

Father's ear; but yet he will not refresh him in his agonies, nor abate him any thing of the debt he was now paying, and all this for the love he had to poor sinners. Had Christ been relieved in his sufferings, and spared, then God could not have pitied or spared us. The extremity of Christ's sufferings was an act of justice to him; and the greatest mercy to us that ever could be manifested. Nor indeed (though Christ so bitterly complains of his thirst) was he willing to be relieved, till he had finished his work. O love unspeakable! He doth not complain, that he might be relieved, but to manifest how great that sorrow was which his soul now felt upon our account.

Thirdly, And it should never be forgotten, that Jesus Christ was exposed to these extremities of sorrow for sinners, the greatest of sinners, who deserved not one drop of mercy from God. This commends the love of God singularly to us, in that "whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 1. Thus the love of God in Jesus Christ still rises higher and higher in every discovery of it. Admire, adore, and be ravished with the thoughts of this love!

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

SERMON XXXV.

The sixth excellent Saying of CHRIST upon the Cross,
illustrated.

JOHN XIX. 30.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

I*T is finished.* This is the sixth remarkable word of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, uttered as a triumphant shout when he saw the glorious issue of all his sufferings now at hand.

It is but one word in the original; but in that one word is contained the sum of all joy; the very spirits of all divine consolation. The ancient Greeks reckoned it their excellency to speak much in a little: "to * give a sea of matter in a drop of language." What they only sought, is here found. I find some variety, (and indeed variety rather than contrariety), among expositors about the

* Πελαγον πραγματος, εν σαλαγματι ζηματος. *Cypr. Sect. 568.*

relation of these words. Some are of opinion, that the antecedent is the legal types and ceremonies; and so make this to be the meaning *; *It is finished*: that is, all the types and prefigurations that shadowed forth the redemption of souls, by the blood of Christ, are now fulfilled and accomplished. And, doubtless, as this is itself a truth, so it is such a truth as may not be excluded, as foreign to the true scope and sense of this place. And though it be objected, that many types and prefigurations remained at this time unsatisfied, even all that looked to the actual death of Christ, his continuance in the state of the dead, and his resurrection; yet it is easily removed, “by considering that they are said to be finished, because they were just finishing, or ready to be finished: and it is as if Christ had said, I am now putting the last hand to it †,” a few moments of time more will complete and finish it; I have the sum now in my hand, which will fully satisfy and pay God the whole debt.

It is now but bow the head, and the work is done, and all the types therein fulfilled. So that this cannot exclude the fulfilling of the types in the death of Christ, from their just claim to the sense of this place. But yet, though we cannot here exclude this sense, we cannot allow it to be the whole or principal sense: for lo! a far greater truth is contained herein, even the finishing or completing of the whole design and project of our redemption, and therein of all the types that prefigured it. Both these judicious Calvin conjoins, making the completing of redemption the principal; and the fulfilling of all the types the collateral and less principal sense of it.

Yet it must be observed, when we say, Christ finished redemption-work by his death, the meaning is not that his death alone did finish it; for his abode in the grave, resurrection, and ascension, had all of them their joint influence therein; but these being shortly to follow, all are included in the scope of this place. According then to the principal scope of the place, we observe,

Doct. That Jesus Christ hath perfected and completely finished the great work of redemption, committed to him by God the Father.

To this great truth the apostle gives a full testimony, Heb. x. 14. “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” And to the same purpose speaks Christ, John xvii. 4. “I have glorified thee on earth! I have finished the work thou

* He teaches us that the full accomplishment of our salvation, and every part thereof, was contained in his death: the cancelling all the legal ceremonies is connected with this doctrine. *Calvin.*

† *Factum dicit, quod jam in eo fuit, et pæne factum esset. Cam.*

“gavest me to do.” Concerning this work, and the finishing thereof by Jesus Christ upon the cross, we shall enquire what this work was; how Christ finished it; and what evidence can be produced for the finishing of it.

First, What was the work which Christ finished by his death?

It was the fulfilling the whole law of God in our room, and for our redemption, as a sponsor or surety for us. The law is a glorious thing; the holiness of God, that fiery attribute, is engraven or stamped upon every part of it; Deut. xxxiii. 2. “From his right hand went a fiery law.” The jealousy of the Lord watched over every point and tittle of it, for his dreadful and glorious name was upon it; it cursed every one that continued not in all things contained therein, Gal. iii. 10. Two things, therefore, were necessarily required in him that should perfectly fulfil it, and both found in our Surety, and in him only, viz. a subjective and effective perfection.

