

SERMON XXIV.

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of the might of his power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.—VER. 19, 20.

I SHALL repeat nothing I have delivered, but only lay open the method I have proceeded in handling of these words.

I propounded these four things to be considered in them:—

The *first* is, some general considerations about the power of God. I named three—

1. The excellency of that power, described in these words, ‘the exceeding greatness of his power.’

2. The efficacious working of his power, in these words, ‘according to the effectual working’—the energy of his power—‘of the might of his power.’ They are all words to note out an efficaciousness in the thing here mentioned.

3. The proportions of the power of God; ‘according,’ saith he. He putteth forth more or less power in some works than in other, as himself pleaseth.

The *second* was, the persons toward whom this exceeding greatness of his power is exercised; it is *to us-wards*.

Thirdly, here is the work wherein it is exercised. It is all the works that God hath upon Christians, both from first to last; this I shewed in the last discourse, especially the work of conversion; ‘who believe, according to the working of the might of his power.’

And when he had discoursed at large, from the 20th verse to the end of the chapter, what a power wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead,—he having said that he putteth forth the same power in them that believe,—he telleth them in the 2d chapter, from the 1st verse to the 7th, that he put forth the same power in raising them up, in quickening their hearts, in working grace in them. Read over the coherence, and you will find it to be especially meant of the work that he had wrought in them, when he converted them and brought them to believe.

I am yet upon the *third* thing, viz., *wherein this power is manifested*. I proved in the last discourse—and I thought to have added something, but that the time cut me off from what I have now to deliver—that the thing wherein this power is manifested, this exceeding greatness of power, is at the present in believers; it is not only meant, as some would have it, of his power in raising them up at the last day. For this I shewed reasons, which I will not repeat.

I proved it, *first*, to be the scope of the Apostle.

Now, the *second* thing will be, *What it is in the work of conversion that doth draw forth the exceeding greatness of the power of God.*

And the *third* thing is this, *That it holdeth proportion with that power that raised up Jesus Christ from death to life.*

Now then, to handle, in the first place, that *second* thing mentioned, viz., What it is in the work of conversion,—which I have proved to be the scope of the Apostle to take in, and especially to aim at,—I say, *What is that should draw forth so great a power from God*, to have all these high and mighty expressions of it: ‘the exceeding greatness of the might of his power.’

There are great disputes in the world, what power God putteth forth in converting men to him. My brethren, believe not discourses of it, but believe the Holy Ghost himself. If you would know what power is put forth in any work, ask the agent himself. Who is he that lets fall these words but he that hath converted millions of souls, who is ‘the power of the Highest,’ as he is called, Luke i. 35? He it is that hath indited this scripture, and he saith no less goeth to it than the ‘exceeding greatness of his power.’ Oftentimes the standers-by discern it not. When the woman was healed by a touch of the hem of Christ’s garment, those that stood by discerned no such thing. Hear Christ speak: saith he, ‘Virtue is gone from me.’ He could best tell; because the Holy Ghost doth work oftentimes in men’s hearts in a trice; like unto a strong man that hath a sleight of hand, takes up a weight in show easily; hence therefore, men think that there is no great power goeth to the work, but the man himself that doth the thing thus slightly, he can tell you what strength he putteth to it. So the Holy Ghost, he that was the inditer of this epistle, telleth us that the exceeding greatness of his power went to the converting of you.

Now, my brethren, though this be enough to settle your hearts in it, yet consider the work itself: what it is that requireth this power. All wise agents do proportion their power unto the work they have in hand; he that spends more power than the thing requireth, it is folly. And God, you know, works all things in weight and measure. Let us consider, therefore, what there is in this great work should draw forth the exceeding greatness of the power of God.

‘According,’ saith he, ‘to the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward.’ The word *εις ημεις* either is *toward us*, as noting an extrinsical agency, an agency without us, yet which concerns us; or it noteth out *in us*. We will consider, first, *what God doth when he bringeth a man home to him, which is an extrinsical work out of him*; and, secondly, *what he doth in him*: and so we shall by degrees shew you that there is an exceeding greatness of power required to this work.

In the first place, *what God doth extrinsically toward a man, and for a man*, besides what he doth in him.

First, when he converteth a man, he casteth the devil out of him; that is one thing that is done for a man, besides what is done in his own heart; and there is an exceeding greatness of power goeth to this. In Matt. xii. 28, our Saviour Christ there, from his having cast out a devil, and their saying he did it by the prince of devils, he clears the point, and he riseth up to the point of conversion,—for that is his scope likewise,—and he sheweth that it must be a divine power that must cast the devil out of a man, and when you are turned to God the devil is cast out of you. Saith he, ‘If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you; else,’ saith he, ‘how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house?’

