

## SERMON VII.

## Of the Solemn CONSECRATION of the MEDIATOR.

JOHN xvii. 19.

*And for their sakes I sanctify myself.*

**J**ESUS Christ being fitted with a body, and authorized by a commission, now actually devotes, and sets himself apart to his work. In the former sermon you heard what the Father did; in this you shall hear what the Son hath done towards the farther advancement of that glorious design of our salvation: *He sanctified himself for our sakes.* Wherein observe, (1.) Christ's sanctifying of himself. (2.) The end or design of his so doing.

1. You have Christ's sanctifying of himself. The word *αγιαζω* is not here to be understood for the cleansing, purifying, or making holy that which was before unclean and unholy, either in a moral sense, as we are cleansed from sin by sanctification; or in a ceremonial sense, as persons and things were sanctified under the law; though here is a plain allusion to those legal rites; But Christ's sanctifying himself, imports, (1.) His *separation, or setting apart to be an oblation or sacrifice.* So Beza, *nempe ut sacerdos et victima*, as the priest and sacrifice. I sanctify myself, imports, (2.) His *consecration, or dedication of himself to this holy use and service.\** So the Dutch Annotations, I sanctify myself, (i. e.) *I give up myself for a holy sacrifice.* And so our English Annotations, *I sanctify*, (i. e.) I consecrate and voluntarily offer myself a holy and unblemished sacrifice to thee for their redemption. And thus under the Law, when any day, person, or vessel, was consecrated and dedicated to the Lord, it was so entirely for his use and service, that to use it afterward in any common service, was to profane and pollute it, as you see Dan. v. 3.

2. The end of his so sanctifying himself [*for their sakes, and that they might be sanctified*†] where you have the *Finis cuius*, the end for whom, for their (i. e.) for the elect's sake, for them whom thou gavest me; and the *Finis cui*, the end for which, that they might be sanctified. Where you also see that the death of Christ wholly respects us; he offered not for himself as other priests did, but for us, that we may be sanctified. Christ is so in

\* To sanctify, is to separate or set apart for divine uses. *Brentius* on this place.

† The meaning then is this, I sanctify myself, i. e. for their sakes I die, that they by my death may be filled with the Spirit of holiness, and may become holy vessels of God, by the Spirit of God revealed. *Martorat*, on this place.

love with holiness, that at the price of his blood he will buy it for us. Hence the observation is;

• Doct. *That Jesus Christ did dedicate, and wholly set himself apart to the work of a Mediator, for the elect's sake.*

This point is a glass, wherein the eye of your faith may see Jesus Christ preparing himself to be offered up to God for us, fitting himself to die. And to keep a clear method, I shall open these two things, in the doctrinal part; *First*, what his sanctifying himself implies: *Secondly*, How it respects us.

*First*, What is implied in this phrase, “I sanctify myself,” And there are seven things carried in it.

1. This phrase [“I sanctify myself”] implies the *personal union of the two natures in Christ*; for what is that which he here calls *himself*; but the same that was consecrated to be a sacrifice, even his human nature? This was the sacrifice. And this also was himself: So the apostle speaks, Heb. ix. 14. “He through the “eternal Spirit, offered up himself to God, without spot.” So that our nature, by that assumption, is become himself. Greater honour cannot be done it, or greater ground of comfort proposed to us. But having spoken of that union in the former sermon, shall remit the reader thither.

2. This sanctifying, or consecrating himself to be a sacrifice for us, implies, *the greatness and dreadfulness of that breach which sin made betwixt God and us*. You see no less a sacrifice than Christ himself must be sanctified to make atonement. Judge of the greatness of the wound by the breadth of the plaister. “Sacrifice “and offering, and burnt-offering for sin, thou wouldest not; but “a body hast thou prepared me,” Heb. x. 5. All our repentance, could we shed as many tears for sin, as there have fallen drops of rain since the creation, could not have been our atonement: “But God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.” And had he not sanctified Christ to this end, he would have sanctified himself upon us, in judgment and fury for ever.