First, A subjective perfection. He that wanted this, could never say, *It is finished*. Perfect working always follows a perfect Being. That he might therefore finish this great work of obedience, and therein the glorious design of our redemption; lo! in what shining and perfect holiness was he produced! Luke i. 35. “That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the “Son of God.” And indeed, “such an High-priest became us, “who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,” Heb. vii. 26. So that the law could have no exception against his person; nay, it was never so honoured since its first promulgation, as it was by having such a perfect and excellent person as Christ to stand at its bar, and give it due reparation.

Secondly, There must be also an effective perfection, or a perfection of working and obeying, before it could be said, *It is finished*. This Christ had; for he continued in all things written in the law, to do them: *He fulfilled all righteousness*, as it behoved him to do, Mat. iii. 15. He did all that was required to be done, and suffered all that was requisite to be suffered; he did and suffered all that was commanded or threatened, in such perfection of obedience, both active and passive, that the pure eye of divine justice could not find a flaw in it; and so finished the work his Father gave him to do; and this work finished by our Lord Jesus Christ was both a necessary, difficult, and precious work.

First, It was a necessary work which Christ finished upon the cross; necessary, upon a threefold account.

Opus necessarium ex parte Patris; It was necessary on the Father’s account: I do not mean that God was under any necessity, from his nature, of redeeming us this or any other way; for our redemption is *opus liberi concilii*, an act of the free counsel of God;

but when God had once decreed and determined to redeem and save poor sinners by Jesus Christ, then it became necessary that the counsel of God should be fulfilled; Acts iv. 28. "To do whatsoever thy hand and counsel had before determined to be done."

Secondly, Ex parte Filii. It was necessary with respect to Christ, upon the account of that precious compact that was betwixt the Father and him about it. Therefore it is said by Christ himself, Luke xxii. 22. "Truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined," i. e. as it was fore-agreed and covenanted; under the necessity of fulfilling his engagement to the Father, he came into the world; and being come, he still minds his engagement, John ix. 3. "I must work the works of him that sent me."

Thirdly, Ex parte nostri. Yea, and it was no less necessary upon our account that this work should be finished; for, had not Christ finished this work, sin had quickly finished all our lives, comforts, and hopes. Without the finishing this work, not a son or daughter of Adam could ever have seen the face of God. Therefore it is said, John iii. 14, 15. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so [must] the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." On all these accounts the finishing of this work was necessary.

Secondly, As it was necessary this work should be finished, so the finishing of it was exceeding difficult: It cost many a cry, many a groan, and many a tear, before Christ could say, *It is finished.* All the angels in heaven were not able, by their united strength, to lift that burden one inch from the ground, which Christ bare upon his shoulders, yea, and bare it away. But how heavy a burden this was, may in part appear by his agony in the garden, and the bitter outcries he made upon the cross, which in their proper places have been opened.

Thirdly, and lastly, It was a most precious work which Christ finished by his death; that work was dispatched and finished in few hours, which will be the matter of everlasting songs and triumphs to the angels and saints to all eternity. O it was a precious work! The mercies that now flow out of this fountain, viz. justification, sanctification, adoption, &c. are not to be valued; besides the endless happiness and glory of the world to come, which cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive. If the angels sang when the foundation-stone was laid, what shouts, what triumphs should there be among the saints, when this voice is heard, *It is finished!*

Secondly, Let us next inform ourselves how, and in what manner

Jesus Christ finished this glorious work; and if you search the scriptures upon that account, you will find that he finished it obediently, freely, diligently, and fully.

First, This blessed work was finished by Jesus Christ most obediently, Phil. ii. 8. "He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." "His obedience was the obedience of a servant, though not servile obedience*." So it was foretold of him, before he touched this work, Isa. l. 5. "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back;" i. e. My Father told me the very worst of it; he told me what hard and heavy things I must undergo, if ever I finished this design of redemption; and I was not rebellious, i. e. I heartily submitted to, and accepted all those difficulties; for there is a *Meiosis* in the words; I was content to stoop to the hardest and most ignominious part of it, rather than not finish it.

Secondly, As Christ finished it obediently, so he finished it freely. Freedom and obedience in acting are not at all opposite to, or exclusive of each other. Moses' mother nursed him in obedience to the command of Pharaoh's daughter, yet most freely with respect to her own delight and contentment in that work. So it is said of Christ, and that by his own mouth, John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He liked the work for the end's sake. When he had a prospect of it from eternity, then were his delights with the sons of men: then he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, Prov. viii. 30, 31. And when he came into the world about it, with what a full and free consent did his heart echo to the voice of his Father calling him to it; just as you shall sometimes hear an echo answering your voice two or three times over, Psal. xl. "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will: thy law is within my heart." He finished the work freely.

