

SERMON II.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places [or in heavenly things] in Christ.—VER. 3.

THE holy heart of this blessed Apostle was so full in his own person of being blessed by God, that he falls a blessing him as soon as he begins to speak. It is his first word he begins the body of this epistle with, and continues the same course and way of blessing God through the first half of the chapter unto ver. 15. And then he enters upon and opens another view of giving thanks, and pouring out prayers for these Ephesians, although this of blessing God far excels both thanksgiving and prayer, as I shall afterwards shew. But still under one or other of these ways of worshipping God, either prayer or thanksgiving or blessing, which are the highest strains of immediate worship we can perform to God, or at least with the materials for these, he goes on to fill up the rest of the first chapter. Yea, and after that being finished, he still continues matter of thanksgiving and blessing to the end of the second chapter throughout.

And here the occasion that inflamed him to pour forth such a flood of blessings, &c., comes duly to be noticed by us. And oh how abundantly did his heart use to overflow, if he fell but into this argument from that occasion, and entertained but the thoughts of it! You may for an instance thereof, though all his epistles testify it, but read over those passages of his in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, which he begins even as he doth this chapter, Eph. i. 4, 'Knowing their election of God.' How? By the fruits of it throughout his ministry, as the instrument. 'For our gospel,' says he, 'came unto you, not in word only, but in power.' And how exemplarily they turned from idols to wait for Christ from heaven, through that his ministry, which brought forth all these fruits amongst them, as it hath done over the world! And having thus begun and fallen into this argument, as I said, he proves so concerned, as he knows not how to get out or to set bounds to his affections. Read on 1 Thess. ii. 8, 'So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls;' and, chap. iii. 7, the joy hereof was so great, that it swallowed up the afflictions of all his sufferings, 'Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our afflictions and distress by your faith; for now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord: for what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God?' Thus he, when he took pen to write this Epistle, or otherwise to dictate it, the first thing the Holy Ghost filled him with was the consideration of all these blessings vouchsafed these Ephesians, which he enumerates together with this remembrance conjoined therewith. Thus all these blessings and matters of thanksgiving were all and every one of them the fruits of his own doings; that is, the very fruits of his own ministry and preaching; which, besides the glory

and riches of God's grace towards those persons he writes to, did deeply affect him. Besides this, the memory of what had passed, and he had cause to remember them by a good token, he knew what he had preached, and remembered how they had been wrought upon thereby. For he had afore this Epistle, for three years' space, laboured amongst them night and day, publicly and privately, from house to house, in preaching and that with tears; as in his last farewell sermon to the elders of this very church himself relateth, when he told them they should see his face no more, and so that he should never any more preach to them again; and how much his heart and theirs was affected with that speech, the story of it and that his sermon doth sufficiently inform you.

Now, then, a little observe his speech in that farewell sermon, in which he makes a sum of his forepast ministry in that city, though but in general speeches; as how he had 'not shunned to declare all the counsel of God to them,' Acts xx. 27; and above all thereof to make a display of the grace of God in the gospel, wherewith he saith he had finished 'the ministry which I have received from our Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God,' ver. 24. And then let us but compare the first part of this Epistle, which contains the fruits I speak of; and they do answer to these his declarations of the matter of his preaching, related in that farewell sermon. In the fifth verse of this chapter, he mentions God's having chosen them in Christ, and having predestinated them to the adoption of children, to the praise of the glory of his grace. Whereby it sufficiently appears that the doctrines of election and predestination, in all the points of them, he certainly had in his ministry gone over, and were the points he had instructed them in, and had taught them fully; otherwise had he not declared all the counsel of God, (whereof specially the doctrines of election and predestination do eminently in the New Testament bear that very name of the counsel of the Almighty within himself,) and how could he have said, that He had elected and predestinated them, had he kept back anything that was profitable for them?

Well, he goes on first, 'In which glory and riches of his grace he hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of his will,' in which words he tells us here again that this he had preached, 'according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself,' which in the eleventh verse he styles 'the counsel of his own will.' And again, ver. 11, out of which it was 'he had predestinated us to obtain an inheritance according to the purposes of him who worketh (both this, as) all things (else) according to the counsel of his own will.' So that the matter for which he here blesses God, wrought and accomplished in and upon their hearts, will be found answering, as the print does to the seal, that is, of his ministry. His doctrine namely, (as he recapitulates it in that sermon Acts xx., and that it has been the pith and principal sum of all his former sermons,) which had been to testify the grace of God in the gospel, and to open all the counsels of God in and about man's salvation; in which he had concealed nothing that was profitable unto them, (as he professeth,) that might work repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 20, 21. Now behold, what you read, you find here in this Epistle, testified by the Holy Ghost, who had been the master workman of all grace in them, and towards them, to have been left from his preaching impressed upon their souls, verified on their persons; visibly to be read by all men, written in their hearts and lives, and openly avowed professions of themselves. There is no man that shall compare one with the other, but

must say that as face answers to face in water, so those contents specified to have been the subject of his preaching in that sermon in the Acts, to be answerable to these impresses here in their hearts, the effects recorded in this Epistle, and the success of his ministry, answering to the other, as prints do unto their copy. As he had preached repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as he had declared in that sermon of his there, so answerably here he says that 'the grace of God had abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence;' the genuine meaning of which words is, that God had wrought all that belongs unto true faith, the truest wisdom and repentance, the only prudence accompanied with holiness; which are signified by these, as I shall shew, when I come to open those words. And by what means God had wrought it, he tells you in the 9th verse, that follows in his own words you meet with in that sermon in the Acts, ver. 20, whereby he had set out the matter of his preaching, 'having made known,' says he, 'to us the mystery and secret of his will,' 'the purpose and counsel of his will,' ver. 11, as to the matters namely of their salvation, and all to the 'praise and glory of that grace,' which in his preaching he had so much celebrated, and nowhere hath set forth more than in this paragraph of his blessing God for them.