To open this place unto you a little:—

Every man before his conversion, as he is a child of Satan, so, as chap. ii. 2 of this epistle hath it, the devil works effectually in him while he is a child of disobedience; he doth ride and act, and fill the hearts of men, as you have

it, Acts v. 3. You shall find this in Scripture, that the wickedness of men is expressed to you by how many devils they have in them; as, Luke xi. 26, when he would describe a man's state to be in a worse condition than his former, he takes seven devils worse than himself, and they enter into the man. According to the proportion of a man's wickedness in the state of nature, accordingly hath he devils that possess his soul; that is certain. 'According,' saith he in that Eph. ii. 2, 'to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works now in the children of disobedience,' works not in you as he was wont to do, for he is cast out; he works now, but not in you; you walk thus and thus, not according to the power of the prince of the air. Therefore, in John xvi. 11, he saith that the Spirit shall convince the world of judgment, for, saith he, 'the prince of this world is judged.' When a man is converted, Satan is judged, is cast out. Before, a man was 'taken captive of him at his will,' 2 Tim. ii. 26.

My brethren, this is a mighty power, to throw the devil out of a man. In Matt. xii. 28, he saith, 'If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils.' Look Luke xi. 20, 'If I by the finger of God.' The finger of God, you know, was applied to a miracle that no creature could do, Exod. viii. 19. He is called 'the strong man;' and, saith he, if I throw the devil out of any man, I must overcome him by strength, for he is a strong man. He compareth him to a giant, and, saith he, he will never yield; he must be bound; there is no quarter, no moral persuasions will turn the devil out of a man's heart. And he saith—I remember it is an expression in Luke xi. 22—that he hath *πανοπλιαν*, armour; he hath all sorts of armour for to defend himself, and to keep the heart, which, in the 21st verse, is compared to his castle. He compareth him to a strong man that hath his castle, and he hath goods there; for so he calleth them there, a spoiling of his goods, for every sin is the devil's goods; it is more the devil's work than ours, he is gratified in it more than we; it is our loss, but it is his gain, for he is the father of all sin. Now, saith he, if I cast the devil out of a man's heart, he must be bound, it must be by main strength; therefore, saith he, a man must enter in that is stronger than he, and bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house. Here is, you see, one part of the greatness of power put forth in the work of conversion; but here is but the finger of God, it is no more in comparison of what followeth; yet this is somewhat toward it. Here is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us, or to us-ward.

But, secondly, let us come to *the exceeding greatness of his power in us*. To open that to you, for indeed that is the main. You shall find there are exceeding great expressions of Scripture about the work of grace in us.

It is compared to creating at the first,—that expression is often used,—to a metamorphosis, a transformation. It is a word that is used Rom. xii. 2. It is such a transformation as when beasts are turned into men; for so you know the word *metamorphosis* is. It is the title of a book that describeth the metamorphosis, the change of men into beasts, and beasts into men. So it is described Isa. xi. 6; he telleth us there that the wolf and the lamb should dwell together, and the lion and the calf should lie down together; that is, God under the gospel would change these creatures, the wildness of them; he would metamorphose them. And Isa. xliii. 18, 19; it is a place that the Apostle doth allude to, and therefore I quote it. You shall find in 2 Cor. v. 17, saith the Apostle, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' Now, that place in Isaiah is quoted for this; and if you read there, where he useth the same words much to that purpose, he telleth you that the beasts of the

field shall honour him. He had mentioned before, 'Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old;' here old things are passed away. 'Behold, I will do a new thing; the beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls.' He would go and convert heathenish men, men that were beasts, that were as remote from honouring God even as beasts are in some regard. But how would he do this but by a creation? Saith he, ver. 21, 'This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.' Here is that the Apostle saith, old things are past, all things are become new; it is with a transformation.

Now, my brethren, where have you in Scripture—mark what I shall now say—any one that fell away from God, that it is said of him he was a new creature, or was born again, which is the infusion of a new life, or a new soul; or that he was quickened and raised from the dead? All these phrases are put to express the greatness of his power. It is nowhere said in all the word of God, of any such man, that he fell away. Why? Because to that work that shall never fall away goeth a power answerable to the work of creation; it is the infusion of a new nature, it is the raising of a dead man. There is a counterfeit of it indeed, which these phrases are never applied unto.

But, you will say, these are metaphors.

Suppose they be but metaphors many of them, yet still in this they agree, that the same power that created, the same power that shall change a beast into a man, makes that transformation; the same power that shall quicken a dead man, the same power doth go to convert. In this they agree.