Thirdly, As he finished it freely, so he finished it diligently; he wrought hard from the morning of his life to the end of it: he was never idle wherever he was, but "went about doing good," Acts x. 38. Sometimes he was so intent upon his work, that "he forgot to eat bread," John iv. 30, 31. As the life of some men is but a diversion from one trifle to another, from one pleasure to another; so the whole life of Christ was spent and taken up betwixt one work and another: never was a life so filled up with

* *Obedientia servi, non servilis.*

labour: the very moments of his time were all employed for God to finish this work.

Fourthly, and lastly, *He finished it completely and fully*. All that was to be done by way of impetration and meritorious redemption is fully done; no hand can come after his; angels can add nothing to it*. “That is perfected to which nothing is wanting, and to which nothing can be added.” Such is the work Christ finished. Whatever the law demanded is perfectly paid; whatever a sinner needs, is perfectly obtained and purchased; nothing can be added to what Christ hath done; he put the last hand to it, when he said, *It is finished*. Thus you see what the work was, and how Christ finished it.

Thirdly, In the last place, let us consider what assurance or evidence we have that Christ hath so finished redemption-work: and if you pursue that enquiry, you will find these, among other plain evidences of it.

First, When Christ died, redemption-work must needs be finished, inasmuch as the blood, as well as the obedience of Christ, was of infinite value and efficacy, sufficiently able to accomplish all the ends for which it was shed; “and that not by divine acceptance, but upon the account of its proper value†.” This effect, viz. the finishing redemption work meritoriously by Christ, doth not exceed the power of the cause to which we assign it, viz. the death of Christ. And if there be a sole sufficient cause in act, what hinders but the effect should follow? There was certainly enough in Christ’s blood to satisfy the utmost demand of justice: when that therefore is actually shed, justice is fully paid, and, consequently, the souls for whom, and in whose names it is paid, are fully redeemed from the curse by the merit thereof.

Secondly, It is apparent that Christ finished the work, by the discharge or acquittance God the Father gave him, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. If Christ, the sinner’s surety, be, as such, discharged by God the creditor, then the debt is fully paid. Now Christ was justified, and cleared at his resurrection, from all charges and demands of justice; therefore it is said, 1 Tim. iii. 16. that he was *justified in the spirit*, i. e. openly discharged by that very act of the Godhead, his raising him from the dead. For when the grave was opened, and Christ arose, it was to him as the opening of the prison-doors, and setting a surety at liberty, who was confined for another man’s debt. To the same sense Christ speaks of his ascension, John xvi. 10. “The Spirit (saith he) shall convince the world of righteousness,” i. e.

* *Perfectum est, cui nihil deest, et cui nihil addi potest.*

† *Non ex divina acceptatione, sed ex proprio valore.*

of a complete and perfect righteousness in me, imputable to sinners for their perfect justification. And whereby shall he convince and satisfy them that is so? Why, by this, "Because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more." There is a great deal of force and weight in those words, "because ye see me no more:" for it amounts to this much; by this you shall be satisfied I have fully and completely performed all righteousness, and that, by my active and passive obedience; I have so fully satisfied God for you, as that you shall never be charged or condemned; because, when I go to heaven, I shall abide there in glory with my Father, and not be sent back again, as I should, if any thing had been omitted by me. And this the apostle gives you also in so many plain words, Heb. x. 12, 13, 14. "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right-hand of God." And what doth he infer from that, but the very truth before us, verse 14. that "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified?"

Thirdly, It is evident Christ hath finished the work, by the blessed effects of it upon all that believe in him: for by virtue of the completeness of Christ's work, finished by his death, their consciences are now rationally pacified, and their souls, at death, actually received into glory; neither of which could be, if Christ had not in this world finished the work. If Christ had done his work imperfectly, he could not have given rest and tranquillity to the labouring and burdened souls that come to him, as now he doth, Mat. xi. 28. Conscience would still be hesitating, trembling, and unsatisfied; and had he not finished his work, he could not have had entrance through the vail of his flesh into heaven, as all that believe in him have, Heb. x. 19, 20. If he had but *almost* done that work, we had been but *almost saved*, that is, certainly damned. And thus you see briefly the *evidences*, that the *work* is finished.