In fine, as he elsewhere himself spake, so he had preached, and so they had believed, 1 Cor. xv. 11; so as in effect Paul's blessing of God by his enumerating these particular blessings of God bestowed upon them, proves to be indeed a preaching over to them the whole gospel of their salvation anew, the whole gospel in a new mode, in a new dress of thanksgiving, viz., for blessings of grace either shewed to them, and wrought in them, by the matter of his preaching. Instead of the seeds, the corn and grain he had sown, which were since grown up in their hearts, he returns the fruits of them—fruits of their own growth. And withal he doth in a covert manner mind them thereby, and brings fresh to their remembrance the principal materials, which God, by his preaching, and which while he was preaching them, God had wrought in them; and finally he provokes them upon the remembrance hereof afresh to bless God, by observing himself thus affectionately and passionately giving thanks, and praises, and blessing to God for them; that how much more should and ought they to do it anew for themselves? Than which course of proceeding herein held by him, there could not have been a greater artifice invented or used, whereby to affect their own hearts. This for the fitness and justness of the occasion of blessing God.

Nor let any man wonder that I make this kind of enumeration of gospel blessings to be as the preaching of the gospel itself. 'I am ready to preach the gospel to you at Rome also,' says Paul to the Romans, at the beginning of chap. i.; 'and I am sure,' says he, 'that when I come unto you I shall come in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ,' so speaks he at the end of that Epistle. The gospel is made up of blessings, is nothing but blessings, and the fulness of blessings.

Nor will it be out of our way or hinder us, to stand and observe, as touching the form of his blessing God, the vast difference that at this very entrance appears to be between the old dispensation among the Jews, and the dispensation under the New Testament. The form they used is, 'Blessed be the God of Israel.' And Zachary used this at a time when it was so near the expiring of the Old Testament and the approach of the New, at a time when the Messiah himself was conceived and come in the womb, though not yet born, and John the Baptist, that was to be his immediate forerunner, was already born. They all speak in this sort, till Christ were as the sun at his

height, as if they generally knew no higher title to honour God by than the God of the Jews, the Lord God of Israel.

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,' that was the wonted note of old they used in the beginning, otherwhile in the middle, or else conclusion of their songs and worship. So David in the Psalms often, Zachary in his song, Luke i. 68. The difference is that they spake it according to the level of the Old Testament, 'Blessed be the God of Israel;' but the holy apostles Paul and Peter, according to the elevation of the New, the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And this style the two great apostles begin with—our apostle here in the beginning of this Epistle, and Peter in the beginning of his first Epistle; and he used it then when he did write unto Jews, for unto them are his Epistles written, which makes the alteration of the style the more observable, 1 Peter i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Yet the mercies which he there blesses God for are but one or two, 'who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, to an inheritance,' &c. It is a blessing God for the first blessing in execution, regeneration, and the last performed, namely, the inheritance in heaven, as it followeth there.

He begins his doxology no higher than at that first spiritual mercy bestowed in this life, which estates us into that inheritance; but our apostle here prefixeth it before his 'Blessed be God,' and unto all blessings universally, whereof in his subsequent discourse he enumerates the particulars, and he takes the rise of his flight higher, 'according as he hath chosen us afore the world,' even at election; that first, original, and universally fundamental grace of all the other that follow; that vast womb of eternity, in which all blessings were conceived and shaped before the world was, and so from thence descends to redemption, regeneration, seal of the Spirit, glory.

And here in this place, since most interpreters generally have observed a correspondence held with that Jewish doxology in the Old Testament, I shall more specially add this one that appears to me to be the most direct and likeliest correspondent of the Old Testament, that ever the Apostle held intelligence with, in this of his of the New. And it was in a prophecy of the prophet David, Ps. lxxii., where, prophesying of Christ, ver. 17, 'Men shall be blessed in him,' (plainly meaning Christ,) and that 'all nations shall call him blessed,' he breaks forth thereupon, as here the apostle doth, 'Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, (that latter is Old Testament language,) who only doth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen.' Wherein you see that the prophet blesseth God expressly for the times of the gospel, wherein he should bless us Gentiles, as well as Jews, in Christ; in whom, both to Abraham and again to David himself, God had promised to bless all the nations of the world. 'Let the whole earth be filled with his glory;' and this estate our holy apostles together having seen with their own eyes to have been in their days, (and especially Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, through his ministry so gloriously accomplished in these Ephesians and other Gentiles, as well as that other apostle had, on the Jews he wrote to,) the same Spirit of faith, 2 Cor. iv. 13, (in him and both, crowned and confirmed with so visible experience,) did burst out as you see into the same blessing for substance, but more full and explicit, which had been but by way of prophetic foresight uttered by David; thereby most passionately inciting these Ephesians, and with them all Christians in all nations, (so lately converted to Christ,) to join with him in this his manner of blessing God; the whole earth being now filled with his glory, and all nations being now blessed by

God, the God and Father of Christ, with all spiritual and heavenly blessings in him.

The words of this third verse divide themselves into three parts :—

1. A blessing God, as on our parts to be performed : ‘Blessed be God.’

2. The style or titles under which Paul blesseth God : as ‘the God and Father of Jesus Christ.’

3. The matter for which, or blessings bestowed on us : ‘for all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.’

Blessed be God.

I. *What it is to bless God.*—Blessing of God is to wish well to, and speak well of God, out of good-will to God himself, and a sense of his goodness unto ourselves.

1. *To wish well to him, and speak well of him.*—There is *benedicere alicui*, which is, to invoke a blessing by prayer to another, as a father blesseth his child, one saint another : thus we are not capable of blessing God, nor God of being blessed by any. But there is *benedicere aliquem*, which is, to speak well of another, and to wish well to (as Ps. cxxix. 8), or to congratulate heartily the happiness of another ; and in this manner God gives us leave to bless him, *εὐλογεῖν τὸν Θεόν*, in *accusativo* Luc. i. 64, Jam. iii. 10. Yea, God loves your good word, that is, to be spoken of well by you, rejoiceth in your well-wishes, and to hear from you expressions of rejoicings in his own independent blessedness. Though God hath an infinite ocean of all blessedness, to which we can add nothing, who is therefore entitled by way of eminency, ‘The Blessed One,’ Mark xiv. 61, a title solely proper and peculiar to him, yet he delights to hear the *amen* of the saints, his creatures, resounding thereto ; that is, our ‘so be it.’ Thus our apostle having entitled him, Rom. i. 25, the ‘God blessed for ever,’ as in himself he is, and such in distinction from, and opposition to his whole creation, which is his scope there, yet he adds his own *amen*, or ‘so be it,’ thereto, ‘God blessed for ever, Amen.’ It is strange, that although so it is already, God is blessed in himself, and so it must be for evermore, that yet our ‘so be it’ is put to it ; we thereby uttering our good-will ; and it is well taken by him. It is not an *amen* set to a blessing of invocation, but it is an *amen* of joyful acclamation and congratulation, as expressing our rejoicing and complacency in his happiness, declaring that so we would have it.

