

## SERMON XXVI.

### *The Perpetuity and Change of the Sabbath.*



#### 1 CORINTHIANS xvi. 1, 2.

NOW CONCERNING THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS, AS I HAVE GIVEN ORDER TO THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA, EVEN SO DO YE. UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, LET EVERY ONE OF YOU LAY BY HIM IN STORE, AS GOD HATH PROSPERED HIM, THAT THERE BE NO GATHERINGS WHEN I COME.

WE find in the New Testament often mentioned a certain collection, which was made by the Grecian churches, for the brethren in Judea, who were reduced to pinching want by a dearth which then prevailed, and was the heavier upon them by reason of their circumstances, they having been from the beginning oppressed and persecuted by the unbelieving Jews.... We have this collection or contribution twice mentioned in the Acts, as in chapter xi. 28....31, and in chapter xxiv. 17. It is also taken notice of in several of the epistles ; as Rom. xv. 26, and Gal. ii. 10. But it is most largely insisted on, in these two epistles to the Corinthians ; in this first epistle, chapter xvi. and in the second epistle, chapter viii. and ix.

The apostle begins the directions, which in this place he delivers concerning this matter, with the words of the text.... wherein we may observe,

1. What is the thing to be done concerning which the apostle gives them direction, and that is, the making of a collection for the saints ; the exercise and manifestation of their charity towards their brethren, by communicating to them, for the supply of their wants ; which was by Christ and his apostles often spoken of and insisted on, as one main duty of the Christian religion, and is expressly declared to be so by the Apostle James, chap. i. 27. " Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."

2. We may observe the time on which the apostle directs that this should be done, viz. " on the first day of the week." By the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he insists upon it, that it be done on such a particular day of the week, as if no other day would do so well as that, or were so proper and fit a time for such a work. Thus, although the inspired apostle was not for making that distinction of days in gospel times, which the Jews made, as appears by Gal. iv. 10. " Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain ;" yet here he gives the preference to one day of the week, before any other, for the performance of a certain great duty of Christianity.

3. It may be observed, that this is the direction which the apostle had given to other churches that were concerned in the same duty, upon this occasion : He had given direction to them also to do it on the first day of the week : " As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." Whence we may learn, that it was nothing peculiar in the circumstances of the Christians at Corinth, which was the reason why the Holy Ghost insisted that they perform this duty on this day of the week. The apostle had given the like orders to the churches of Galatia.

Now Galatia was far distant from Corinth ; the sea parted them ; and besides that, there were several other countries between them. Therefore it cannot be thought that the Holy Ghost directs them to this time upon any secular account, having respect to some particular circumstances of the people in that city, but upon a religious account. In giving the preference to this day for such work, before any other day, he has respect to something which reached all Christians throughout the wide world.

And by other passages of the New Testament, we learn that the case was the same as to other exercises of religion ; and that in the age of the apostles, the first day of the week was preferred before any other day, among the primitive Christians, and in churches immediately under the care of the apostles, for an attendance on the exercises of religion in general. Acts xx. 7. " Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." It seems by these things to have been among the primitive Christians in the apostles' days, with respect to the first day of the week, as it was among the Jews with respect to the seventh.

We are taught by Christ, that the doing of alms and showing of mercy are proper works for the sabbath day. When the Pharisees found fault with Christ for suffering his disciples to pluck the ears of corn and eat on the sabbath, Christ corrects them with that, " I will have mercy and not sacrifice," Matth. xii. 7. And Christ teaches that works of mercy are proper to be done on the Sabbath, in Luke xiii. 15, 16, and xiv. 5. These works used to be done on sacred festivals and days of rejoicing, under the Old Testament, as in Nehemiah's and Esther's time ; Neh. viii. 10, and Esth. ix. 19, 22. And *Josephus* and *Philo*, two very noted Jews, who wrote not long after Christ's time, give an account that it was the manner among the Jews on the Sabbath, to make collections for sacred and pious uses.

## DOCTRINE.

It is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be especially set apart among Christians, for religious exercises and duties.

That this is the doctrine which the Holy Ghost intended to teach us, by this and some other passages of the New Testament, I hope will appear plainly by the sequel. This is a doctrine that we have been generally brought up in by the instructions and examples of our ancestors; and it is and has been the general profession of the Christian world, that this day ought to be religiously observed and distinguished from other days of the week. However some deny it. Some refuse to take any notice of the day, or any way to difference it from other days. Others own, that it is a laudable custom of the Christian church, into which she fell by agreement, and by appointment of her ordinary rulers, to set apart this day for public worship. But they deny any other original to such an observation of the day, than prudential human appointment. Others religiously observe the Jewish Sabbath, suppose that the institution of that is of perpetual obligation, and that we want foundation for determining that that is abrogated, and another day of the week is appointed in the room of the seventh.

All these classes of men say, that there is no clear revelation that it is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be observed as a day to be set apart for religious exercises, in the room of the ancient Sabbath; which there ought to be in order to the observation of it by the Christian church, as a divine institution. They say, that we ought not to go upon the tradition of past ages, or upon uncertain and far fetched inferences from some passages of the history of the New Testament, or upon some obscure and uncertain hints in the apostles' writings; but that we ought to expect a

plain institution ; which, they say, we may conclude God would have given us, if he had designed that the whole Christian church, in all ages, should observe another day of the week for an holy Sabbath, than that which was appointed of old by plain and positive institution.

So far is undoubtedly true, that if this be the mind and will of God, he hath not left the matter to human tradition ; but hath so revealed his mind about it, in his word, that there is there to be found good and substantial evidence that it is his mind : And doubtless, the revelation is plain enough for them that have ears to hear ; that is, for them that will justly exercise their understandings about what God says to them. No Christian, therefore, should rest till he has satisfactorily discovered the mind of God in this matter. If the Christian Sabbath be of divine institution, it is doubtless of great importance to religion that it be well kept ; and therefore, that every Christian be well acquainted with the institution.

If men only take it upon trust, and keep the first day of the week only because their parents taught them so, or because they see others do so, and so they take it for certain that it is right ; they will never be likely to keep it so conscientiously and strictly, as if they had seen with their own eyes, and had been convinced by seeing for themselves, good grounds in the word of God for their practice : And unless they do see thus for themselves, whenever they are negligent in sanctifying the Sabbath, or are guilty of profaning it ; their consciences will not have that advantage to smite them for it, as otherwise they would. And those who have a sincere desire to obey God in all things, will keep the Sabbath more carefully and more cheerfully, if they have seen and been convinced that therein they do what is according to the will and command of God, and what is acceptable to him ; and will also have a great deal more comfort in the reflection upon their having carefully and painfully kept the Sabbath.

Therefore, I design now, by the help of God, to show, that it is sufficiently revealed in the scriptures, to be the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be distin-

guished in the Christian church from other days of the week, as a Sabbath, to be devoted to religious exercises.

In order to this, I shall here premise, that the mind and will of God, concerning any duty to be performed by us, may be sufficiently revealed in his word, without a particular precept in so many express terms, enjoining it. The human understanding is the ear to which the word of God is spoken; and if it be so spoken, that that ear may plainly hear it, it is enough. God is sovereign as to the manner of speaking his mind, whether he will speak it in express terms, or whether he will speak it by saying several other things which imply it, and from which we may, by comparing them together, plainly perceive it. If the mind of God be but revealed, if there be but sufficient means for the communication of his mind to our minds, that is sufficient; whether we hear so many express words with our ears, or see them in writing with our eyes; or whether we see the thing that he would signify to us, by the eye of reason and understanding.

