think worse of themselves than others, they have a token of greater holiness, and a greater measure of light, which discovers their filthiness ; for the nearer they draw unto God, they will see themselves the more vile. Therefore Isaiah says, “ Woe is me ! I am a man of polluted lips.”

1. Take it for a mark of the augmentation of thy light, because the farther thou be on in the way, and nearer God, thou seest more of thy own mischief to abase thee.
2. Foster nobody’s conceit, that would think more of thee than is meet.
3. And if thou cannot mend other folk’s conceits of thee, but they will esteem of thee, yet have a low conceit of thyself ; so shall not their conceit hurt thee. This serves to keep men from being puffed up, and

to teach them to walk circumspectly in their eyes, and abstain from all appearance of evil. When they think how short way they are come on in godliness, then all the commendation that can be given them, will not puff them up. What makes many a one walk on a while in the way, and then their heels are tripped up, and they fall by, but because they have an overweening conceit of themselves? Their rottenness, which inwardly stank before, breaks out like a boil. While they were low in their own estimation, and still battling with their own evil nature within them, the world about would be less cumbered with it. The more pains in secret, the less shall break out; for those who deal with the root of sin, cannot but mar the branches of it.

“I count not myself to have apprehended.”—Before, in his words, he glances at the similitude of a race, while he was speaking of apprehending, attaining, and following; but here he evidently sets forth the similitude, and lets us see, that he is running a race. Therefore, in the similitude we learn, 1. That the Christian man’s life is like a race; whether he sit or stand, he is still running the race. The length of the way of the race is the man’s life-time; the actions and passages of a man’s life, are the steps of the race; our high calling is our starting and on-holding in the race; the prize we run for, is holiness and eternal blessedness. It is called a race, not for foolhardiness or hastiness, but for diligence, circumspectness, so contriving of all things, that one thing hinder not another. It is called a race, because we may not sit down in it all our lifetime. There is one that starts the race, even God, who calls and starts all the runners by the voice of his word: he goes on beside

them in the race, and exhorts them to run this or that way, as may best further them in the race: whiles he bids them mend their pace; and if they fall behind, he encourages, as a friend that stirs up one whom he would fain have winning the race. So God cries, "Run, my children; run, and get heaven and happiness!" Every direction from the word, is an encouragement in the race. In a race there are witnesses who look on: so here, God, angels, men, devils, are witnesses, but God is the chief witness or judge. Run this race; sit not down; run as in the sight of God. Remember that every action or word is a step of this race: words spoken to edification are steps; words of thy calling levelled at the mark are steps; for a man may speak of worldly purposes, but with a heavenly mind, and do worldly actions, being levelled by a spiritual rule. Therefore it is said, "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." Albeit God ordains to run this Christian race, yet he ordains no man to cast away his calling; the ploughman to quit his plough, the servant his service, or the tradesman his trade; but every man continue in his calling, and yet run on, holding his eye on the mark; for every point of a man's service done as service to God, shall promote him in his race.

What's Paul's behaviour in this race? "One thing I do."—Being sensible of short remaining in the race, he sets himself to this one thing; he takes not many turns in hand, or if he did, he put them into this one thing: he laid aside all that might hinder or divert him from this one thing; whereby he teaches us to lay aside every weight that presses down. The care of lawful business, in as far as it draws from God, cast thou away the care, but do the business. In loss or

gain, labour to further in this one thing, and be sure, time what thou wilt, thou shalt get eternal life; and then, what lovest thou? Cast away lumpish sorrow in common business; streight all things to the rule of the word; and let all the points of thy calling and work be done, as parts of that one necessary thing.

“Forgetting the things that are behind.”—This is another point of his behaviour in the race. Had he many faults which he behoved to remember, for his encouragement to do more? He forgot things that were past, in the estimation of them; he conceived nothing of them, and forgot all things which might teagle* him in the way. It is true, thoughts of things done were encouragements, and things left undone were whips to drive and chase him forward, and so these teagled him not: he forgot all things that might slack his swiftness, or hinder him in the race; or he forgot things behind, as a runner of the race looks not how much of the race is to be run. Even so should we do,—forget things past that would teagle us. Look not how many things we have overcome, but how many we have to overcome; not how many good works are done, but how short we are come of that we should; what time we have to spend, that we may spend it well.