Thus Christ, who is God with the Father, and so acknowledged in that 45th Psalm, (a psalm to his praise,) ‘Thy throne, O God,’ &c., ver. 6, (compare Heb. i. 8,) yet there we find that he is blessed by the Church, his spouse, in these words, ver. 4, ‘Prosper thou, ride thou in thy majesty, or ride prosperously ;’ which is a joyful shout and acclamation, as useth to be to kings, upon his passing by ; the people exulting in that glory and majestic state which they see him go forth in, wishing him prosperity in his expedition and undertakings, to make himself glorious, by doing wondrous things. The old translation expressed the intent of it, rather than the letter : ‘Good luck have thou with thine honour.’ The church there had withal in her eye all those gracious perfections his person was adorned with ; which thus won her heart to him, and drew this from her : for so it follows, ‘Ride and prosper, because of truth, righteousness, and meekness.’ And thus for us to take a view of all the absolute excellencies and perfections that are in God, to behold him crowned with glory and happiness that encircleth him round—a crown of glory made up of justice, truth, holiness, and other attributes ; to take a survey of all his proceedings and dispensations, and goings forth of every kind—his everlasting degrees of justice and mercy—all his ways and deal-

ings in the variety of them, though never so cross to our particular ; and to rejoice heartily in that glory of his, which is the result of them all : and inwardly to say, Oh, let him be thus glorious and blessed for ever, whatever shall become of me ! to be glad of all, congratulate him and wish well to him in all, this is to bless him.

2. *When done out of good-will as the principle of it ;* as indeed where such acts as those forementioned are, there must needs be good-will, the spring of them. And in this respect, blessing God superadds to confessing to his praise, yea or to give glory to him ; it speaks more than either. The devils shall confess to his praise, Phil. ii. 10, 11, ‘ Every knee, and every tongue, even of things under the earth (in hell), shall confess Christ, to the glory of the Father ;’ but theirs is but extorted, although acknowledged by them to be justly his due. Hence if we would speak strictly, blessing God is appropriated properly to the saints, with a difference from praising God ; Ps. cxlv. 10, ‘ All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee.’ The saints alone, they bless him, and why ? because they alone bear good-will to him. And they bless the Lord with their whole souls, and all that is within them, Ps. ciii. 1, and this God respects more than your ‘ giving him glory.’ It was his very end in choosing forth a select company of saints ; that he himself first blessing them, they then might bless him again. He could have been glorified however in them, but he loves to be blessed ; he loves our good-will in it, more than the thing.

3. I added, *out of good-will to God himself ;* that is, purely for what he is himself, and not only for what to ourselves ; in this manner our apostle blesseth God here, even for this, that he is the God and Father of Christ. As loving God that ever he begot such a Son, he rejoiceth that so great a Father hath so great a Son ; to the mutual honour of each. How often doth he in his Epistles come in with this, even in the midst or conclusion of a discourse, in which there was an occasion to magnify him, ‘ who is God blessed for ever,’ which is a glorifying God as God, that is, in himself and by himself, thus blessed for ever. Thus Rom. i. 25, Rom. ix. 5, and elsewhere.

Yet, 4. together herewith, *out of a sense of his goodness also to us.* So here, though he blesseth him first for being the God of Christ, yet he withal after blesseth him for having blessed us with all blessings ; and God gives us leave so to do. ‘ If you loved me [purely],’ says Christ, John xiv. 28, ‘ you would rejoice, because I said, I go to my Father :’ you would rejoice in my enjoyment of him, that is, in my blessedness in and through him, ‘ who is greater than I,’ (as it follows,) and so is the fountain of that happiness I have. He takes it unkindly at our hands, if we rejoice not in his personal blessedness primarily, and in the first place. And thus as we love him because he loves us first, so we bless him because he blesseth us first : and yet it must rise higher in the end, (and in heaven it will do so,) *even* purely to bless him for himself, or else we love him not, nor bless him, as the great God is to be loved and blessed by us. A meditation or two :—

1ST MEDITATION.

It is an infinite favour we are admitted to, and privilege vouchsafed to creatures, and indeed the highest, not only to pray to God to obtain all blessings, and to give thanks to him when we have them ; and further to glorify him for the glory that is in him ; but beyond all this, to bless him for all the blessedness that is in him, and for him to take in our *Amen*, our *Euge*, to his own blessedness, as in like manner he doth our faith as a seal

to his truth and faithfulness. Oh, what is it! He was not content to be blessed alone, but he must bless us, and make us partakers thereof. But further, as if not perfect without us, he blesseth himself in our returns and echoes of blessing to his blessedness, that so we in him, and he in us, might be blessed together for evermore. Amen.

2D MEDITATION.

You have seen it a peculiar character of the saints, thus out of good-will to bless God, "Thy saints they bless thee." It was his end why he had saints; said he with himself, They will do that which none of my other works will do—they will bless me, for none else have good-will to me: and whoever blesseth him, are first blessed of him. Hast thou, or dost thou find in thy heart, thus to bless God, and findest all within thee rising up in the doing of it? 'Bless God, O my soul, and all that is within me,' Ps. ciii. 1. Go home, thou art a saint I warrant thee. It was Job's grace, 'The Lord hath taken, yet blessed be the name of the Lord.' You will say, that was Old Testament grace: yea, and it is New Testament grace too; you see it in our Apostle, the greatest of saints; so we may write him, however he writes himself the least. His heart was full of this, and so it came out first; he could not hold at the first to utter it; when he was to speak to those he wrote to, he must needs begin to speak by way of blessing God: yea, it is the highest and best grace in heaven itself. The angels, though not themselves, but men only, have benefit by Christ's blood,—he died for men, not angels, and therefore it is only the chorus of men that sing, Rev. v. 9, 'Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood out of all nations'—yet, ver. 11, the angels are brought in blessing Christ also, and that for this, that he was slain, ver. 11, 12, 'And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, (they mention nothing else of him,) and then blessing comes in at last as the *E, la*, the highest note that heavenly choir can reach to. The like at his birth, their song was to bless him for 'peace on earth, good-will to men,' (they mention not themselves,) but purely for good-will to men; because it brought 'glory to God on high,' (as there,) they heartily rejoiced in that glory God should have in his dispensations towards us.