Who can positively say, that if it had been the mind of God, that we should keep the first day of the week, he would have commanded it in express terms, as he did the observation of the seventh day of old? Indeed, if God had so made our faculties, that we were not capable of receiving a revelation of his mind in any other way; then there would have been some reason to say so. But God hath given us such understandings, that we are capable of receiving a revelation, when made in another manner. And if God deals with us agreeably to our natures, and in a way suitable to our capacities, it is enough. If God discovers his mind in any way whatsoever, provided it be according to our faculties, we are obliged to obedience; and God may expect our notice and observance of his revelation, in the same manner as if he had revealed it in express terms.

I shall speak upon this subject under these two general propositions:

1. It is sufficiently clear, that it is the mind of God, that one day of the week should be devoted to rest, and to religious exercises, throughout all ages and nations.

2. It is sufficiently clear, that under the gospel dispensation, this day is the first day of the week.

**I. PROPOSITION.** It is sufficiently clear, that it is the mind of God, that one day of the week should be devoted to rest, and to religious exercises, throughout all ages and nations ; and not only among the ancient Israelites, till Christ came, but even in these gospel times, and among all nations professing Christianity.

1. From the consideration of the nature and state of mankind in this world, it is most consonant to human reason, that certain fixed parts of time should be set apart, to be spent by the church wholly in religious exercises, and in the duties of divine worship. It is a duty incumbent on all mankind, in all ages alike, to worship and serve God. His service should be our great business. It becomes us to worship him with the greatest devotion and engagedness of mind ; and therefore to put ourselves, at proper times, in such circumstances, as will most contribute to render our minds entirely devoted to this work, without being diverted or interrupted by other things.

The state of mankind in this world is such, that we are called to concern ourselves in secular business and affairs, which will necessarily, in a considerable degree, take up the thoughts and engage the attention of the mind. However some particular persons may be in such circumstances as to be more free and disengaged ; yet the state of mankind is such, that the bulk of them, in all ages and nations, are called ordinarily to exercise their thoughts about secular affairs, and to follow worldly business, which, in its own nature, is remote from the sole duties of religion.

It is therefore most meet and suitable, that certain times should be set apart, upon which men should be required to

throw by all other concerns, that their minds may be the more freely and entirely engaged in spiritual exercises, in the duties of religion, and in the immediate worship of God ; and that their minds being disengaged from common concerns, their religion may not be mixed with them.

It is also suitable that these times should be fixed and settled, that the church may agree therein, and that they should be the same for all, that men may not interrupt one another ; but may rather assist one another by mutual example : For example has a great influence in such cases. If there be a time set apart for public rejoicing, and there be a general manifestation of joy, the general example seems to inspire men with a spirit of joy and mirth ; one kindles another. So, if it be a time of mourning, and there be general appearances and manifestations of sorrow, it naturally affects the mind, it disposes it to depression, it casts a gloom upon it, and does as it were dull and deaden the spirits....So, if a certain time be set apart as holy time, for general devotion, and solemn religious exercises, a general example tends to render the spirit serious and solemn.

2. Without doubt, one proportion of time is better and fitter than another for this purpose. One proportion is more suitable to the state of mankind, and will have a greater tendency to answer the ends of such times, than another. The times may be too far asunder ; I think human reason is sufficient to discover, that it would be too seldom for the purposes of such solemn times, that they should be but once a year. So, I conclude, no body will deny, but that such times may be too near together to agree with the state and necessary affairs of mankind.

Therefore, there can be no difficulty in allowing, that some certain proportion of time, whether we can exactly discover it or not, is really fittest and best ; and considering all things, considering the end for which such times are kept, and the condition, circumstances, and necessary affairs of men, and considering what the state of man is, taking one age and nation with another, that one proportion of time is more conve-



nient and suitable than any other ; which God may know and exactly determine, though we, by reason of the scantiness of our understandings, cannot.

As a certain frequency of the returns of these times may be more suitable than any other, so one length or continuance of the times themselves may be fitter than another, to answer the purposes of such times. If such times, when they come, were to last but an hour, it would not well answer the end ; for then worldly things would crowd too nearly upon sacred exercises, and there would not be that opportunity to get the mind so thoroughly free and disengaged from other things, as there would be, if the times were longer. But they being so short, sacred and profane things would be as it were mixed together. Therefore, a certain distance between these times, and a certain continuance of them when they come, is more proper than others ; which God knows and is able to determine, though perhaps we cannot.

5. It is unreasonable to suppose any other, than that God's working six days, and resting the seventh, and blessing and hallowing it, was to be of general use in determining this matter, and that it is written, that the practice of mankind in general might some way or other be regulated by it. What could be the meaning of God's resting the seventh day, and hallowing and blessing it, which he did, before the giving of the fourth commandment, unless he hallowed and blessed it with respect to mankind ? For he did not bless and sanctify it with respect to himself, or that he himself and within himself might observe it ; as that is most absurd. And it is unreasonable to suppose that he hallowed it only with respect to the Jews, a particular nation, which rose up above two thousand years after.

So much therefore must be intended by it, that it was his mind, that mankind should, after his example, work six days, and then rest, and hallow or sanctify the next following ; and that they should sanctify every seventh day, or that the space between rest and rest, one hallowed time and another, among his creatures here upon earth, should be six days. So that it

hence appears to be the mind and will of God, that not only the Jews, but men in all nations and ages, should sanctify one day in seven ; which is the thing we are endeavoring to prove.

4. The mind of God in this matter is clearly revealed in the fourth commandment. The will of God is there revealed, not only that the Israelitish nation, but that all nations, should keep every seventh day holy ; or, which is the same thing, one day after every six. This command, as well as the rest, is doubtless everlasting and of perpetual obligation, at least, as to the substance of it, as is intimated by its being engraven on the tables of stone. Nor is it to be thought that Christ ever abolished any command of the ten ; but that there is the complete number TEN yet, and will be to the end of the world.

Some say, that the fourth command is perpetual, but not in its literal sense, not as designing any particular proportion of time to be set apart and devoted to literal rest and religious exercises. They say, that it is abolished in that sense, and stands in force only in a mystical sense, viz. as that weekly rest of the Jews typified spiritual rest in the Christian church. And so, they say, that we under the gospel, are not to make any distinction of one day from another, but are to keep all time holy, doing every thing in a spiritual manner.

But this is an absurd way of interpreting the command, as it refers to Christians. For if the command be so far abolished, it is entirely abolished. For it is the very design of the command, to fix the time of worship. The first command fixes the object, the second, the means, the third, the manner, the fourth, the time. And, if it stands in force now only as signifying a spiritual, Christian rest, and holy behavior at all times, it doth not remain as one of the ten commands, but as a summary of all the commands.

The main objection against the perpetuity of this command is, that the duty required is not MORAL. Those laws whose obligation arises from the nature of things, and from the general state and nature of mankind, as well as from God's

positive revealed will, are called MORAL laws. Others, whose obligation depends merely upon God's positive and arbitrary institution, are not moral ; such as the ceremonial laws, and the precepts of the gospel, about the two sacraments. Now, the objectors say, they will allow all that is moral in the decalogue to be of perpetual obligation ; but this command, they say, is not moral.

But this objection is weak and insufficient for the purpose for which it is brought, or to prove that the fourth command, as to the substance of it, is not of perpetual obligation. For,

(1.) If it should be allowed that there is no morality belonging to the command, and that the duty required is founded merely on arbitrary institution, it cannot therefore be certainly concluded that the command is not perpetual. We know that there may be commands in force under the gospel, and to the end of the world, which are not moral : Such are the institutions of the two sacraments. And why may there not be positive commands in force in all ages of the church ? If positive, arbitrary institutions are in force in gospel times, what is there which concludes that no positive precept given before the times of the gospel can yet continue in force ? But,

(2.) As we have observed already, the thing in general, that there should be certain fixed parts of time set apart to be devoted to religious exercises, is founded in the fitness of the thing, arising from the nature of things, and the nature and universal state of mankind. Therefore, there is as much reason that there should be a command of perpetual and universal obligation about this, as about any other duty whatsoever. For if the thing in general, that there be a time fixed, be founded in the nature of things, there is consequent upon it a necessity, that the time be limited by a command ; for there must be a proportion of time fixed, or else the general moral duty cannot be observed.