Inf. 1. Hath Christ perfected and completely finished all his work for us? *how sweet a relief is this to us that believe in him against all the defects and imperfections of all the works of God, that are wrought by us.* There is nothing finished that we do: all our duties are imperfect duties; they come off lamely, and defectively from our hands. It is Christ's charge against the church of Sardis, Rev. iii. 2. I have not found thy works *πεπληρομενα*, perfect, or filled up before God. O there is much impudence and vanity in the best of our duties: but here is the grand relief, and that which answers to all the grounds of our doubts and fears upon that account; Jesus Christ hath finished all his work, though we can finish none of ours: and so, though we be defective, poor, imperfect creatures, in ourselves, yet, notwithstanding, we are com-

plete in him, Col. ii. 9, 10. Though we cannot perfectly obey, or fulfil one command of the law, yet is “the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us that believe,” Rom. viii. 4. Christ’s complete obedience being imputed to us, makes us complete, and without fault before God.

It is true, we ought to be humbled for our defects, and troubled for every failing in obedience; but we should not be discouraged, though multitudes of weaknesses be upon us, and many infirmities compass us about, in every duty we put our hand to: though we have no righteousness of our own; yet of God, Christ is made unto us righteousness; and that righteousness of his is infinitely better than our own: instead of our own, we have his. O blessed be God for Christ’s perfect righteousness!

Inf. 2. Did Christ finish his work with his own hand? *How dangerous and dishonourable a thing is it to join any thing of our own to the righteousness of Christ, in point of justification before God.* Jesus Christ will never endure this; it reflects upon his work dishonourably; he doth not (in this case) affect *social glory*: not I, and my God; I, and my Christ, did this; he will be all, or none, in your justification. If he have finished the work, what need of our additions? And if not, to what purpose are they? Can we finish that which Christ himself could not? But we would fain be sharing with him in this honour, which he will never endure. Did he finish the work by himself, and will he ever divide the glory and praise of it with us? No, no, Christ is no half Saviour. O it is an hard thing to bring these proud hearts to live upon Christ for righteousness: we would fain add our penny to make up Christ’s sum. But if you would have it so, or have nothing to do with Christ, you and your penny must perish together, Isa. l. ult. God gives us the righteousness of Christ, as he gave *manna* to the Israelites in the wilderness. It is said, Deut. viii. 16. “That he fed them with manna in the wilderness, that he might humble them.” The quality of the food was not humbling, for it was angels food, but the manner of giving it was so: they must live by faith upon God for it, from day to day. This was not like other food, produced by their own labour. Certainly God takes the right way to humble proud nature, in calling sinners wholly from their own righteousness to Christ’s for their justification.

Inf. 3. Did Christ finish his work for us: Then there can be no doubt, *but he will also finish his work in us.* As he began the work of our redemption, and finished it: so he that hath begun the good work in you, will also finish it upon your souls. And of this the apostle saith, “He is confident,” Phil. i. 6. Jesus Christ is not only called the *author*, but also the *finisher* of our faith, Heb. xii. 2. If he begin it, no doubt but he will finish it. And indeed

the finishing of his own work of redemption without us, gives full evidence that he will finish his work of sanctification within us; and that because these two works of Christ have a respect and relation to each other; and such a relation, that the work he finished by his own death, resurrection, and ascension, would be in vain to us, if the work of sanctification in us should not in like manner be finished. Therefore, as he presented a perfect sacrifice to God, and finished redemption-work; so will he present every man perfect and complete, for whom he offered up himself; for he will not lose the end of all his sufferings at last. To what purpose would his meritorious impetration be, without complete and full application? Be not therefore discouraged at the defects and imperfections of your inherent grace: be humbled for them, but be not dejected by them: this is Christ's work, as well as that: that work is finished, and so will this.

Inf. 4. Is Christ's work of redemption a complete and finished work? *How excellent and comfortable beyond all compare, is the method and way of faith!* Surely the way of believing is the most excellent way in which a poor sinner can approach God; for it brings before him a complete, entire, perfect righteousness; and this must needs be most honourable to God, most comfortable to the soul that draws nigh to God. O what a complete, finished, perfect thing is the righteousness of Christ! the searching eye of the holy and jealous God cannot find the least flaw or defect in it. Let God or conscience look upon it; turn it every way; view it on every side; thoroughly weigh and examine it, it will appear a pure, a perfect piece, containing in it whatsoever is necessary for the reconciling of an angry God, or pacifying of a distressed and perplexed soul. How pleasing, therefore, and acceptable to God must be that faith, which presents so complete and excellent an atonement to him! Hence the acting of our faith upon Christ for righteousness, the approaches of faith to God with such an acceptable present, is called the work of God; that is, the most grateful, acceptable, and well pleasing work to God that a creature can perform; John vi. 29. "This is the work of God, that ye believe." One act of faith pleases him more, than if you should toil all your lives at a task of obedience to the law. As it is more for God's honour and thy comfort, to pay all thou owest him at one payment, in one full sum, than to be paying by very small degrees, and never be able to make full payment, or see the bond cancelled; so this perfect work only produces perfect peace.