This for our blessing of God on our parts, 'Blessed be God.'

II. *The person who, and the style under which our Apostle blesseth him—*
'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

It is not only, Blessed be God the Father, but the God and Father of Christ: nor only the God who is the Father of Christ, but *ὁ Θεὸς καὶ πατήρ*, the God and Father of Christ. Otherwise *καὶ, and*, were here redundant; but as conjoined thus between those two, shews that both these titles do speak each of them a several relation of God unto Christ; or what God is unto Christ—he is his God and his Father. The like manner of speech we have, (when elsewhere Christ is spoken of,) two titles of his in the same sort locked together with that *καὶ ὁ Θεὸς καὶ σωτήρ*, 2 Peter i. 1, 'Ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ', speaking to them that believe in the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost intending both those two attributes of Christ. And Titus ii. 13, *Τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, 'Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the

great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' He speaks in both places of one and the same person, namely, Christ under two titles: and thus here he doth the like of God the Father, 'The God and Father of Christ.' And this parallel speech used to Christ in those places, compared with what the Apostle useth here, those places are strong proofs and assertions apostolical, that Christ is God as well as Saviour, the great God and Saviour; even as it is evident here in the like tenor of speech, that the person of God the Father is both the God and the Father of Christ: for in the very same strain and tenor of speech it is that both these are said of Christ, wherein here both are spoken of God the Father in his relation unto Christ. This for the phraseology; now as to the thing itself.

Two things are here to be apart spoken to for the explanation hereof:—

1. The matter itself: how God the Father is the God and the Father of Christ, and in what respects the one or the other, either of them.

2. The reason why here he singlenth out these relations of God to Christ, and under the respects and considerations thereof he blesseth God here.

1. *The matter itself*, 'The God and Father of Christ.'—That the Father is both the God and Father of Christ, other Scriptures affirm, yea, accord also, in putting both relations thus together as well as here; yea, upon the cross he challengeth his interest in both, 'My God, my God,' Matt. xxvii. 46, and 'Father, into thy hands,' Luke xxiii. 46; and on the other side, when to enter into his glory, he mentions both, John xx. 17, 'I ascend unto my Father, and to my God.' There are both, you see, found in one sentence, only he puts Father first afore being his God; so there; but here the God afore the Father of Jesus Christ.

The difficulty about it is, how these two relations respectively are to be understood.

We all know and acknowledge Christ's person hath two natures. He is God, he is man; and we often find in one and the same sentence several things attributed to the person of Christ, whereof the one is spoken of him in respect of the human nature only, the other in relation to the Divine. I shall mention but one instance, because somewhat akin to this here; Heb. vii. 3, his person is described to be without father, without mother, and both are equally said of this one and the same person; yet the one in respect of one nature only, the other in relation to the other. It is evident the man Jesus had a mother, and yet he is said to be without mother, namely as God. It is evident that he called God his own Father, John v., as also he useth to do upon every occasion everywhere, and yet this person as man is said to be without father. And that both these should be thus attributed to, and said of one and the same person, all the wits in the world cannot otherwise reconcile than by affirming or acknowledging two natures to abide in this one person; and withal what is proper to each, yet to be in common and alike attributed to the person himself, respectively to these two natures. And therefore the Apostle elsewhere is fain to distinguish upon this matter with this or the like distinction: who, according to the flesh or human nature, came of the fathers by his mother Mary; and who, according to the spirit or Divine nature, is the declared Son of God, and God blessed for ever.* You have these distinctions *in terminis* thus applied, Rom. i. 3, 4, and Rom. ix. 5, and it is the sum of the scope of both places, as also of Acts ii. 30. In like manner here bring but these, the same distinctions tricked up, and insert them to each, and none will question this exposition, that question

* 'En Deus, et Pater unius et ejusdem Christi; Deus quidem ut incarnati, Pater, ut Dei Verbi.'—*Marlorat*.

not the verity of one of those his natures, that as Son of God, and so God equal with God, God is his Father: and that as Son of man, so the same God that is his Father is his God also. Thus Bishop Davenant expoundeth these words, 'God and Father of Christ.'

The God.—The Father is the God of Christ in relation to his being man, and that in these respects more peculiar to him—

1. Because he chose him to that grace and union, 1 Peter i. 20. Christ as man was predestinated as well as we, and so hath God to be his God by predestination and so by free grace, as well as he is our God in that respect.

2. Because God the Father made a covenant with him. Look, as because of that covenant with Abraham, &c., he is termed the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so in respect of that covenant made with Christ, which we have specified, Isa. xlix., throughout, where Christ doth call him 'My God,' ver. 4, of which covenant, as also God's being his God, David was his type, Ps. lxxxix. 26.

3. Because God was his only refuge in all times of distress. Thus when hanging on the cross, he cries out to him, 'My God, my God,' Matt. xxvii. 46, compared with Ps. xxii. 1-5.

4. Because God is the author and immediately the matter of Christ's blessedness, (as he is man,) and therefore blessed be he as the God of Christ, who hath blessed our Lord Christ for ever and ever, as Ps. xlv. 2, whereupon, in the 7th verse, it follows, 'God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' The Psalmist satisfieth not himself to say, 'God hath anointed thee,' but with an emphasis, 'God, thy God:' and thy God he is in relation to this effect and fruit of it, 'anointing thee with gladness,' which, ver. 2, is synonymously expressed, 'God hath blessed thee for ever.' And then anointed by God as man he was when glorified, Acts iv. 27. And God thus blessed him by becoming himself his blessedness; which, in the 16th Psalm, Christ exults in, ver. 2, 'My soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord.' And, ver. 5, it follows, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance;' and, ver. 6, 'I have,' says he, 'a goodly heritage,' that is, in having God to be my God and heritage to live upon for ever; for, as he further speaks in ver. 11, 'in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' The psalm is made in Christ's name, as the Apostle, Acts ii., and he speaks it of his human nature expressly in the 9th verse, 'My flesh,' says he, 'shall rest in hope,' namely this hope, by this my death to be advanced to the right hand of God, (which alone that man Christ Jesus is, for as God he was always at his right hand,) where those pleasures are: so then God is his happiness. Hence, therefore, when Christ was risen, and speaks of ascending, and was shortly to ascend, then it was he calls God his God, John xx. 17, 'I ascend to my God;' that is, to him in whom my happiness I now am going to enjoy consists. And therefore, John xiv. 28, he told his disciples, 'If ye loved me, you would rejoice that I go to my Father:' for I go to him that is able to make me happy, and is my immediate blessedness. For it follows, 'My Father is greater than I,' (namely, as I am a man,) and so I am to be blessed in him, the less being blessed of the greater. The human nature, though glorified, is not blessedness to itself, it is but finite in itself; but God immediately is. Nor is that human nature, though God dwells in it, the utmost blessedness of us; but God immediately also is: yet as to our right thereunto, it is because he is our God and his God first. Thus *his God*, as man.