My brethren, I ask you this question, To what end doth God set forth the work of grace to us by these metaphors? He setteth them forth that he might have real thanks; therefore certainly there is something in these expressions that answereth the work of creation that is real; for God would not have you give thanks above his proportion, above what his power in working is. Do but compare Eph. ii. 10 with Col. iii. 10. In Eph. ii. 10, saith he, 'We are his workmanship.' How? Produced by creation. If he had meant any other working,—will you mark my reason?—if he had meant any other working than creation, he would never have said, 'his workmanship created;' it had been enough to have said, 'his workmanship,' for that implieth the power of God. Why doth he add 'created?' Certainly, to shew that is as great a work as creation. Therefore, in Col. iii. 10, (compare with this likewise Eph. iv. 24,) he compareth the image of God before the fall to the image of God now renewed in the heart of a Christian. Saith he, 'We are renewed,' so it is in the Colossians, 'after the image of him that created him,' namely at first. All the world grants that it was an immediate power of creation wrought that image at first. Now then, look Eph. iv. 24, and there you shall find that this image is said to be created likewise, 'after the image of him that created them' at the first. So that this is his meaning; as it is the same image, so there is the same power goeth to work it; it is a creation works it now, as a creation wrought it before. He useth the same expression both of the one and of the other.

Will you come to particulars, this is but in general, you shall find it is a power exceedeth the creation. I will but take for my ground Ezek. xxxvi. 26; you shall see there what goeth to convert a man. The power of God is put forth there in three things:—

It is put forth, first, in the *removing of what hindereth*; there is *amotio impediendi*; it is called the taking the stony heart out of your flesh, so ver. 26.

There is, secondly, a *giving of a new capacity to perform*, a new nature and new disposition, which is called giving a new spirit, and by 'new spirit' he meaneth another thing than the Holy Ghost. Why? For he mentioneth him afterward; 'I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.' That is at the 27th verse, but this new spirit is at the 26th verse.

And then, thirdly, there is not only a power given, new and holy dispositions that shall make a man capable by the actings of the Holy Ghost to do well; it is a workmanship created to good works, it is fit for it; but he telleth us, 'I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,' so saith ver. 27. And to shew that he it is that doth all this by an almighty power, what saith he at ver. 36? After he had set down enlargements of promises, saith he, 'I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it;' as he is Jehovah he will do it.

Now, let us but consider these three things, and you shall see what a mighty power goeth to turn a man to God.

Consider, first, *what God takes away*; 'I will take,' saith he, 'the stony heart out of your flesh.' It is not a hardness, such as is of wax, that by an extrinsecal power may be melted; the fire will melt it, the sun will melt it; but no fire, no sun, will melt a stone; you can deal with that no way but by taking it away; therefore that is the phrase, I will, saith he, take away the heart of stone, or 'the stone of the heart.' You see here is something to be destroyed, therefore it is called a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. Why new? Because all new respecteth all old to be taken away, as Heb. viii. 13, 'In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old;' he abolisheth that: so the words following imply, and so indeed it followeth in 2 Cor. v. 17, 'He that is in Christ is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' There is a passing away, a taking away of old things, and there is not a whit of the old remaineth in the new; all is become new, saith he; not a stick, not a stud that was in a man's natural estate will serve afterward, more than the soul and the faculties of it. All old things pass away, and all are become new.

Now, my brethren, will you compare it with the creation, that you may see it is a thing far exceedeth it? God sheweth forth power in creating; he sheweth forth here greatness of power, and exceeding greatness of power; it will appear before we have done.

Herein lay the power of God in the creation, that he created something out of nothing, as it is Rom. iv. 17, 'He called things that be not as if they were;' yet that is made even and equal with the raising of the dead in that very place. But here is a calling things that are *to nothing* first, and when he hath done that, then there is a calling things that are *out of nothing*. There is a doubling of his power in this; there is not only a calling things out of nothing, but there is a bringing to nothing old things. Now, it is a rule in politics, and it holdeth true in philosophy likewise, *Ejusdem potestatis est destruere cujus est constituere*,—The same power that goeth to make laws is it which destroyeth laws, disannulleth laws; there is as much power goeth to bring old things to nothing, as there is to create new things out of nothing. Now then, here is a double power, you see; here is not only power, but greatness of power; it will come to exceeding greatness anon.

The conversion of a sinner is not expressed only by putting in a *new heart*, but the Scripture doth usually express it by destroying *old things*; and as much by that as the other, because the power of God is seen as much in

that as in working grace, that is, as in working grace simply: it is not but that the working of grace is at the same time with this destroying old things; but it is to shew that there is a doubling of his power in it. It is more than to create grace in Adam or in the angels. He therefore calleth it the 'destroying of the body of sin,' Rom. vi. 6; 'the circumcision of the heart,' he cutteth off something, Col. ii. 11; 'the taking away of the vail.' I might give you many like instances.