(3.) The particular determination of the proportion of time in the fourth commandment, is also founded in the nature of things, only our understandings are not sufficient absolutely to determine it of themselves. We have observed.

already, that without doubt one proportion of time is in itself fitter than another, and a certain continuance of time fitter than any other, considering the universal state and nature of mankind ; which God may see, though our understandings are not perfect enough absolutely to determine it. So that the difference between this command and others, doth not lie in this, that other commands are founded in the fitness of the things themselves, arising from the universal state and nature of mankind, and this not : But only in this, that the fitness of other commands is more obvious to the understandings of men, and they might have seen it of themselves ; but this could not be precisely discovered and positively determined without the assistance of revelation.

So that the command of God, that every seventh day should be devoted to religious exercises, is founded in the universal state and nature of mankind, as well as other commands ; only man's reason is not sufficient, without divine direction, so exactly to determine it : Though perhaps man's reason is sufficient to determine, that it ought not to be much seldomer, nor much oftener than once in seven days.

5. It further confirms it, that it is the mind and will of God, that such a weekly Sabbath should forever be kept, that God appears in his word as laying abundantly more weight on this precept concerning the Sabbath, than on any precept of the ceremonial law ; not only by inserting it in the decalogue, and making it one of the ten commands, which were delivered by God with an audible voice, by writing it with his own finger on the tables of stone, which were the work of God in the mount, and by appointing it afterwards to be written on the tables which Moses made ; but as the keeping of the weekly Sabbath is spoken of by the prophets, as that wherein consists a great part of holiness of life ; and as it is inserted among moral duties, as particularly in Isa. lviii. 13, 14. " If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking

thine own words : Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father ; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

6 It is foretold, that this command should be observed in gospel times ; as in Isa. lvi. at the beginning, where the due observation of the Sabbath is spoken of as a great part of holiness of life, and is placed among moral duties. It is also mentioned as a duty that should be most acceptable to God from his people, even where the prophet is speaking of gospel times ; as in the foregoing chapter, and in the first verse of this chapter. And, in the 3d and 4th verses, the prophet is speaking of the abolition of the ceremonial law in gospel times, and particularly of that law, which forbids eunuchs to come into the congregation of the Lord. Yet, here the man is pronounced *blessed, who keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it*, verse 2. And even in the very sentence where the eunuchs are spoken of as being free from the ceremonial law, they are spoken of as being yet under obligation to keep the Sabbath, and their keeping of it, as that which God lays great weight upon : "For, thus saith the Lord, unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant : Even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters : I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

Besides, the strangers spoken of in the 6th and 7th verses, are the Gentiles, that should be called in the times of the gospel, as is evident by the last clause in the 7th, and by the 8th verse : "For mine house shall be called an house of prayer *for all people*. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him. *besides those that are gathered unto him*." Yet it is represented here as their duty to keep the Sabbath : "Also the *sons of the stranger*, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, *every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it*, and taketh hold of my

covenant: *even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.*"

7. A further argument for the perpetuity of the Sabbath, we have in Matth xxiv. 20. "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, *neither on the Sabbath day.*" Christ is here speaking of the flight of the apostles and other Christians out of Jerusalem and Judea, just before their final destruction, as is manifest by the whole context, and especially by the 16th verse: "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." But this final destruction of Jerusalem was after the dissolution of the Jewish constitution, and after the Christian dispensation was fully set up. Yet, it is plainly implied in these words of our Lord, that even then Christians were bound to a strict observation of the Sabbath.

Thus I have shewn, that it is the will of God, that every seventh day be devoted to rest and to religious exercises.

I proceed now to the

II. PROPOSITION. That it is the will of God, that under the gospel dispensation, or in the Christian church, this day should be the FIRST day of the week.

In order to the confirmation of this, let the following things be considered.

1. The words of the fourth commandment afford no objection against this being the day that should be the Sabbath, any more than against any other day. That this day, which, according to the Jewish reckoning, is the first of the week, should be kept as a Sabbath, is no more opposite to any sentence or word of the fourth command, than that the seventh of the week should be the day; and that because the words of the fourth command do not determine which day of the week we should keep as a Sabbath; they merely determine this, that we should rest and keep as a Sabbath every seventh day, or one day after every six. It says, **SIX DAYS THOU SHALT LABOR, AND THE SEVENTH THOU SHALT REST**; which implies no more, than that after six days of labor, we shall, upon

the next to the sixth, rest and keep it holy. And so, to be sure, we are obliged to do forever. But the words no way determine where those six days shall begin, and so where the rest or Sabbath shall fall. There is no direction in the fourth command how to reckon the time, i. e. where to begin and end it. That is not meddled with in the fourth command, but is supposed to be determined otherwise.

The Jews did not know, by the fourth command, where to begin their six days, and on which particular day to rest ; this was determined by another precept. The fourth command does indeed suppose a particular day appointed ; but it does not appoint any. It requires us to rest and keep holy a seventh day, one after every six of labor, which particular day God either had or should appoint. The particular day was determined for that nation in another place, viz. in Exod. xvi. 23, 25, 26. “ And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, TOMORROW is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord : Bake that which ye will bake, today, and seethe that ye will seethe ; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning.....And Moses said, Eat that today, for TODAY IS A SABBATH UNTO THE LORD : Today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it ; but on the SEVENTH DAY, WHICH IS THE SABBATH, in it there shall be none.” This is the first place where we have any mention made of the Sabbath, from the first Sabbath on which God rested.

It seems that the Israelites, in the time of their bondage in Egypt had lost the true reckoning of time by the days of the week, reckoning from the first day of the creation, if it had been kept up till that time. They were slaves, and in cruel bondage, and had, in a great measure, forgotten the true religion : For we are told, that they served the gods of Egypt. And it is not to be supposed, that the Egyptians would suffer their slaves to rest from their work every seventh day. Now, they having remained in bondage for so long a time, had probably lost the weekly reckoning ; therefore, when God had brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness, he made

known to them the Sabbath, on the occasion, and in the manner recorded in the text just now quoted. Hence, we read in Nehemiah, that when God had led the children of Israel out of Egypt, &c. he made known unto them his holy Sabbath; Neh. ix. 14. "And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath." To the same effect, we read in Ezek. xx. 10, 12. "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. Moreover also, I gave them my Sabbaths."

But they never would have known where the particular day would have fallen by the fourth command. Indeed, the fourth command, as it was spoken to the Jews, did refer to their Jewish Sabbath. But that doth not prove, that that day was determined and appointed by it. The precept in the fourth command is to be taken generally of a seventh day, such a seventh day as God should appoint, or had appointed. And because such a particular day had been already appointed for the Jewish church; therefore, as it was spoken to them, it did refer to that particular day. But this doth not prove, but that the same words refer to another appointed seventh day, now in the Christian church. The words of the fourth command may oblige the church, under different dispensations, to observe different appointed seventh days, as well as the fifth command may oblige different persons to honor different fathers and mothers.

The Christian Sabbath, in the sense of the fourth command, is as much the seventh day, as the Jewish Sabbath; because it is kept every seventh day, as much as that; it is kept after six days of labor as well as that; it is the seventh, reckoning from the beginning of our first working day, as well as that was the seventh from the beginning of their first working day. All the difference is, that the seven days formerly began from the day after God's rest from the creation, and now they begin the day after that. It is no matter by what names the days are called: If our nation had, for instance, called Wednesday the first of the week, it would have been all one, as to this argument.