But whether the Father is termed the God of Christ, as Christ is God, and so in relation to his divine nature, I will not debate it. There are that

read that passage of the 45th Psalm thus : O God (as speaking to Christ as God) thy God, so terming his Father, *Deus de Deo*, God of God, is old : and the Father is *Deus gignens*, the Son *Deus genitus*, and *Deus Dei* is near to these ; the Father is the God of the Son, who is God. But I pass it.

And the Father.—This is out of question spoken of Christ, and is true of him, both as God and also man.

1. As God : so he is his Son, his own Son, Rom. viii. 32, and reciprocally the Father, *ἴδιος πατήρ*, his own Father, John v. 18, and therefore ‘equal with God,’ as it is emphatically there said ; for the Jews objected against him, that *πατέρα ἰδίου ἔλεγε τὸν Θεόν*, he said God was his own Father, (so in the Greek,) making himself equal with God. All which do imply, that he was such a Son as was begotten of the substance and essence of his Father, even as he that is said to be a man’s own natural son useth to be, and is thereby distinguished from their adopted children ; and in that respect also is Christ said to be God’s only begotten Son, and *ὁ υἱός*, *Dei vivi*, that Son of the living God, Matt. xvi. 16 ; and so discriminated from all other. As from the angels, ‘To which of all the angels did he say, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?’ Heb. i., and so from all creatures. For whereas, John i. 18, he is termed the only-begotten Son, in distinction there from all creatures, which are said to be but made, ver. 1, 3, and believers to have received power from him to be sons, ver. 12. In fine, he is in such a respect the Son of God, and begotten of God, as being man he was the Son of David, because out of his loins. Thus Matt. xxii. 42. And that he was thus the Son of God, is the main and most fundamental point of the gospel, Rom. i. 3, 4, compared ; and therefore is still brought in as the conclusion of all those several discourses of the last evangelist’s Gospel, beginning at the first chapter, ver. 18, 49, chap. iii. 16, and so on to chap. xx. 31, where, in the conclusion of his book, he professeth this to have been the intended scope of the whole, ‘These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing (thus of him) ye might have life through his name ;’ through that name of his that he is the Son of God, and thereby the fountain of life and sonship to us ; for upon this very rock or foundation, Christ told his disciples he would build his Church.

2. As man and Son of man, God was his Father. That forementioned profession and answer in the name of all the rest of his disciples was setly pitched upon this in Christ’s question as punctual thereunto : ‘Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?’ That was Christ’s question. He answers thereupon, ‘The Son of the living God.’ Therefore as man he was the Son of the living God. The like ye have uttered by Christ himself, (for it was that point he died upon,) Mark xiv. 61, 62, compared.

But then as to this last point the question is, How it is to be understood that as man he was the Son of God ; whether only but as other men, or in any transcendent privilege above us ? Or thus, whether as man he was but the adopted son, as the saints are ; or whether not the natural Son of God ? Which is solved by these considerations :—

1. That the subject of this relation as Son to God, or the *terminus* of it, is not either his nature divine or human, but his person ; for sonship is a personal property, not of the nature.

2. Hence, *secondly*, in the person of Christ there are not two Sons, or two sonships or relations of sonship unto God as a Father ; but as God is but one, so the person of the Son but one, and so but one sonship in him.

3. Hence, *thirdly*, Christ as man is but one and the same Son of God ;

that he is as he is God, that is, his style and honour is to be the natural Son of God, even as man. The sonship of the man Christ Jesus doth coalesce into one sonship with the Son of God, even as in like manner the man is taken up into one person with the Son of God, Luke i. 35, 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee (speaking of Christ's conception to the Virgin Mary) shall be called the Son of God.' For look as though he was man, yet that man was never a person of itself, but subsisted from the first in the personality of the second Person: so that the Son of man was never called or accounted a Son to God, of himself, as such; but his sonship was that of the person which he was taken up into. Only with this difference, that he is the Son of God as God, in that he was begotten of the Father's substance, but so the Son of man was not; but this Son of man becoming the Son of God, who was begotten of the substance of the Father by personal union, he the man, by being made one person with him, wears that dignity. The one is *per essentialæ communicationem*, the other *per unionem cum personâ*.

4. Hence, *fourthly*, he is not as man the Son of God naturally or essentially, but he is the Son of God personally. If we take *natural* for *essential*, so he is not, as man, God's natural Son; but take *natural* as in opposition to *adoption*, and so he is God's natural Son: and not by adoption, this being the title and honour he had from his conception and birth, and from his union with the person of the natural Son, as you heard from the angel, 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God,' (and God calls things as they are.) And more distinctly, Gal. iv. 4, 'God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,' where evidently his sonship and ours are set in these terms of distinction, that ours is the sonship of adoption received from his, and that his is primitive, original, and natural; yea, and this is true of him as he is man, for it is spoken of him that was 'made of a woman, made under the law.'

2. *The reason why under these relations of God and Father to Christ, he blesteth God.*

Although this will easily appear in many of the particulars that follow, yet one reason may be, to unvail the Old Testament and decipher it into the New, and bring forth the gospel in its substantial and real intendments, both of the promise of blessing, as also of God's relation to us men; God's being their God, this of old was typically set forth under this tenure, 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob,' Exod. iii. 6. And before them, 'The Lord God of Shem,' Gen. ix. 26; and in the names of these patriarchs the conveyance of the blessing ran, and answerably their return of praise and blessing unto God again then was, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem,' Gen. ix. 26. Thus before Abraham. After, when renewed in Jacob's name, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,' as you heard out of David; and this form the Jews (upon whose hearts, as now in their synagogues, the veil remains, 2 Cor. iii. 14, in token thereof they wear it upon their heads,) in their worship keep to this day; but now that the substance is come, the shadows disappear. Abraham, and Isaac, and Israel are subdued. The days are come, as the prophet in another case speaks, that it shall no more be said, The God of Abraham, &c., but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as Isaiah foretold of the gospel times, Isa. lxxv. 15, 16, look as my servants (or children of God) shall be called by another name, (namely Christians, as first at Antioch, and no longer Jews;) so also the terms of their covenant is altered, and so their form of blessing God, as

was also foresignified there in the following words, 'He that blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth,' namely, when Christ, who is the truth and the life, shall come. Old Zachary, that lived in the expiration or extreme verge of the Old Testament, when Christ was not yet conceived, he then useth that Old Testament form which he found sanctified in the Scriptures of old. But had he stayed half a year longer, (for thereabouts was the distance between Christ's and his son John Baptist's conception,) his 'Blessed be the God of Israel' (which he useth in his song) had been out of date; and 'Blessed be the God and Father of Christ' had come in its room, and been in force.