3. This his sanctifying himself, implies *his free and voluntary undertaking of the work*. It is not, *I am sanctified*, as if he had been merely passive in it, as the lambs that typed him out were, when pluckt from the fold; but it is an active verb he useth here, \* *I sanctify myself*; he would have none think that he died out of a necessity of compulsion, but out of choice: therefore he is said to “offer up himself to God, Heb. x. 14. And John ix. 18.

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\* Ἐγὼ αγιαζῶ ἑμαυτὸν.

“ I lay down my life of myself; no man taketh it from me.” And although it is often said *his Father sent him, and gave him*; yet his heart was as much set on that work, as if there had been nothing but glory, ease, and comfort in it; he was under no constraint, but that of his own love. Therefore, as when the scripture would set forth the willingness of the Father to this work, it saith, *God sent his Son, and God gave his Son*: so when it would set forth Christ’s willingness to it, it saith, *he offered up himself, gave himself*, and, here in the text, *sanctified himself*. The sacrifice that struggled, and came not without force to the altar, was reckoned ominous and unlucky by the Heathen: our Sacrifice dedicated himself; he died out of choice, and was a free-will offering.

4. His sanctifying himself implies *his pure and perfect holiness; that he had no spot or blemish in him*. Those beasts that prefigured him, were to be without blemish, and none else were consecrated to that service. So, and more than so, it behoved Christ to be, Heb. vii. 26. “ Such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners:” And what it became him to be, he was. Therefore in allusion to the lambs offered under the law, the apostle calls him *a Lamb without blemish, or spot*, 1 Pet. i. 19. Every other man hath a double spot on him, the heart-spot, and the life-spot; the spot of original, and the spots of actual sins. But Christ was without either, he had not the spot of original sin, for he was not by man; he came in a peculiar way into the world, and so escaped that: nor yet of actual sins; for, as his nature, so his life was spotless and pure, Isa. liii. 9. “ He did no iniquity.” And though tempted to sin externally, yet he was never defiled in heart or practice; he came as near as he could for our sakes, yet still without sin, Heb. iv. 15. If he sanctifies himself for a sacrifice, he must be as the law required, pure and spotless.

5. His sanctifying himself for our sakes, speaks *the strength of his love, and largeness of his heart to poor sinners, thus to set himself wholly and entirely apart for us*: so that what he did and suffered, must all of it have a respect and relation to us. He did not (when consecrated for us) live a moment, do an act, or speak a word, but it had some tendency to promote the great design of our salvation. He was only and wholly, and always doing your work, when consecrated for your sakes. His incarnation respects you; Isa. ix. 6. “ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.” And he would never have been the son of man, but to make you the sons and daughters of God. God would not have come down in the likeness of sinful flesh, in the habit of a man, but to raise up sinful man unto the likeness of God. All the miracles he wrought

were for you, to confirm your faith. When he raised up Lazarus, John xi. 42. "Because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they might believe that thou hadst sent me." While he lived on earth, he lived as one wholly set apart for us: and when he died, he died for us, Gal. iii. 13. "he was made a curse for us." When he hanged on that cursed tree, he hanged there in our room, and did but fill our place. When he was buried, he was buried for us: for the end of it was, to perfume our graves, against we come to lie down in them. And when he rose again, it was, as the apostle saith, "for our justification," Rom. iv. 25. When he ascended into glory, he protested it was about our business, that he went to *prepare places for us*: and if it had not been so, he would have told us, John xiv. 2. And now he is there, it is for us that he there lives; for he "ever lives to make intercession for us," Heb. vii. 25. And when he shall return again to judge the world, he will come for us too. "He comes (whenever it be) to be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10. He comes to gather his saints home to himself, that where he is, there they all may be in soul and body with him for ever. Thus you see how, as his consecration for us doth speak him set apart for our use; so he did wholly bestow himself, time, life, death, and all upon us; living and dying for no other end, but to accomplish this great work of salvation for us.