Therefore, by the institution of the Christian Sabbath, there is no change from the fourth command ; but the change is from another law, which determined the beginning and ending of their working days. So that those words of the fourth command, viz. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ;" afford no objection against that which is called the Christian Sabbath ; for these words remain in full force still. Neither does any just objection arise from these words following, viz. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." These words are not made insignificant to Christians, by the institution of the Christian Sabbath ; They still remain in their full force as to that which is principally intended by them. They were designed to give us a reason why we are to work but six days at a time, and then rest on the seventh, because God hath set us the example. And taken so, they remain still in as much force as ever they were. This is the reason still, as much as ever it was, why we may work but six days at a time. What is the reason that Christians rest every seventh, and not every eighth, or every ninth, or tenth day ? It is because God worked six days and rested the seventh.

It is true, these words did carry something further in their meaning, as they were spoken to the Jews, and to the church, before the coming of Christ : It was then also intended by them, that the seventh day was to be kept in commemoration of the work of creation. But this is no objection to the supposition, that the words, as they relate to us, do not import all that they did, as they related to the Jews. For there are other words which were written upon those tables of stone with the ten commandments, which are known and allowed not to be of the same import, as they relate to us, which they were of, as they related to the Jews, viz. these words, in the preface to the ten commands, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."....These words were written on the tables of stone

with the rest, and these words are spoken to us, as well as to the Jews : They are spoken to all to whom the commandments themselves are spoken ; for they are spoken as an enforcement of the commandments. But they do not now remain in all the signification which they had, as they respected the Jews. For we never were brought out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, except in a mystical sense. The same may be said of those words which are inserted in the commandments themselves, Deut. v. 15. " And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm : Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day."

So that all the arguments of those who are against the Christian Sabbath, drawn from the fourth command, which are all their strength, come to nothing.

2. That the ancient church was commanded to keep a seventh day in commemoration of the work of creation, is an argument for the keeping of a weekly Sabbath in commemoration of the work of redemption, and not any reason against it.

We read in scripture of two creations, the old and the new : And these words of the fourth command are to be taken as of the same force to those who belong to the new creation, with respect to the new creation, as they were to those who belonged to the old creation, with respect to the old creation. We read, that " in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and the church of old were to commemorate that work. But when God creates a new heaven and a new earth, those that belong to this new heaven and new earth, by a like reason, are to commemorate the creation of their heaven and earth.

The scriptures teach us to look upon the old creation as destroyed, and as it were annihilated by sin ; or, as being reduced to a chaos again, without form and void, as it was at first. Jer. iv. 22, 23. " They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and lo,

it was without form and void ; and the heavens, and they had no light :” i. e. They were reduced to the same state in which they were at first ; the earth was without form and void, and there was no light, but darkness was upon the face of the deep.

The scriptures further teach us to call the gospel restoration and redemption, a creation of a new heaven and a new earth. Isai. lxxv. 17, 18, “ For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth : And the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create : For behold, I create *Jerusalem* a rejoicing, and *her people* a joy.” And Isai. li. 16. “ And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, *Thou art my people.*” And chap. lxxvi. 22. “ For as the new heavens, and the new earth which I will make,” &c....In these places, we are not only told of a new creation, or new heavens and a new earth, but we are told what is meant by it, viz. The gospel renovation, the making of Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy ; saying unto Zion, “ Thou art my people,” &c. The prophet, in all these places, is prophesying of the gospel redemption.

The gospel state is every where spoken of as a renewed state of things, *wherein old things are passed away, and all things become new* : We are said to be *created in Christ Jesus unto good works* : *All things are restored and reconciled whether in heaven or in earth*, and God hath *caused light to shine out of darkness*, as he did at the beginning ; and the dissolution of the Jewish state was often spoken of in the Old Testament as the end of the world. But we who belong to the gospel church belong to the new creation ; and therefore there seems to be at least as much reason, that we should commemorate the work of this creation, as that the members of the ancient Jewish church should commemorate the work of the old creation.

3. There is another thing which confirms it, that the fourth command reaches God's resting from the new creation, as well as from the old ; which is, that the scriptures do expressly speak of the one, as parallel with the other, i. e. Christ's resting from the work of redemption, is expressly spoken of as being parallel with God's resting from the work of creation, as in Heb. iv. 10. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Now, Christ rested from his works when he rose from the dead, on the first day of the week. When he rose from the dead, then he finished his work of redemption ; his humiliation was then at an end ; he then rested, and was refreshed. When it is said in this place, "There remaineth a rest to the people of God ;" in the original, it is, a *Sabbatism*, or *the keeping of a Sabbath* : And this reason is given for it, "For he that entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." These three things at least we are taught by these words :

(1.) We are taught by them to look upon Christ's rest from his work of redemption, as parallel with God's rest from the work of creation ; for they are expressly compared together, as parallel one with the other.

(2.) They are spoken of as parallel, particularly in this respect, viz. The relation which they both have to the keeping of a Sabbath among God's people, or with respect to the influence which these two rests have, as to *Sabbatizing* in the church of God : For it is expressly with respect to this that they are compared together. Here is an evident reference to God's blessing and hallowing the day of his rest from the creation to be a Sabbath, and appointing a Sabbath of rest in imitation of him. For the apostle is speaking of this, verse 4. "For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Thus far is evident ; whatever the apostle has respect to by this keeping of a Sabbath by the people of God, wheth-

er it be a weekly Sabbatizing on earth, or a Sabbatizing in heaven.

(3.) It is evident in these words, that the preference is given to the latter rest, viz. The rest of our Saviour from his works, with respect to the influence it should have, or relation it bears to the Sabbatizing of the people of God, now under the gospel, evidently implied in the expression, "There remaineth therefore a Sabbatism to the people of God. For he that entered into his rest," &c. For, in this expression, *There remaineth*, it is intimated, that the old Sabbatism appointed in remembrance of God's rest from the work of creation, doth not remain, but ceases; and that this new rest, in commemoration of Christ's resting from his works, remains in the room of it.

4. The Holy Ghost hath implicitly told us, that the Sabbath which was instituted in commemoration of the old creation, should not be kept in gospel times, in Isai. lxx. 17, 18. There we are told, that when God should create new heavens and a new earth, the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind. If this be so, it is not to be supposed, that we are to keep a seventh part of time, on purpose to remember it, and call it to mind.

Let us understand this which way we will, it will not be well consistent with the keeping of one day in seven, in the gospel church, principally for the remembrance and calling to mind of the old creation. If the meaning of the place be only this, that the old creation shall not be remembered, nor come into mind in comparison with the new, and that the new will be so much more remarkable and glorious, and will so much more nearly concern us, that so much more notice will be taken of it, and it will be thought so much more worthy to be remembered and commemorated, that the other will be forgotten, will not be remembered, nor come into mind: If we understand it thus, it is impossible that it should be more to our purpose. For then, hereby the Holy Ghost teaches us, that the Christian church has much more reason to com-

memorate the new creation than the old ; insomuch, that the old is worthy to be forgotten in comparison with it.

And as the old creation was no more to be remembered, nor come into mind ; so, in the following verse, the church is directed for ever to commemorate the new creation : “ But be you glad, and rejoice forever in that which I create ; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy ; i. e. Though you forgot the old, yet for ever to the end of the world, keep a remembrance of the new creation.

5. It is an argument, that the Jewish Sabbath was not to be perpetual, that the Jews were commanded to keep it in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt. One reason why it was instituted was, because God thus delivered them, as we are expressly told in the decalogue itself, in one of the places where we have it recorded in the books of Moses.... Deut. v. 15. “ And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm : Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.” Now, can any person think, that God would have all nations under the gospel, and to the end of the world, keep a day every week, which was instituted in remembrance of the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt ?

6. The Holy Ghost hath implicitly told us, that instituted memorials of the Jews’ deliverance from Egypt should be no longer upheld in gospel times, as in Jer. xvi. 14, 15. The Holy Ghost, speaking there of gospel times, says, “ Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt ; but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them ; and I will bring them again into their own land.” *They shall no more say, The Lord liveth that brought* &c. i. e. at least they shall keep up no more any public memorials of it.