MEDITATION.

Oh, let us, therefore, that live under the knowledge of Christ in the gospel, bless our God as the God and Father of Jesus Christ, which is the highest note of celebrating his praise which our hearts can reach to! For it is the most elevated strain of the gospel language, and of the glory of God, which any man, or all men, can rise up unto. It is said of Christ in the Psalms, Ps. lxxii. 17, 'All nations shall call him blessed.' In like manner it was spoken of and by herself, that was the mother of his human nature only, 'All generations shall call me blessed.' Oh, then, how should we all bless that God that is the Father of him, who in his person also is God blessed together with his Father for ever! Many good souls find this as an eternal evidence of their own future blessedness, that when wanting assurance of God's love to themselves, they can yet bless God for his being good to others in the same condition with themselves, out of their love to God and to the good of others' souls. If thou findest such elevations of spirit in thee, vent and spend them much more in blessing God, that he is the God and Father of Christ. This is high, and most divine.

Of our Lord Jesus Christ.—He having thus setly displayed these relations of God to Christ, he interweaves withal *our* special relation to Christ; to wit, his being our Lord; his scope therein being to shew the foundation and descent of those very same relations which God beareth to Christ; and of the same their coming down upon and unto us, namely of his being our God and our Father, which are the groundwork of the conveyance to us of all those particular blessings he doth after enumerate, by and through Jesus Christ's being our Lord or husband.

And it is observable how the Apostle carries on his discourse along. In the second verse he had called God our Father, and Jesus Christ barely the Lord; but then in this verse he styleth this God the Father of Christ, and then subjoins therewith, varying his style, this 'Jesus our Lord.' Thereby to shew the genealogy or descent of our being sons to God, and of God's being our Father, to lie in this, that Christ is our Lord, and so God becomes our Father by being his Father. And then, in the next verse, he answerably proceeds to shew how all other blessings do flow from this relation, first of God to Christ, then this of Christ to us; which in the fifth verse he doth more determinately discover to be his meaning in saying, 'He hath predestinated us by Jesus Christ to the adoption of children;' so that this mention of his being our Lord here, is not merely, as elsewhere, an appellative, or as the ordinary style that is given to the person of Christ, as that whereby he is described when he is spoken of or mentioned, when there is any occasion to name him. Thus frequently his disciples, 'We have seen the Lord,' say they all, John xx. 25. 'It is the Lord,' says he, when he spied him

first, John xxi. 7. Yea, and this appellation of 'our Lord' is often used by the apostles, but barely to decipher his person, as in that speech, Heb. vii. 14, 'It is evident our Lord sprang out of Judah.' These in part are no more than as when men speak of the person of their prince, they say, The king, and, Our lord the king, so designing his person. But here in saying in this coherence, and in saying, 'The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' his intent is to draw the pedigree of our relation to God, as our Father also, even by descent from Christ; and this is the highest improvement, as to us, of this attribute here, 'Christ our Lord.' This for the general scope of these words.

To make good which general scope, two things are now particularly to be explicated :—

1. What special or peculiar relation there is of the saints unto Christ, as to their Lord.

2. That the relation of Christ to us as a Lord, is the foundation of God's being our God and Father, as well as he is Christ's God and Father.

For the first, that our Jesus is the Lord, and that one Lord, in distinction from God the Father; which title fully declareth his office of Mediator, and is attributed to him by way of eminency above and from all other lords; this I have elsewhere shewn upon 1 Cor. viii. 6. That which is more proper here is, that he is our Lord more peculiarly, and how we have these two apart attributed to Christ, both that he is the Lord, and our Lord, as in a special relation and appropriation, in the 4th verse of the Epistle of Jude; where speaking of the heresies of those times, he says, that they denied that only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. The question here hath been made by some, as also about the like parallel places, 2 Pet. i. 1, Tit. ii. 13, whether he here should speak of two persons distinct, viz., God and Christ, styling the first, the Lord God, but Christ, in distinction from him, our Lord; or whether that apostle should intend Christ only and alone as one and the same subject of two royal titles or relations; the one more general, namely his being the only Lord God, and then the other of his more special relation unto us, our Lord. Indeed as the English translation carries it, it leans more to that first interpretation, that he should speak of the Father in the one, whom he should signalise, the only Lord God; the other of Christ. But the Greek evidently inclines much rather to the latter, that Christ alone should be intended as the subject of both these styles.

Considering first, that though here be three attributes, 1, the only Lord, 2, God, 3, and our Lord; that yet there is but one article or note of designation affixed, or rather prefixed to all these at first, τὸν μόνον, as meaning evidently but one person pointed at in them all, as the subject of them: which the *Complutensis* copy of the Greek renders more plain, 'That only God and Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ'—Τὸν μόνον Θεὸν καὶ δεσπότην, τὸν Κύριον.

Which, secondly, the counterpart to this Apostle's epistle—namely, the second Epistle of Peter—helps to clear; where, speaking of the same heretics (whom both these apostles aimed to speak of, and do affirm these things of) there, in the latter he mentions Christ only as the person spoken of in these words, 'denying the Lord that bought them;' using there also the same word, δεσπότην, which the other epistle useth when he speaks of the lordship and dominion of Christ, which is in common over wicked men, and but such as over all things else, which Jude manifestly intended in calling him 'the Lord.' And the contradictions of all heretics, that professed Christianity in

those times, were all and only bent against the person of Christ, and also against his being God, and not against the Father, or his being only Lord God.