Inf. 5. Did Christ work, and work out all that God gave him to do, till he had finished his work? *How necessary then is a laborious working life to all that call themselves Christians?* The life of Christ, you see, was a laborious life. Shall he work and we play? Shall a

zealous, active, working Christ be reproached with idle, negligent and lazy followers? O work, and *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12.

Object. But if Christ wrought so hard, we may sit still. If he finished the work, nothing remains for us to do.

Solut. Nothing of that work which Christ did, remains for you to do. It is your commendation and duty to leave all that to Christ: but there is other work for you to do; yea, store of work lying upon your hands. You must work as well as Christ, though not for the same ends Christ did. He wrought hard to satisfy the law, by fulfilling all righteousness. He wrought all his life long, to work out a righteousness to justify you before God. This work falls to no hand but Christ's: but you must work, to obey the commands of Christ into whose right ye are come by redemption: you must work to testify your thankfulness to Christ, for the work finished for you: you must work, to glorify God by your obedience: *let your light so shine before men*. For these, and divers other such ends and reasons, your life must be a working life. God preserve all his people from the gross and vile opinions of *Antinomian libertines*, who cry up grace and decry obedience: who under specious pretences of exalting a naked Christ upon the throne, do indeed strip him naked of a great part of his glory, and vilely dethrone him. My pen shall not English what mine eyes have read*. Tell it not in Gath.

But for thee, reader, be thou a follower of Christ, imitate thy pattern; yea, let me persuade thee, as ever thou hopest to clear up thine interest in him, imitate him in such particulars as these that follow.

First, Christ began early to work for God; he took the morning of his life, even the very beginning of it, to work for God: "How is it (said he to his parents, when he was but a child of "about twelve years old) that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I "must be about my Father's business?" Reader, if the morning of thy life be not gone, O devote it to the work of God as Christ did: if it be, ply thy work the closer in the afternoon of thy life. If a man have any great and necessary business to do, it is good doing it in the morning; afterwards a hurry of business and diversion comes on.

Secondly, As Christ began betime, so he followed his work close: he was early up, and he wrought hard, so hard, that "he forgat "to eat bread," John iv. 31, 32. So zealous was he in his Fa-

* *Da mihi Christum, non quæro dona gratiæ, sed Christum. Non quæro promissiones, sed Christum. Non quæro sanctificationem, sed Christum. Ne mihi narra fabulam de mediatore, et officio; narra mihi de Christo.* Commentarius de statu Eccles. Brit. p. 45.

ther's work, that his friends thought "that he had been beside himself;" Mark iii. 21. So zealous that "the zeal of God's house eat him up." He flew like a *seraphim*, in a flame of zeal, about the work of God. O be not ye like snails. What * Augustus said of the young Roman, well becomes the true Christian, "whatsoever he doth, he doth it to purpose."

Thirdly, Christ often thought upon the shortness of his time, and wrought hard because he knew his working-time would be but little. So you find it, John ix. 4. "I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." O in this be like Christ: rouse your hearts to diligence with this consideration. If a man have much to write, and be almost come to the end of his paper, he will write close, and thereby put much matter in a little room.

Fourthly, He did much work for God in a very silent manner: he wrought hard, but did not spoil his work, when he had wrought it, by vain ostentation. When he had expressed his charity in his acts of mercy and bounty to men, he would humbly seal up the glory of it, with this charge; "see ye tell no man of it," Matt. viii. 4. He affected no popular air. All the angels in heaven could not do what Christ did, and yet he called himself a *worm*, for all that, Psal. xxii. 6. O imitate your pattern; Work hard for God, and let not pride blow upon it, when you have done. It is hard for a man to do much, and not value himself for it too much.