If there be a Sabbath kept up in gospel times, as we have shown there must be, it is more just from these words to sup-

pose, that it should be a memorial of that which is spoken of in the latter verse, *the bringing up of the children of Israel from the land of the north* ; that is, the redemption of Christ, and his bringing home the elect, not only from Judea, but from the north, and from all quarters of the world. See Isai. xliii. 16....20.

7. It is no more than just to suppose, that God intended to intimate to us, that the Sabbath ought by Christians to be kept in commemoration of Christ's redemption, in that the Israelites were commanded to keep it in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt ; because that deliverance out of Egypt is an evident, known, and allowed type of it. It was contrived and ordered of God, on purpose to represent it ; every thing about that deliverance was typical of this redemption, and much is made of it, principally for this reason, because it is so remarkable a type of Christ's redemption. And it was but a shadow, the work in itself was nothing in comparison with the work of redemption. What is a petty redemption of one nation from a temporal bondage, to the eternal salvation of the whole church of the elect, in all ages and nations, from eternal damnation, and the introduction of them, not into a temporal Canaan, but into heaven, into eternal glory and blessedness ? Was that shadow so much to be commemorated, as that a day once a week was to be kept on the account of it ; and shall not we much more commemorate that great and glorious work of which it was designed on purpose to be a shadow ?

Besides, the words in the fourth commandment, which speak of the deliverance out of Egypt, can be of no significance unto us, unless they are to be interpreted of the gospel redemption : But the words of the decalogue are spoken to all nations and ages. Therefore, as the words were spoken to the Jews, they referred to the type or shadow ; as they are spoken to us, they are to be interpreted of the antitype and substance. For the Egypt from which we under the gospel are redeemed, is the spiritual Egypt ; the house of bondage, from which we are redeemed, is a state of spiritual bondage.

Therefore the words, as spoken to us, are to be thus interpreted, Remember, thou wast a servant to sin and Satan, and the Lord thy God delivered thee from this bondage, with a mighty hand and out stretched arm ; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.

As the words in the preface to the ten commandments, about the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt, are interpreted in our catechism, and as they have respect to us, must be interpreted of our spiritual redemption, so, by an exact identity of reason, must these words in Deuteronomy, annexed to the fourth command, be interpreted of the same gospel redemption.

The Jewish Sabbath was kept on the day that the children of Israel came up out of the Red Sea. For we are told in Deut. v. 15. That this holy rest of the Sabbath was appointed in commemoration of their coming up out of Egypt. But the day of their going through the Red Sea was the day of their coming up out of Egypt ; for till then they were in the land of Egypt. The Red Sea was the boundary of the land of Egypt....The scripture itself tells us, that that day on which they sung the song of Moses, was the day of their coming up out of the land of Egypt. Hos. ii. 15. " And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt ;" referring plainly to that triumphant song which Moses and the children of Israel sang when they came up out of the Red Sea.

The scripture tells us, that God appointed the Jewish Sabbath in commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel from their task masters, the Egyptians, and of their rest from their hard bondage and slavery under them. Deut. v. 14, 15. " That thy man servant and thy maid servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by an out stretched arm : Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." But the day that the children of Israel were delivered from their task masters and had rest from



them, was the day when the children of Israel came up out of the Red Sea. They had no rest from them till then. For though they were before come forth on their journey to go out of the land of Egypt ; yet they were pursued by the Egyptians, and were exceedingly perplexed and distressed. But on the morning that they came up out of the Red Sea, they had complete and final deliverance ; then they had full rest from their task masters. Then God said to them, "The Egyptians which ye have seen this day, ye shall see no more for ever ;" *Exod. xiv. 13.* Then they enjoyed a joyful day of rest, a day of refreshment. Then they sang the song of Moses ; and on that day was their Sabbath of rest.

But this coming up of the children of Israel out of the Red Sea, was only a type of the resurrection of Christ. That people was the mystical body of Christ, and Moses was a great type of Christ himself ; and besides, on that day Christ went before the children of Israel in the pillar of cloud and of fire, as their Saviour and Redeemer. On that morning Christ, in this pillar of cloud and fire, rose out of the Red Sea, as out of great waters ; which was a type of Christ's rising from a state of death, and from that great humiliation which he suffered in death.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is in scripture represented by his coming up out of deep waters. So it is in Christ's resurrection, as represented by Jonah's coming out of the sea, *Matth. xii. 40.* It is also compared to a deliverance out of deep waters in *Psal. lxxix. 1, 2, 3,* and *ver. 14, 15.* These things are spoken of Christ, as is evident from this, that many things in this Psalm are in the New Testament expressly applied to Christ, as you may see by comparing *ver. 4,* with *John xv. 25,* and *ver. 9,* with *John ii. 17,* and *ver. 2,* with *Matth. xxvii. 34, 48,* and *Mark xv. 23,* and *John xix. 29,* and *ver. 22,* with *Rom. xi. 9, 10,* and *ver. 25,* with *Acts i. 20.*

Therefore it being so, that the Jewish Sabbath was appointed on the day on which the pillar of cloud and fire rose out of the Red Sea, and on which Moses and the church, the mystical body of Christ, came up out of the same sea, which

is a type of the resurrection of Christ ; it is a great confirmation that the Christian Sabbath should be kept on the day of the rising of the real body of Christ from the grave, which is the antitype. For surely the Scriptures have taught us, that the type should give way to the antitype, and that the shadow should give way to the substance.

8. I argue the same thing from Psalm cxviii. 22, 23, 24. There we are taught, that the day of Christ's resurrection is to be celebrated with holy joy by the church. "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." The stone spoken of is Christ ; he was refused and rejected by the builders, especially when he was put to death. That making of him the head of the corner spoken of, which is the Lord's doing, and so marvellous in our eyes, is Christ's exaltation, which began with his resurrection. While Christ lay in the grave, he lay as a stone cast away by the builders. But when God raised him from the dead, then he became the head of the corner. Thus it is evident the apostle interprets it, Acts iv. 10, 11. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead," &c....."This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

And the day on which this was done, we are here taught, that God hath made to be the day of the rejoicing of the church.

9. The abolition of the Jewish Sabbath seems to be intimated by this, that Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, lay buried on that day. Christ, the author of the world, was the author of that work of creation, of which the Jewish Sabbath was the memorial. It was he that worked six days and rested the seventh day from all his works, and was refreshed. Yet he was holden in the chains of death on that day.....God, who created the world, now in his second work of creation, did not follow his own example, if I may so speak ; he did not rest on the

same day, but remained imprisoned in the grave on that day, and took another day to rest in.

The Sabbath was a day of rejoicing ; for it was kept in commemoration of God's glorious and gracious works of creation, and the redemption out of Egypt. Therefore we are directed to call the Sabbath a delight. But it is not a proper day for the church, Christ's spouse, to rejoice, when Christ the bridegroom lies buried in the grave, as Christ says, Matth. ix. 15. " That the children of the bridechamber cannot mourn, while the bridegroom is with them. But the time will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them ; then shall they mourn," &c. While Christ was holden under the chains of death ; then the bridegroom was taken from them ; then it was a proper time for the spouse to mourn and not rejoice. But when Christ rose again, then it was a day of joy, because we are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

10. Christ hath evidently, on purpose and design, peculiarly honored the first day of the week, the day on which he rose from the dead, by taking this day of the week, from time to time, to appear to the apostles, and by taking this day to pour out the Holy Ghost on the apostles, which we read of in the second chapter of Acts : For this was on the first day of the week, being on Pentecost, which was on the first day of the week, as you may see by Levit. xxiii. 15, 16. And by pouring out his spirit on the Apostle John, and giving him his visions on this day ; Rev. i. 10. " I was in the spirit on the Lord's day," &c.