So then that place of Jude holds forth two things distinctly and apart concerning Christ, which serves to clear the point in hand :—1. What he is absolutely and indeterminately in himself, and in his general relation to all things whatsoever, he is the only God and Lord of all. And, by the way, the word translated Lord in the first part of his style, is a differing word from that which follows in the second part. The first word is *δεσπότην*, supreme, sovereign disposer and governor, as by possession, and natural and more general right ; such as a lord hath of his goods, his chattels, utensils, as 2 Tim. ii. 21. 2. But that other *Κύριον*, the latter word, which is joined with that special relation of his to us, with that addition of ‘our’ Lord ; so noting out in this manifest distinction that sweet and special relation to his spouse and children of the sons of men. So then the meaning is, that besides that Jesus Christ is the sovereign Lord of all persons and things, (as Acts x. 36,) that he further hath a nearer and dearer relation of *our Lord*, so to us his saints.

So, then, he is the Lord of saints peculiarly, in the like sense and respect as he is called King of saints peculiarly, Rev. xv. 3, in distinction from his being King of nations, as, Jer. x. 7, the prophet had it.

Wicked men, as you have heard, are said to ‘deny the Lord that bought them ;’ so then he is their Lord. And the devils are said to confess that Jesus is the Lord, Phil. ii. 11, but none of these do say, ‘Our Lord.’ The good angels, they come nearer to him, and surely they might say it upon better terms ; he being their head, Col. ii. 10, and they our fellow-servants, Rev. xix. 10. Yet I find not that they speak thus of him, ‘Our Lord,’ but as it were, or would seem in a respect, both to him and us, the Holy Ghost should leave this to be alone said by us, and spoken by us of Christ. There was a full occasion once, if ever, for the good angels themselves to have assumed and uttered it, and said, ‘Our Lord.’ It is in Luke ii. 11, when they proclaimed him in the cradle ; but their words there run thus, ‘To you (speaking of men) is born a Saviour,’ and so ‘Christ the Lord ;’ for though a Saviour only to us men, yet those angels might have said, ‘Our Lord,’ for that their part in him forementioned. No ; but when it did come in a comparison and competition with us men, they forbear to do it ; they only say, Christ *the* Lord, not Christ *our* Lord ; or anywhere else we read of. But believers and saints of the sons of men you find often, upon all occasions of mentioning him as the Lord, to assume the privilege to call him with this sweet additament, My Lord, or, Our Lord. David in the Old Testament, he began it, ‘Jehovah said to my Lord,’ Ps. cx. And he was in spirit when he did it, (as Christ tells us,) possessed with an evangelical spirit more than ordinary. Elizabeth followed him in the first break of day of the New Testament ; she was in spirit, too, Luke i. 41, when she said it : ‘Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost,’ and said, ver. 43, ‘Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord is come ?’ Thomas, at last, for it was after the resurrection, with ravishment cries out, ‘My Lord, and my God.’ And our Apostle goes on, when his heart was as full as it could hold of glorying and rejoicing in this his interest in Christ, Phil. ii. 8, ‘Yea, doubtless,’ I that have known him so long, ‘I do count all things but loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.’ The emphasis this comes in with argues his heart raised up to an infinite valuation of him, and

also of this his spiritual relation unto him, 'My Lord.' These saints in their own persons, as particularly it fell out, first tasting the sweetness of it; but then after it grew, the common voice of all believers speaking in their own and other saints' names. So Paul was careful to observe to do, when he wrote to the Church of Corinth, ascribing and enlarging that title of 'Our Lord' unto all saints, as well as to the church of Corinth, as appears expressly in his inscription to that first epistle to that church, 1 Cor. i. 2, 'Unto the church of God that is at Corinth, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of our Lord;' and remarkably adds 'both theirs and ours,' thus appropriating it to the saints of mankind, as he does here, 'our Lord.'

I further only add, that when I thus term it a proper or more special relation with difference from other the sons of men, or the angels, I exemplify my meaning by the like language which the great officers and favourites of kings use, by way of distinction from other subjects, and glory so to do. They rejoice to style him, The king, my master, my lord. And I humbly submit the notion of it, if it appear singular to others. But I shall further add two special appropriate reasons why the saints do the like of Christ:—

1. His saving and redeeming them from sin and wrath. He is their Saviour, not of the angels: and 'to you,' say they, 'a Saviour is born, Christ the Lord;' and so your Lord more peculiarly, because your Saviour, which I insist not on.

2. Besides this obliging interest of redemption, proper to the saints of the sons of men, whereby he is our Lord, (though as a second-hand bargain he bought all the world, 2 Pet. ii. 1,) there is a further, more endearing consideration whereby he is our Lord; even because he is our husband, 'Thy Maker is thy husband,' and so thy Lord. And he is such a husband as did serve a servitude for his wife, yea, and bought her thereby of a slave and captive by the way of redemption, as in ver. 7 of this 1st of Ephesians; and again, Eph. v. 23, 'Even as Christ is head of the church, and Saviour of the body;' and ver. 25, 'He loved his church, and gave himself for her.' These things cannot be spoken of angels. A queen, the wife or spouse of a great king, when she mentions her relation to him, and says, My lord, or calls him her lord, she speaks it in that sense wherein none of her maids of honour or courtiers about her dare, or must take on them to speak it, though he be in other respects their lord also. For he is her lord as he is her husband, and not only as king; and so she imports, 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine,' whilst she only calls him My lord. Sarah, you know, called Abraham, as her husband, lord, 1 Pet. iii. 6, which is applied to Christ and the church, Eph. v. 22, 23, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the Saviour of the body.' And in this conjugal respect it is that God the Father teacheth the Church to call Christ her Lord, Ps. xlv. 11, 'He is thy Lord, worship thou him: so shall the King greatly delight in thy beauty.' He speaks it of his conjugal relation, as that passage, 'delighting in her beauty,' argues. Now, as it is said of Christ's Sonship, 'To which of all the angels did he say, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?' though they are sons of God also, and he their Father, so say I of this lordship, To which of all the angels did he ever say, Christ is thy Lord,—that is, thy husband,—he shall greatly delight in thy beauty, as a husband in his spouse? Though they are the virgins that do attend her, yet that relation is reserved proper

between Christ and us. So, though he be a head to angels. Col. ii. 10, yet in a proper and a peculiar manner a head to his Church, the saints. So, in the 22d of this Eph. i., 'The Father hath given him to be a head over all to his church,' (even over 'all principalities and powers,' ver. 21,) and therefore in such a peculiar manner a head to them, as he is not to all or any else. He being said to be over all things else then, when withal his relation of headship to her is spoken of. And so it is in this.