6. His sanctifying himself for us plainly speaks the *vicegerency of his death, that it was in our room or stead*. When the priest consecrated the sacrifice, it was set apart for the people. So it is said of the scape-goat; "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness," Levit. xvi. 21. Thus Isa. liii. 6, 7. He stood in our room, to bear our burden. And as Aaron laid the iniquities of the people upon the goat, so were ours laid on Christ; it was said to him in that day, On thee be their pride, their unbelief, their hardness of heart, their vain thoughts, their earthly-mindedness, &c. Thou art consecrated for them, to be the sacrifice in their room. His death was in our stead, as well as for our good. And so much his sanctifying himself [for us] imports.

7. His sanctifying himself, imports *the extraordinariness of his person: for it speaks him to be both Priest, Sacrifice, and Altar, all in one: a thing unheard of in the world before*. So that this name might well be called *Wonderful*. *I sanctify myself*: I sanctify, according to both natures; myself, *i. e.* my human nature, which was

the sacrifice upon the altar of my divine nature; for it is the altar that sanctifies the gift. As the three offices never met in one person before, so these three things never met in one priest before. The priests indeed consecrated the bodies of beasts for sacrifices, but never offered up their own souls and bodies as a whole burnt-offering, as Christ did. And thus you have the import of this phrase, *I sanctify myself for their sakes.*

*Secondly*, I shall shew you briefly the habitude and respect that all this hath to us; for unto us the scriptures every where refer it. So in 1 Cor. v. 7. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." Eph. v. 2. "He loved the church, and gave himself for it." See Tit. ii. 14. This will be made out, by a threefold consideration of Christ's death. And,

1. Let it be considered, that *he was not offered up to God for his own sins*; for he was most holy. Isa. liii. 9. No iniquity was found in him. Indeed, the priests under the law offered for themselves, as well as the people; but Christ did not so, Heb. vii. 27. "He needed not daily, as those High-priests, to offer up sacrifice, "first for his own sins, and then for the people's." And indeed had he been a sinner, what value or efficacy could have been in his sacrifice? He could not have been the sacrifice, but would have needed one. Now, if Christ were most holy, and yet put to death, and cruel sufferings, either his death or sufferings must be an act of injustice and cruelty, or it must respect others, whose persons and cause he sustained in that suffering capacity. He could never have suffered or died by the Father's hand, had he not been a sinner by imputation. And in that respect, as Luther speaks, he was the greatest of sinners; or, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, *all our sins were made to meet upon him*; not that he was intrinsically, but was made so, *so*, by imputation, as is clear from 2 Cor. v. 21. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin." So that hence it is evident, that Christ's death, or sacrifice, is wholly a respective or relative thing.

2. It is not to be forgotten here, that the scriptures frequently call the death of Christ *a price*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. and *a ransom*, Mat. xx. 28. or counterprice\*. To whom then doth it relate, but to them that were, and are in bondage and captivity? If it was to redeem any, it must be captives: but Christ himself was never in captivity; he was always in his Father's bosom, as you have heard; but we were in cruel bondage and thralldom, under the tyranny of sin and Satan: and it is we only that have the benefit of this ransom.

3. Either the death of Christ must relate to believers, or else he

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\* Δυστρον, ἀντιδύτρον, i. e. *pretium, pretium ex adverso respondens.*

must die in vain. As for the angels, those that stood in their integrity needed no sacrifice, and those that fell, are totally excluded from any benefit by it: he is not a Mediator for them. And among men that have need of it, unbelievers have no share in it, they reject it; such have no part in it. If then he neither died for himself, as I proved before, nor for angels, nor unbelievers; either his blood must be shed with respect to believers, or, which is most absurd, and never to be imagined, shed as water upon the ground, and totally cast away; so that you see by all this, it was for our sakes, as the text speaks, that he sanctified himself. And now we may say, Lord, the *condemnation* was thine, that the *justification* might be mine; the *agony* thine, that the *victory* might be mine; the *pain* was thine, and the *ease* mine; the *stripes* thine, and the *healing balm* issuing from them mine; the *vinegar* and *gall* were thine, that the *honey* and *sweet* might be mine; the *curse* was thine, that the *blessing* might be mine; the *crown of thorns* was thine, that the *crown of glory* might be mine; the *death* was thine, the *life* purchased by it mine; thou paidst the *price* that I might enjoy the *inheritance*.