3. “Reaching forth to the things that are before.”—A third point is, he looks before him, how far he had to run; what sins there were to mortify, what he wanted of full sanctification and conformity to Christ. So should we do. Look what we want, follow to, and get that. We have little daylight, and a long journey—run fast! If ye have much pride and vanity to mortify, set yourselves to do it. Say, I must have

* Delay, impede

this sin dead ; this cankered nature borne down, that it break not out before men ; then I must have it slain within, murdered in the hole, and my canker turned into meekness. So chase every sin to the root, and hold it out.

4. "I press toward the mark."—A fourth point of his behaviour in the race is, he bended all his forces, stretched out himself like a man that is running, having his head before his feet, looking forward to the way ; that is, he employed all his wit and pains in well-doing, set himself with might and main to overtake every good duty. So should we do,—strive with our whole heart, soul, strength, and mind, to do the duties required.

5. "On to the mark."—As he held his eye on the mark, following all the rules of the race, so should we do.

6. "For the prize of the high calling."—He held his eye on the prize for his encouragement : as a man in a race runs because of the gold, and the honour that is gotten at the score ; when he looks at these, it serves him for a pair of spurs. So when we look to the prize, or vantage that is to be had at the end of our Christian race, we will care nothing for many grieved hearts, crosses, troubles, in the top of the race, for all these further us. This reproves those who clog themselves so with the world, that they cannot run this race ; therefore, God many times pulls off such clogs from the backs of his own, that they may run the faster. He holds riches, respect of friends, and the things of this world from them ; and if, instead of these, he gives them sore hearts, disgraces, poverty, by these he is only helping them a lift, that they may run the faster. Albeit these things take the flesh off

them, yet this makes them the lighter for the race, and speeds them to the end of it.

7. The prize he runs for is glory and immortality, the perfection of his soul and body in joy and glory incomprehensible, and being with God for ever; for when his flesh shall be perfected, it shall be like the glorious body of Christ: then shall sin, sorrow, pain, grief, be done away, and instead of these, eternal joy. What reckon we then of pain, loss, disgrace, seeing eternal pleasure, durable riches, and a crown of glory abide us?

8. "Of the high calling of God."—He held his calling to the work in high estimation, for his caller was the high God. He had his *elsin** and *lincyel*† for sewing of leather, for he was a maker of tents, to teach us so to do our worldly calling, in packing it all up in our Christian calling.

"In Christ Jesus."—He eiks this as the back-warrant. He has told of a race, and all the parts of it how it should be run; but here he tells, that all must be done in Christ. Christ is all his confidence. To get the race run, he takes himself to Christ, to get all made possible and easy. So should we do, that we may run the race well; and to get it easy and possible, take ourselves to Christ to help us, for he is the way, the truth, and the life. We must run all the race upon his ground; he is the new and the living way—the living way that makes dead runners grow quick, and tired men grow fresh, so that all the runners are carried by coach to the race-end. And when we know that Christ must cause us run at the race, the knowing of this makes us draw strength and courage from Christ, to draw on, and run still, till we come

* Awl.

† Twine, packthread.

to the end. If we be hungry or faint in the race, he is bread of life to refresh ; he is the Truth to direct ; the Life to hold in our life, till the race be run ; he is also our Guide and Forerunner ; The Prize we run for ; our Swiftmess, our Strength, and Perfection. For when we run on a while, as a young child that runs when his father bears him by the shoulders, he only pats and stirs with his feet, but his father bears the weight of him,—and when he comes to a mire, he only bids the child loup, but yet it is the father's strength that carries him over the mire—even so Christ carries along all his children in the Christian race ; and when they come to the last step of death, he having them in his arms, lifts them over death, and sets them safe into heaven. Therefore take courage, and be not dashed nor driven from Christ's back. Let your honest carriage tell, that ye have been at his banquet : express the virtues of Christ in a holy life if so be. Then, as ye were ranked yesterday at his table, so shall ye be ranked in heaven, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whatever task God's word has laid upon you, make use of Christ, and he shall do all your turn ; else how should bond-slaves to Satan get this race run, were it not that Christ supplies all enlack, lifts over all impediments, carries them to the race-end, and sets them in heaven himself ? God write these things in our hearts ! Amen.