Now doubtless Christ had his meaning in thus distinguishingly honoring this day.

11. It is evident by the New Testament, that this was especially the day of the public worship of the primitive church, by the direction of the apostles. We are told that this was the day that they were wont to come together to break bread ; and this they evidently did with the approbation of the apostles, in as much as they preached to them on that day ; and therefore, doubtless, they assembled together by the direction

of the apostles. Acts xx. 7. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."....So the Holy Ghost was careful that the public contributions should be on this day, in all the churches, rather than on any other day, as appears by our text.

12. This first day of the week is, in the New Testament, called THE LORD'S DAY; see Rev. i. 10.....Some say, how do we know that that was the first day of the week? Every day is the Lord's day. But it is ridiculous so to talk: For the design of John is to tell us when he had those visions. And if by the Lord's day is meant any day, how doth that inform us when that event took place?

But what is meant by this expression we know, just in the same way as we know what is the meaning of any word in the original of the New Testament, or the meaning of any expression in an ancient language, viz. by what we find to be the universal signification of the expression in ancient times. This expression of THE LORD'S DAY is found, by the ancient use of the whole Christian church, by what appears in all the writings of ancient times, even from the apostles' days, to signify the first day of the week.

And the expression implies in it the holiness of the day. For doubtless the day is called the LORD'S DAY, as the sacred supper is called the LORD'S SUPPER, which is so called, because it is an holy supper, to be celebrated in remembrance of the Lord Christ, and of his redemption. So this is an holy day, to be kept in remembrance of the Lord Christ, and his redemption.

The first day of the week, being in Scripture called the Lord's day, sufficiently makes it out to be the day of the week that is to be kept holy unto God; for God hath been pleased to call it by his own name. When God puts his name upon any thing, or any thing is called by the name of God in Scripture, this denotes the business of that thing and the appropriation of it to God....Thus God put his name upon his people Israel of old; Numb. vi. 27. "And they shall put my name

upon the children of Israel.” They were called by the name of God, as it is said, 2 Chron. vii. 14. “If my people which are called by my name,” &c. i. e. They were called God’s people, or the Lord’s people. This denoted that they were an holy, peculiar people above all others. Deut. vii. 6. “Thou art an holy people unto the Lord ;” and so in verse 14, and many other places.

So the city Jerusalem was a city that was called by God’s name ; Jer. xxv. 29.....“Upon the city which is called by my name.” Daniel ix. 18, 19. “And the city which is called by thy name,” &c. This denoted that that was an holy city, a city chosen of God above all other cities for holy uses, as it is often called the HOLY CITY, as in Nehem. xi. 1. “To dwell in Jerusalem the holy city ;” and in many other places.

So the Temple is said to be an house called by God’s name ; 1. Kings viii. 43. “This house that is called by my name.” And often elsewhere. That is, it was called God’s house, or the Lord’s house. This denoted that it was called an holy place, an house devoted to holy uses, above all others.

So also we find that the first day of the week is called by God’s name, being called in Scripture God’s day, or the LORD’S day, which denotes that it is an holy day, a day appropriated to holy uses, above all others in the week.

13. The tradition of the church from age to age, though it be no rule, yet may be a great confirmation of the truth in such a case as this is. We find by all accounts, that it hath been the universal custom of the Christian church, in all ages, even from the age of the apostles, to keep the first day of the week. We read in the writings which remain of the first, second, and third centuries of the Christians’ keeping the Lord’s day ; and so in all succeeding ages ; and there are no accounts that contradict them. This day hath all along been kept by Christians, in all countries throughout the world, and by almost all that have borne the name of Christians, of all denominations, however different in their opinions as to other things.

Now, although this be not sufficient of itself, without a foundation in scripture ; yet it may be a confirmation of it, because there is really matter of conviction in it to our reason. Reason may greatly confirm truths revealed in the Scriptures. The universality of the custom throughout all Christian countries, in all ages, by what account we have of them, is a good argument, that the church had it from the apostles ; and it is difficult to conceive how all should come to agree to set up such a custom through the world, of different sects and opinions, and we have no account of any such thing.

14. It is no way weakening to these arguments, that there is nothing more plainly said about it in the New Testament, till John wrote his REVELATION, because there is a sufficient reason to be given for it. In all probability it was purposely avoided by the Holy Spirit, in the first settling of Christian churches in the world, both among the Heathen and among the Jews, but especially for the sake of the Jews, and out of tenderness to the Jewish Christians. For it is evident that Christ and the apostles declared one thing after another to them gradually as they could bear it.

The Jews had a regard for their Sabbath above almost any thing in the law of Moses ; and there was that in the Old Testament which tended to uphold them in the observance of this, much more strongly than any thing else that was Jewish. God had made so much of it, had so solemnly, frequently, and carefully commanded it, and had often so dreadfully punished the breach of it, that there was more color for their retaining this custom than almost any other.

Therefore Christ dealt very tenderly with them in this point. Other things of this nature we find very gradually revealed. Christ had many things to say, as we are informed, which yet he said not, because they could not as yet bear them, and gave this reason for it, that it was like putting new wine into old bottles. They were so contrary to their old customs, that Christ was gradual in revealing them. He gave here a little and there a little, as they could bear ; and it was a long time before he told them plainly the principal doctrines of the

kingdom of heaven. He took the most favorable opportunities to tell them of his sufferings and death, especially when they were full of admiration at some signal miracle, and were confirmed in it, that he was the Messiah.

He told them many things much more plainly after his resurrection than before. But even then, he did not tell them all, but left more to be revealed by the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. They therefore were much more enlightened after that than before. However, as yet he did not reveal all. The abolition of the ceremonial law about meats and drinks was not fully known till after this.

The apostles were in the same manner careful and tender of those to whom they preached and wrote. It was very gradually that they ventured to teach them the cessation of the ceremonial laws of circumcision and abstinence from unclean meats. How tender is the Apostle Paul with such a scruple, in the fourteenth chapter of Romans? He directs those who had knowledge to keep it to themselves, for the sake of their weak brethren. Rom. xiv. 22. But I need say no more to evince this.

However, I will say this, that it is very possible that the apostles themselves at first might not have this change of the day of the Sabbath fully revealed to them. The Holy Ghost, at his descent, revealed much to them, yet after that, they were ignorant of much of gospel doctrine; yea, they were so a great while after they acted the part of apostles, in preaching, baptizing and governing the church. Peter was surprised when he was commanded to eat meats legally unclean; so were the apostles in general, when Peter was commanded to go to the Gentiles, to preach to them.

Thus tender was Christ of the church while an infant. He did not feed them with strong meat, but was careful to bring in the observation of the Lord's day by degrees, and therefore took all occasions to honor it, by appearing from time to time of choice on that day, by sending down his Spirit on that day in that remarkable manner at Pentecost; by ordering Christians to meet in order to break bread on that day, and by order-

ing their contributions and other duties of worship to be hold-  
 en on it ; thus introducing the observation of it by degrees.  
 And though as yet the Holy Ghost did not speak very plainly  
 about it, yet God took special care that there should be suffi-  
 cient evidences of his will, to be found out by the Christian  
 church, when it should be more established and settled, and  
 should have come to the strength of a man.

Thus I leave it with every one to judge, whether there be  
 not sufficient evidence, that it is the mind and will of God, that  
 the first day of the week should be kept by the Christian  
 church as a Sabbath ?

### APPLICATION.

This shall be in an use of EXHORTATION.

1. Let us be thankful for the institution of the Christian  
 Sabbath. It is a thing wherein God hath shown his mercy to  
 us, and his care for our souls. He shows, that he, by his infi-  
 nite wisdom, is contriving for our good, as Christ teaches us,  
 that the Sabbath was made for man ; Mark ii. 27. " The  
 Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." It  
 was made for the profit and for the comfort of our souls.