We come next to the inferences of truth deducible from this point, which follow.

*Inference 1.* If Jesus Christ did wholly set himself apart for believers, *how reasonable is it that believers should consecrate and set themselves apart wholly for Christ?* Is he all for us, and shall we be nothing for him? What he was, he was for you? Whatever he did, was done for you; and all that he suffered, was suffered for you. O then, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, present your bodies," *i. e.* your whole selves, (for so body is there\* synecdochically put to signify the whole person) I say, present "your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service," Rom. xii. 1. As your good was Christ's end, so let his glory be your end. Let Christ be the "end of your conversation," Heb. xiii. 7. As Christ could say, "To me to live is you; so do you say, 'For us to live is Christ,'" Phil. i. 21. O that all who profess faith in Christ, could subscribe cordially to that profession, Rom. xiv. 8. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; but whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die to the Lord; so then whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." This is to be a Christian indeed. What is a Christian, but an holy dedicated thing to the Lord? And what greater evidence can there be,

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\* *Synedoché Hebraica, pro vos-met ipsos totos; i. e. your whole persons. Sic Patrus in loc.*

that Christ set himself apart for you, than your setting yourselves apart for him?

This is the marriage covenant, Hos. iii. 3. "Thou shalt be for me, and not for another; so will I be for thee." Ah, what a life is the life of a Christian; Christ all for you, and you all for him. Blessed exchange! Soul, (saith Christ) all I have is thine, Lord, (saith the soul) and all I have is thine. Soul, (saith Christ) my person is wonderful, but what I am, I am for thee: my life was spent in labour and travail, but lived for thee. And Lord, (saith the believer), my person is vile, and not worth thy accepting; but such as it is, it is thine; my soul, with all and every faculty; my body, and every member of it, my gifts, time, and all my talents are thine.

And see that as Christ bequeathed and made over himself to you, so ye, in like manner, bestow and make over yourselves to him. He lived not, neither died (as you hear) for himself, but you. O that you, in like manner, would down with self, and exalt Christ in the room of it. 'Wo, wo is me, (saith one) that the holy profession of Christ is made a shewy garment by many to bring home a vain fame; and Christ is made to serve men's ends. This is to stop an oven with a king's robes. Except men martyr and slay the body of sin, in sanctified self-denial, they shall never be Christ's martyrs and faithful witnesses. O if I could be master of that house-idol, myself, mine own, mine own wit, will, credit, and ease, how blessed were I! O but we have need to be redeemed from ourselves, rather than from the devil and the world. Learn to put out yourselves, and to put in Christ for yourselves. I should make a sweet bargain, and give old for new, if I could shuffle out self, and substitute Christ my Lord in place of myself; to say, not I, but Christ; not my will, but Christ's; not my ease, not my lusts, not my credit, but Christ, Christ.—O wretched idol, *myself*, when shall I see thee wholly decourted, and Christ wholly put in thy room? O if Christ had the full place and room of myself, that all my aims, purposes, thoughts and desires would coast and land upon Christ, and not upon myself.'

He set himself apart for you believers, and no others; no, not for angels, but for you: Will ye also set yourselves apart peculiarly for Christ? be his, and no others? Let not Christ and the world share and divide your hearts in two halves betwixt them; let not the world step in and say, half mine. You will never do Christ right, nor answer this grace, till you can say, as it is, Psal. lxxiii. 25. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and on earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee." None but Christ, none but Christ, is a proper motto for a Christian.

He left the highest and best enjoyments, even those in his Father's bosom, to set himself apart for death and suffering for you: Are you ready to leave the bosom of the best and sweetest enjoyments, you have in this world, to serve him? If you stand not habitually ready to leave father, mother, wife, children, lands, yea, and life too, to serve him, you are not worthy of him, Matt. x. 37.

He was so wholly given up to your service, that he refused not the worst and hardest part of it, even bleeding, groaning, dying-work; his love to you sweetened all this to him; Can you say so too; do you "account the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, as Moses did?" Heb. xi. 26.