For the second, I must now shew you, that this peculiar relation of his being our Lord in this near and endearing sense, is the foundation of God's being our God and our Father; even because he is the God and Father of Christ, who is this our Lord and husband.

1. The *first*, that so it is, that the foundation of these relations of God unto us is laid in these same like relations of ours unto Christ, (besides what by induction might be shewn to hold of all other titles or privileges communicated to us, how they all hold of Christ,) that one place afore cited, where Christ at once calls him both his God and his Father, John xx. 17, more fully and pertinently holds forth this to us, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' He speaks at once, as that God is our God, &c., so that our relation of his being our God is founded upon God's being the God of Christ. And our Father, because his first. He says not, as Austin observes, I ascend to our Father, or to our God, as casting his own proper relation into the same common rank with ours. No, but apart, first mine and then yours. Mine primitively, naturally, and originally; yours derivatively by participation, or, as ver. 5 here expreseth it, 'sons of adoption by Jesus Christ;' or, as Gal. iv. 4, 'He sent his Son, (his own Son, as elsewhere,) that we might receive the adoption of sons.'

2. But secondly, if you will see how this doth spring from that special relation of Christ's being our Lord, that is, our Head, Husband, Redeemer, consult that Psalm xlv., which is an epithalamium, or marriage-song of Christ and his Church. God the Father, who gives all that good counsel there to the Church, (for all that come to Christ are taught of God, as Christ says,) in the 11th verse he teacheth her to call him her Lord, and in the 10th verse, to forsake her father's house, as spouses married use to do, and to cleave unto their husbands; and upon all this account, God himself there calls her his daughter, 'Hearken, O daughter,' &c. That is his compellation, (and parallel to this of a wife to her husband, My lord here,) God the Father, in the beginning of his speech to her, speaking as a father-in-law useth to do, who is giving counsel to his daughter new married unto his natural son. So then, from thence I infer that thus it is that we become sons and daughters to God, even by marriage with his natural Son, who in that conjugal respect doth become our Lord, and thereby also receive the adoption of sons, and so God takes on him the relation of Father. Thus Rom. viii. 17, 'heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ.'

1ST MEDITATION.

Let him then be Lord and King of saints, and level him not with saints, as some most cursedly in this age have done; even then when we are enjoying the highest advancement even of God himself in heaven, yet still Christ is our Lord, by means of whom God is our God. The Psalmist indeed says, that we are fellows in all with him: 'God, thy God, hath anointed thee above thy fellows,' xlv. 7. But if you would know of the Psalmist how far above his fellows, the Psalmist resolves you, 'He is thy

Lord, worship thou him,' ver II. So as though we are his fellows, yet he hath the deserved honour, this title (and he alone) of being your Lord, yea and of the 'man, God's fellow,' given him by God himself in the prophet. Would you be all Christ's? Set your hearts at rest; there is but one Christ personally, as certainly as that God is but one. It is uttered as a fundamental maxim of Christian profession, universally received, 'To us (Christians namely) there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. viii. 6, and because there is but one God, therefore God hath ordained but this one Lord; because he therein bears the image of God's sovereignty and oneness, being the brightness of his glory. Neither are we, the saints, considered as sharing with him herein, but himself is that one Lord alone. For it follows, 'And we in him,' we are all in him; and therefore not only reckoned distinct and apart from him, as he is that one Lord, but dependent on him, and not lords or Christs with him, but infinitely distant from him. It is true, we have all that Christ hath derivatively, but not in that kind he hath it. God is our Father as well as his Father, &c., but as Augustine well observes, commenting upon this passage, 'He says not, I ascend to our Father, but my Father and your Father, therefore he is in another respect my Father, and in another respect your Father; my Father by nature, yours by grace.'*

2D MEDITATION.

Let him be thy Lord, and worship thou him: thou hast now in this a greater tender made thee than ever was made to angels. Part with all for him, forsake thy former father's house, Ps. xlv. 10, this world, given to thy father Adam, and all things in it; for he is thy Lord, and thou shalt have by thy relation to him another Father, whose house hath many mansions, John xiv. 1. Account all things dross and dung that thou mayest win Christ, as Phil. iii. 8. Thou canst not win him else; he never becomes thy Lord, unless thou valuest him at the same rate he did thee, and partest in thy affections with all for him. Give thyself up to the Lord, as 2 Cor. viii. 5. Cast thy lot, thy interest together with his. Here thou shalt be sure never to lose thy love, as in cleaving to all else thou wilt. He is and must, however, be a Lord to thee, and thou must one day confess that Jesus is the Lord, whether thou wilt or no; for all must appear afore his judgment-seat. Oh, but if thy judge be become thy Lord and husband, thou art out of danger. And then give thyself up also to worship, and in all things to obey him, else he is not thy Lord, nor thou his lawful spouse, Eph. v. 24, 'As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives be subject to their husbands;' why doth he speak with such an apparent difference? For what he speaks of wives is but as discoursing to them their duty: 'Let wives be subject,' he doth not say they cannot be saved else; but that other passage of the Church is spoken of as a taken for granted qualification, or essential property in the Church, if she be his lawful true spouse. 'As the Church is subject to Christ,' says he, so that it be the duty of both alike; the Church ought to be subject to Christ, as well as wives to their husbands. The reason and difference is perspicuous, because unless souls be subject to Christ, they are not the Church. A man's wife is his wife, though she be never so perverse and disobedient to him; but no soul is one of his Church and spouse, nor owned by Christ as such, unless she become subject to him,

* 'Non dicit Patrem nostrum, sed Patrem meum et patrem vestrum, aliter ergo meum, aliter vestrum, natura meum, gratia vestrum.'—*Tract. 121, in Joh.*

and subject too in everything, as the comparison there made sheweth. If thou sayest, thou wantest beauty, be not discouraged, he will take thee with all thy deformities, and put beauty on thee; for so the Apostle there goes on,—he washeth and cleanseth his Church, to present her to himself in the end, glorious, and without spot or wrinkle.

And being once married to him, take this for ever along with thee, thou art married to an husband risen from the dead, Rom. vii. 4. And oh, what holiness, heavenliness, should those have that would hold communion and intercourse with such a Lord and husband, the 'Lord from heaven,' and who is now in heaven!