The Sabbath is a day of rest : God hath appointed that we  
 should, every seventh day, rest from all our worldly labors.  
 Instead of that, he might have appointed the hardest labors  
 for us to go through, some severe hardships for us to endure.  
 It is a day of outward, but especially of Spiritual rest. It is a  
 day appointed of God, that his people thereon may find rest  
 unto their souls ; that the souls of believers may rest and be  
 refreshed in their Saviour. It is a day of rejoicing ; God  
 made it to be a joyful day to the church ; Psalm cxviii. 24.  
 " This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice  
 and be glad in it." They that aright receive and improve the  
 Sabbath, call it a DELIGHT and HONORABLE ; it is a pleasant  
 and a joyful day to them ; it is an image of the future heaven.



ly rest of the church. Heb. iv. 9, 10, 11. "There remaineth therefore a rest (or sabbatism, as it is in the original) to the people of God. For he that hath entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest."

The Christian Sabbath is one of the most precious enjoyments of the visible church. Christ showed his love to his church in instituting it ; and it becomes the Christian church to be thankful to her Lord for it. The very name of this day, **THE LORD'S DAY**, or **JESUS' DAY**, should endear it to Christians, as it intimates the special relation it has to Christ, and also the design of it, which is the commemoration of our dear Saviour, and his love to his church in redeeming it.

2. Be exhorted to keep this day holy. God hath given such evidences that this is his mind, that he will surely require it of you, if you do not strictly and conscientiously observe it. And if you do thus observe it, you may have this comfort in the reflection upon your conduct, that you have not been superstitious in it, but have done as God hath revealed it to be his mind and will in his word, that you should do ; and that in so doing you are in the way of God's acceptance and reward.

Here let me lay before you the following **MOTIVES** to excite you to this duty.

(1.) By a strict observation of the Sabbath, the name of God is honored, and that in such a way as is very acceptable to him. Isa. lviii. 13. "If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and **SHALT HONOR HIM.**" God is honored by it, as it is a visible manifestation of respect to God's holy law, and a reverencing of that which has a peculiar relation to God himself, and that more in some respects than the observation of many other commands. A man may be just, and may be generous, and yet not so plainly show respect to the revealed mind and will of God, as many of the Heathen have been so. But if a person, with evident strictness and care, observe the Sabbath, it is a visible manifestation of a

conscientious regard to God's declaration of his mind, and so is a visible honor done to his authority.

By a strict observation of the Sabbath, the face of religion is kept up in the world. If it were not for the Sabbath, there would be but little public and visible appearance of serving, worshipping, and reverencing the supreme and invisible Being. The Sabbath seems to have been appointed very much for this end, viz. to uphold the visibility of religion in public, or among professing societies of men; and by how much greater the strictness is with which the Sabbath is observed, and with how much more solemnity the duties of it are observed among a people; by so much the greater is the manifestation among them of respect to the divine Being.

This should be a powerful motive with us to the observation of the Sabbath. It should be our study above all things to honor and glorify God. It should be the great thing with all that bear the name of Christians, to honor their great God and King, and I hope is a great thing with many that hear me at this time. If this be your inquiry, if this be your desire, to honor God; by this subject you are directed to one way whereby you may do much in that way, viz. by honoring the Sabbath, and by showing a careful and strict observance of it.

(2.) That which is the business of the Sabbath is the greatest business of our lives, viz. the business of religion. To serve and worship God is that for which we were made, and for which we had our being given us. Other business, which is of a secular nature, and on which we are wont to attend on week days, is but subordinate, and ought to be subservient to the higher purposes and ends of religion. Therefore surely we should not think much of devoting one seventh part of our time, to be wholly spent in this business, and to be set apart to exercise ourselves in the immediate duties of religion.

(3.) Let it be considered that all our time is God's, and therefore when he challenges of us one day in seven, he challenges his own; he doth not exceed his right; he would not have exceeded it, if he had challenged a far greater propor-

tion of our time to be spent in his immediate service. But he hath mercifully considered our state, and our necessities here ; and, as he hath consulted the good of our souls in appointing a seventh day for the immediate duties of religion, so he hath considered our outward necessities, and hath allowed us six days for attendance on our outward affairs. What unworthy treatment, therefore, will it be of God, if we refuse to allow him even the seventh day !

(4.) As the Sabbath is a day which is especially set apart for religious exercises, so it is a day wherein God especially confers his grace and blessing. As God hath commanded us to set it apart to have converse with God, so God hath set it apart for himself to have converse with us. As God hath commanded us to observe the Sabbath, so God observes the Sabbath too. It is with respect to the Sabbath, as Solomon prayed that it might be with respect to the temple, 2 Chron. vi. 20. His eyes are open upon it : He stands ready then especially to hear prayers, to accept of religious services, to meet his people, to manifest himself to them on this day, to give his Holy Spirit and blessing to those who diligently and conscientiously sanctify it.

That we should sanctify the Sabbath, as we have observed, is according to God's institution. God in a sense observes his own institutions ; i. e. is wont to cause them to be attended with a blessing. The institutions of God are his appointed means of grace, and with his institutions he hath promised his blessing. Exod. xx. 24. "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." For the same reason may we conclude, that God will meet his people and bless them, waiting upon him not only in appointed places, but at appointed times, and in all appointed ways. Christ hath promised, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them, Matth. xviii. 20. One thing included in the expression, *in his name*, is, that it is by his appointment, and according to his institution.

God hath made it our duty, by his institution, to set apart this day for a special seeking of his grace and blessing. From which we may argue, that he will be especially ready to confer his grace on those who thus seek it. If it be the day on which God requires us especially to seek him, we may argue, that it is a day on which especially he will be found. That God is ready on this day especially to bestow his blessing on them that keep it aright, is implied in that expression of *God's blessing the Sabbath day*. God hath not only hallowed the Sabbath day, but blessed it ; he hath given his blessing to it, and will confer his blessing upon all the due observers of it. He hath hallowed it, or appointed that it be kept holy by us, and hath blessed it ; he hath determined to give his blessing upon it.

So that here is great encouragement for us to keep holy the Sabbath, as we would seek God's grace and our own spiritual good. The Sabbath day is an accepted time, a day of salvation, a time wherein God especially loves to be sought, and loves to be found. The Lord Jesus Christ takes delight in his own day ; he delights to honor it ; he delights to meet with and manifest himself to his disciples on it, as he showed before his ascension, by appearing to them from time to time on this day. On this day he delights to give his Holy Spirit, as he intimated, by choosing it as the day on which to pour out the Spirit in so remarkable a manner on the primitive church, and on which to give his Spirit to the Apostle John.

Of old God blessed the seventh day, or appointed it to be a day whereon especially he would bestow blessings on his people, as an expression of his own joyful remembrance of that day, and of the rest and refreshment which he had on it. *Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.* "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath....For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." As princes give gifts on their birth days, on their marriage days, and the like ; so God was wont to dispense spiritual gifts on the seventh day.

But how much more reason has Christ to bless the day of his resurrection, and to delight to honor it, and to confer his grace and blessed gifts on his people on this day. It was a day whereon Christ rested and was refreshed in a literal sense. It was a day of great refreshment and joy to Christ, being the day of his deliverance from the chains of death, the day of his finishing that great and difficult work of redemption, which had been upon his heart from all eternity ; the day of his justification by the Father ; the day of the beginning of his exaltation, and of the fulfilment of the promises of the Father ; the day when he had eternal life, which he had purchased, put into his hands....On this day Christ doth indeed delight to distribute gifts, and blessings, and joy, and happiness, and will delight to do the same to the end of the world.