He had so entirely devoted himself to your work, that he could not be at rest till it was finished: he was so intent upon it, that he "forgot to eat bread," John iv. 31, 32. So it should be with you; his service should be meat and drink to you. To conclude:

He was so wholly given up to your work and service, that he would not suffer himself to be in the least diverted, or taken off from it: and if Peter himself counsel him to favour himself, he shall hear, "Get thee behind me, Satan." O happy were it if our hearts were but so engaged for Christ! In Galen's time it was proverbial, when they would express the impossibility of a thing, *You may as soon take off a Christian from Christ.* Thus you see what use you should make of Christ's sanctifying himself for you.

*Inf. 2.* If Christ hath sanctified or consecrated himself for us; learn hence, *what a horrid evil it is, to use Christ or his blood, as a common and unsanctified thing.* Yet so some do, as the apostle speaks, Heb. x. 29. The apostate is said to tread upon the Son of God, as if he were no better than the dirt under his feet, and to count his blood an unholy (or common) thing. But wo to them that do so, they shall be counted worthy of something worse than dying without mercy, as the apostle there speaks.

And as this is the sin of the apostate, so it is also the sin of all those that without faith approach, and so profane the table of the Lord, unbelievingly and unworthily handling those awful things. Such "eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the "Lord's body," 1 Cor. xi. 29. Whereas the body of Christ was a thing of the deepest sanctification that ever God created; sanctified (as the text tells us) to a far more excellent and glorious purpose than ever any creature in heaven or earth was sanctified. It was therefore the great sin of those Corinthians, not to discern it, and not to behave themselves towards it, when they saw and handled the signs of it, as became so holy a thing.

And as it was their great sin, so God declared his just indignation against it, in those sore strokes inflicted for it. As they dis-



cerned not the Lord's body, so neither did the Lord discern their bodies from others in the judgments that were inflicted. And, as one well observes, God drew the model and platform of their punishment, from the structure and proportion of their sin. And truly, if the moral and spiritual seeds and originals of many of our outward afflictions and sicknesses were but duly sifted out, possibly we might find a great part of them in the bowels of this sin.

The just and righteous God will build up the breaches we make upon the honour of his Son, with the ruins of that beauty, strength and honour which he hath given our bodies. O then, when you draw nigh to God in that ordinance, take heed to sanctify his name, by a spiritual discerning of this most holy, and most deeply sanctified body of the Lord; sanctified beyond all creatures, angels or men, not only in respect of the Spirit which filled him, without measure with inherent holiness, but also in respect of its dedication to such a service as this, it being set apart by him to such holy, solemn ends and uses, as you have heard.

And let it, for ever, be a warning to such as have lifted up their hands to Christ in a holy profession, that they never lift up their heel against him afterwards by apostasy. The apostate treads on God's dear Son, and God will tread upon him for it. "Thou hast trodden down all that err from thy statutes," Psal. cxix. 118.

*Inf. 3. What a choice pattern of love to saints have we here before us!* Calling all that are in Christ to an imitation of him, even to give up ourselves to their service, as Christ did; not in the same kind, so none can give himself for them, but as we are capable. You see here how his heart was affected to them, that he would sanctify himself as a sacrifice for them. See to what a height of duty the apostle improves this example of Christ, 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." Some Christians came up fairly to this pattern in primitive times; Priscilla and Aquila laid down their necks for Paul, Rom. xvi. 4. i. e. eminently hazarded their lives for him; and he himself could "rejoice, if he were offered up upon the sacrifice and service of their faith," Phil. ii. 17. And in the next times, what more known, even to the enemies of Christianity, than their fervent love one to another? *Ecce quam mutuo se diligunt, et mori volunt pro alterutris!* See how they love one another, and are willing to die one for another!

But alas! the primitive spirit is almost lost in this degenerate age: instead of laying down life, how few will lay down twelvenpence for them? I remember, it is the observation of a late Wor-

thy, upon Mat. v. 44. That he is persuaded there is hardly that man to be found this day alive, that fully understands and fully believes that scripture. O, did men think what they do for them, is done for Christ himself, it would produce other effects than are yet visible.