Fifthly, Christ carried on his work for God resolutely: no discouragements would beat him off, though never any work met with more from first to last. How did Scribes and Pharisees, Jews, Gentiles, yea, devils set upon him, by persecutions, and reproaches, violent oppositions, and subtle temptations; but yet, he goes on with his Father's work for all that: he is deaf to all discouragements †. So it was foretold of him, Isa. xlii. 4. "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged." O that more of this spirit of Christ were in his people: O that, in the strength of love to Christ, and zeal for the glory of God, you will pour out your hearts in service, and, like a river, sweep down all discouragements before you.

Sixthly, He continued working, whilst he continued living: His life and labour ended together: He fainted not in his work: Nay, the greatest work he did in this world, was his last work. O be like Christ in this, be not weary of well-doing: Give not over the work of God, while you can move hand and tongue to

* *Quicquid vult, valde vult.*

† *Savior, ab obice ibit.* i. e. He shall proceed the more resolutely because of obstacles.

promote it, and see that your last works be more than your first. O let the motions of your soul after God be, as all natural motions are, swiftest when nearest the centre*. Say not it is enough, whilst there is any capacity of doing more for God. In these things, Christians, be like your Saviour.

Inf. 6. Did Christ finish his work? *Look to it Christians, that ye also finish your work which God hath given you to do:* That you may with comfort say, when death approaches, as Christ said, John xvii. 4. "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self." Christ had a work committed to him, and he finished it; you have a work also committed to you: O see that you may be able to say, it is finished when your time is so: O work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; and, that I may persuade you to it, I beseech you lay these considerations close to heart.

First, If your work be not done before you die, it can never be done when you are dead. "There is no work nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou goest," Eccl. ix. 5, 10. They that go down to the pit cannot celebrate the name of God, Isa. xxxviii. 18. Death binds up the hand from working any more; strikes dumb the tongue that it can speak no more; for then the composition is dissolved. The body, which is the soul's instrument to work by, is broken and thrown aside: the soul itself presented immediately before the Lord, to give an account of all its works. O therefore, seeing the night cometh, when no man can work, as Christ speaks, John ix. 4. make haste and finish your work.

Secondly, If you finish not your work, as the season of working, so the season of mercy will be over at death. Do not think, you that have neglected Christ all your lives, you that could never be persuaded to a laborious holy life, that ever your cries and intreaties shall prevail with God for mercy, when your season is past: No, it is too late; "Will God hear his cry, when troubles come upon him?" Job xxvii. 9. The season of mercy is then over; *as the tree falls, so it lies:* Then he that is holy shall be holy still, and he that is filthy shall be filthy still. Alas, poor souls, you come too late: "The master of the house is risen up, and the doors are shut," Luke xix. 42. The season is over: happy had it been if ye had known the day of your visitation.

Lastly, If your work be not finished when you come to die, you can never finish your lives with comfort. He that hath not finish-

* *Si dixisti sufficit, peristi.* If thou once say it is enough, thou art lost.

ed his *work* with care, can never finish his *course* with *joy*. O what a dismal case is that soul in, that finds itself surprised by death in an unready posture! To lie shivering upon the brink of the grave, saying, Lord, what will become of me! O I cannot, I dare not die! For the poor soul to shrink back into the body, and cry, *Oh, it were better for me to do any thing than die*. Why, what is the matter? Oh, I am in a Christless state, and dare not go before that awful judgment-seat. If I had in season made Christ sure, I could then die with peace. Lord, what shall I do? How dost thou like this, reader? Will this be a comfortable close! When one asked a Christian that constantly spent six hours every day in prayer, why he did so? He answered, *Oh, I must die, I must die*. Well then, look to it that you finish your work as Christ also did his.

SERMON XXXVI.

The seventh and last Word with which CHRIST breathed out his Soul, illustrated.

LUKE xxiii. 46.

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

THESE are the last of the last words of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, with which he breathed out his soul. They were David's words before him, Psal. xxxi. 5. and for substance, Stephen's after him, Acts vii. 27. They are words full, both of faith and comfort; fit to be the last breathings of every gracious soul in this world. They are resolved into these five particulars:

First, The person depositing, or committing: The Lord Jesus Christ, who in this, as well as in other things, acted as a common person, as the head of the church.* This must be remarked carefully, for therein lies no small part of a believer's consolation: When Christ commends his soul to God, he doth as it were bind up all the souls of the elect in one bundle with it, and solemnly presents them all with his, to his Father's acceptance: To this purpose one aptly renders it.

“ This commendation made by Christ, turns to the singular

* He commends not his soul to the Father on his own personal account, but the souls of all the faithful, bound up as it were in one bundle, that they might be kept in safety together with his own. *D. Parcus.*