O therefore, how well is it worth our while to improve this day, to call upon God and seek Jesus Christ on it ! Let awakened sinners be stirred up by these things, to improve the Sabbath day, as they would lay themselves most in the way of the Spirit of God. Improve the Sabbath day to call upon God ; for then he is near. Improve the Sabbath day for reading the holy scriptures, and diligently attending his word preached ; for then is the likeliest time to have the Spirit accompanying it. Let the saints who are desirous of growing in grace, and enjoying communion with Christ, improve the Sabbath in order to it.

(5.) The last motive which I shall mention, is the experience of the influence which a strict observation of the Sabbath has upon the whole of religion. It may be observed, that in those places where the Sabbath is well kept, religion in general will be most flourishing ; and that in those places where the Sabbath is not much taken notice of, and much is not made of it, there is no great matter of religion any way.

Here I would give several directions in answer to this.

**INQUIRY.** How ought we to keep the Sabbath ?

ANSWER 1. We ought to be exceedingly careful on this day to abstain from sin. Indeed, all breaches of the Sabbath are sinful ; but we speak now of those things which are in themselves sinful, or sinful upon other accounts, besides that they are done upon the Sabbath. The Sabbath being holy time, it is especially defiled by the commission of sin. Sin by being committed on this day becomes the more exceeding sinful. We are required to abstain from sin at all times, but especially on holy time. The commission of immoralities on the Sabbath is the worst way of profaning it, that which most provokes God, and brings most guilt upon the souls of men.

How provoking must it be to God, when men do those things on that day which God has sanctified, and set apart to be spent in the immediate exercises of religion, which are not fit to be done on common days, which are impure and wicked whenever they are done !

Therefore, if any persons be guilty of any such wickedness as intemperance, or any unclean actions, they do in a very horrid manner profane the Sabbath. Or if they be guilty of wickedness in speech, of talking profanely, or in an unclean and lascivious manner, or of talking against their neighbors, they do in a dreadful manner profane the Sabbath. Yet very commonly those who are used to such things on week days, have not a conscience to restrain them on the Sabbath. It is well if those that live in the indulgence of the lust of uncleanness on week days be not some way or other unclean on the Sabbath. They will be indulging the same lusts then ; they will be indulging the same impure flames in their imaginations at least : And it is well if they keep clear while in the house of God, and while they pretend to be worshipping God. The unclean young man gives this account of himself, Prov. v. 14. " I was almost in an evil in the midst of the congregation and the assembly." So those who are addicted to an impure way of talking in the week time, have nothing to keep them from the same upon the Sabbath, when they

meet together. But dreadfully is God provoked by such things.

We ought carefully to watch over our own hearts, and to avoid all sinful thoughts on the Sabbath. We ought to maintain such a reverence for the Sabbath, as to have a peculiar dread of sin, such as shall awe us to a very careful watch over ourselves.

2. We ought to be careful to abstain from all worldly concerns. The reason as we have showed, why it is needful and proper, that certain stated parts of time should be set apart to be devoted to religious exercises, is because the state of mankind is such in this world, that they are necessitated to exercise their minds, and employ their thoughts about secular matters. It is therefore convenient that there should be stated times, wherein all should be obliged to throw by all other concerns, that their minds may the more freely and with less entanglement, be engaged in religious and spiritual exercises.

We are therefore to do thus, or else we frustrate the very design of the institution of a Sabbath. We are strictly to abstain from being outwardly engaged in any worldly thing, either worldly business or recreations. We are to rest in remembrance of God's rest from the work of creation, and of Christ's rest from the work of redemption. We should be careful that we do not encroach upon the Sabbath at its beginning, by busying ourselves about the world after the Sabbath is begun. We should avoid talking about worldly matters, and even thinking about them ; for whether we outwardly concern ourselves with the world or not, yet if our minds be upon it, we frustrate the end of the Sabbath. The end of its separation from other days is, that our minds may be disengaged from worldly things ; and we are to avoid being outwardly concerned with the world, only for this reason, that that cannot be without taking up our minds. We ought therefore to give the world no place in our thoughts on the Sabbath, but to abstract ourselves from all worldly concern-

ment, and maintain a watch over ourselves, that the world do not encroach, as it is very apt to do, Isai. lviii. 13, 14.

3. We ought to spend the time in religious exercises. This is the more ultimate end of the Sabbath : We are to keep our minds separate from the world, principally for this end, that we may be the more free for religious exercises. Though it be a day of rest, yet it was not designed to be a day of idleness : To rest from worldly employments, without employing ourselves about any thing, is but to lay ourselves so much more in the devil's way. The mind will be employed some way or other ; and therefore doubtless the end for which we are to call off our minds from worldly things on the Sabbath is, that we may employ them about things that are better.

We are to attend on spiritual exercises with the greatest diligence. That it is a day of rest, doth not hinder us in so doing ; for we are to look on spiritual exercises but as the rest and refreshment of the soul. In heaven, where the people of God have the most perfect rest, they are not idle, but are employed in spiritual and heavenly exercises. We should take care therefore to employ our minds on a Sabbath day on spiritual objects by holy meditation ; improving for our help therein the holy scriptures, and other books that are according to the word of God. We should also employ ourselves outwardly on this day in the duties of divine worship, in public and private. It is proper to be more frequent and abundant in secret duties on this day, than on other days, as we have time and opportunity, as well as to attend on public ordinances.

It is proper on this day, not only especially to promote the exercise of religion in ourselves, but also in others ; to be assisting them, and endeavoring to promote their spiritual good, by religious conversation and conference. Especially those who have the care of others ought, on this day, to endeavor to promote their spiritual good : Heads of families should be instructing and counselling their children, and quickening them in the ways of religion, and should see to it



that the Sabbath be strictly kept in their houses. A peculiar blessing may be expected upon those families where there is due care taken that the Sabbath be strictly and devoutly observed.

4. We are on this day especially to meditate upon and celebrate the work of redemption. We are with special joy to remember the resurrection of Christ ; because that was the finishing of the work of redemption : And this is the day whereon Christ rested and was refreshed, after he had endured those extreme labors which he had endured for our perishing souls. This was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart ; it was the day of his deliverance from the chains of death, and also of our deliverance : For we are delivered in him who is our head. He, as it were, rose with his elect. He is the first fruits ; those that are Christ's will follow.... Christ, when he rose, was justified as a public person, and we are justified in him. This is the day of our deliverance out of Egypt.

We should therefore meditate on this with joy ; we should have a sympathy with Christ in his joy. He was refreshed on this day, we should be refreshed as those whose hearts are united with his. When Christ rejoices, it becomes all his church every where to rejoice. We are to say of this day, " This is the day that the Lord hath made ; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

But we are not only to commemorate the resurrection of Christ, but the whole work of redemption, of which this was the finishing. We keep the day on which the work was finished, because it is in remembrance of the whole work. We should on this day contemplate the wonderful love of God and of Christ, as expressed in the work of redemption ; and our remembrance of these things should be accompanied with suitable exercises of soul with respect to them. When we call to mind the love of Christ, it should be with a return of love on our part. When we commemorate this work, it should be with faith in the Saviour. And we should praise God and the Lamb for this work, for the divine glory and love

manifested it, in our private and public prayers, in talking of the wonderful works of God, and in singing divine songs.

Hence it is proper that Christ's disciples should choose this day to come together to break bread, or to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, Acts xx. 7, because it is an ordinance instituted in remembrance of the work of redemption.

5. Works of mercy and charity are very proper and acceptable to Christ on this day. They were proper on the ancient Sabbath. Christ was wont to do such works on the Sabbath day. But they especially become the Christian Sabbath, because it is a day kept in commemoration of the greatest work of mercy and love towards us that ever was wrought. What can be more proper than that on such a day we should be expressing our love and mercy towards our fellow creatures, and especially our fellow Christians. Christ loves to see us show our thankfulness to him in such ways as these. Therefore we find that the Holy Ghost was especially careful, that such works should be performed on the first day of the week in the primitive church, as we learn by our text.