*Infer.* 4. *Lastly*, If Christ sanctified himself, that we might be sanctified by [or in] the truth; then it will follow, by sound consequence, *That true sanctification is a good evidence that Christ set apart himself to die for us.* In vain did he sanctify himself (as to you) unless you be sanctified.\* Holy souls only can claim the benefit of the great Sacrifice. O try then, whether true holiness (and that is only to be judged by its conformity to its pattern, 1 Pet. i. 15. "As he that called you is holy, so be ye holy"); whether such a holiness as is, and acts (according to its measure) like God's holiness, in the following particulars, be found in you.

1. God is *universally holy* in all his ways; so Psal. cxlv. 17. "His works are all holy:" whatever he doth, it is still done as becomes a holy God: he is not only holy in all things, but at all times unchangeably holy. Be ye therefore holy in all things and at all times too, if ever you expect the benefit of Christ's sanctifying himself to die for you.

O brethren, let not the feet of your conversation be as the feet of a lame man, which are unequal, Prov. xx. 7. Be not sometimes hot, and sometimes cold; at one time careful, at another time careless; one day in a spiritual rapture, and the next in a fleshly frolic: but be ye holy *εν παντη ανασπορη*, 1 Pet. i. 15. "in all manner of conversation," in every creek and turning of your lives: and let your holiness hold out to the end. "Let him that is holy, be holy still," Rev. xxi. 11. Not like the hypocrite's paint, but as a true natural complexion.

2. God is *exemplarily* holy, Jesus Christ is the great pattern of holiness. Be ye examples of holiness too, unto all that are about you. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works," Matth. v. 16. As wicked men infect one another by their examples, and diffuse their poison and malignity, wherever they come; so do ye disseminate godliness in all places and companies; and let those that frequently converse with you, especially those of your own families, receive a deeper dye and tincture of heavenliness every time they come nigh you, as the cloth doth by every new dipping into the vat.

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\* Nor did Christ so sanctify himself for us, that we should continue to be wicked, and strangers to the communion of the Spirit, and his sanctifying influences. Whosoever are void of this, in vain promise themselves intercourse with Christ's *Musc.* on this place.

3. God *delights in nothing but holiness, and holy ones*; he hath set all his pleasure in the saints. Be ye holy herein, as God is holy. Indeed, there is this difference betwixt God's choice and yours; he chuses not men, because they are holy, but that they may be so; so you are to chuse them for your delightful companions, that God hath chosen and made holy. "Let all your delights be in the saints, even them that excel in virtue," Psal. xvi. 3.

4. God *abhors and hates all unholiness*; do ye so likewise that ye may be like your Father which is in heaven. And when the spirit of holiness runs down this upon you, a sweeter evidence the world cannot give, that Christ was sanctified for you. Holy ones may confidently lay the hand of their faith on the head of this great sacrifice, and say, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

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## SERMON VIII.

### Of the NATURE of CHRIST'S MEDIATION.

1 TIM. ii. 5.

*And one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the man Christ Jesus.*

**G**REAT and long preparations bespeak the solemnity and greatness of the work for which they are designed; A man that had but seen the heaps of gold, silver and brass, which David amassed in his time, for the building of the temple, might easily conclude before one stone of it was laid, that it would be a magnificent structure. But lo, here is a design of God as far transcending that, as the substance doth the shadow. For, indeed, that glorious temple was but the type and figure of Jesus Christ, John ii. 19, 21. and a weak adumbration of that living, spiritual temple which he was to build, cementing the lively stones thereof together with his own blood, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. that the great God might dwell and walk in it, 2 Cor. vi. 16. The preparations for that temple were but of few years, but the consultations and preparations for this were from eternity, Prov. viii. 31. And as there were preparations for this work (which Christ dispatched in a few years) before the world began; so it will be matter of eternal admiration and praise, when this world shall be dissolved. What this astonishing glorious work is, this text will inform you, as to the general nature of it; it is the work of media-