In one word, I do parallel justification and sanctification together. There goeth more to justify a sinner than went to justify an angel that never fell, or Adam in innocency. There is not only an active obedience, 'Do this and live;' but there is a satisfaction to the punishment of the law, which was an appendix to the law; there is a passive obedience too; if you will justify a sinner you must put these in. Come to sanctification likewise; there is not only required a power to put grace into a man, but to destroy sin. Therefore now, as when he would magnify the mercy of God in justifying us, he mentioneth the state of sin we were in: so when he would magnify the power of God in conversion, he considereth the estate we were in before conversion. So you see here is now a power to create a new creature, here is a power to dissolve the old. Here is power, and greatness of power.

Well, but consider in the third place this, that the thing to be destroyed—viz, sin—is opposite, is *enmity* to the grace that God bringeth in, and to God and his law. It is not simply to destroy old things, to bring a creature to nothing; but it is to destroy enmity. In the first creation, when all things were made out of nothing, there was nothing to oppose, though there were nothing to help it. It had no matter to be wrought upon, yet there was not matter to oppose, for all was made out of nothing. But here, that which is destroyed is the highest, the greatest enemy that can be. You may see for this Rom. viii. 7, 'The carnal mind,' saith he—or indeed, the carnal disposition of the mind, for the word implieth so much—'is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.'

Here are two things, you see, said of the disposition of a man's mind by nature. The first is, it cannot be subject; and the second is, it is enmity.

In the first place, *it cannot be subject*. A wolf will sooner marry a lamb, or a lamb a wolf, than ever a carnal heart will be subject to the law of God, which was the ancient husband of it, as in Rom. vii. 6. It is the turning of one contrary into another. To turn water into wine, there is some kind of symbolising, yet that is a miracle. But to turn a wolf into a lamb, to turn fire into water, or rather flesh into spirit; what saith the Apostle, Gal. v. 17? 'These are contrary.' Between nothing and something there is an infinite distance; but between sin and grace there is a greater distance than can be between nothing and the greatest angel in heaven.

To exemplify this unto you: to destroy the power of sin, how great a power must it needs be! You all yield that to take away the guilt of sin requireth an infinite power, an infinite righteousness. Saith our Saviour Christ, Matt. ix. 6, 'Whether is it easier to say to the man,'—and make it good when you have done,—'Thy sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise and walk?' It was a harder thing to forgive sins; only, saith he, 'that ye might know that the Son of man hath power to forgive sins,' for they would deny that he had power to forgive sins, he exemplifieth it by a miracle; but to forgive sins, saith he, that is his meaning, is infinitely harder.

Now, as we say of the attributes of God that they are alike, of equal extent, so are the two attributes of sin, as I may call them; the guilt of sin

and the power of sin are of a like extent. To destroy the power of sin in a man's soul is as great a work as to take away the guilt of sin; all miracles are in it, saith he: 'the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, and the poor receive the gospel;' it is easier to say to a blind man, See, and to a lame man, Walk, than to say to a man that lies under the power of sin, Live, be holy, for there is that that will not be subject.

You will say to me, that the expelling of sin is but the putting in of grace, as of darkness by light.

But let me tell you this, that sin is too hard for grace, if grace had not a back. Adam had grace enough, but sin seized on his heart, threw it out. 'The strength of sin is the law,' saith he, and sin would keep possession; it hath the law to plead for it; but, saith he, on the contrary, 'the strength of grace is the gospel;' and that is it that keepeth grace now that it is not thrown out, otherwise sin would quickly throw your grace out, it is too hard for it.—That is the first thing, it is not subject to the law of God.

Not only so, but it is said to be *enmity*. It is not only said, it cannot be subject, and it must be destroyed, or else it will never yield, but *it is enmity in the abstract*, it is in the nature of it. In Col. i. 21, we are not only said to be 'enemies by evil works,' it is not a grudge, but we are said to be 'enemies in our mind' too.

Now, my brethren, if there be such an enmity, and if there be such a power in sin as there is, to detain a man, that will not yield, will hold a man to the utmost, there must be *an almighty power of God to subdue it*. You shall find in Col. i., the Apostle at the 11th verse having mentioned the glorious power of God that enabled the saints to do what they did; upon occasion of it what followeth? 'Giving thanks,' saith he, ver. 12, 'unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.' When he cometh to give thanks for the works of grace upon them, what doth he mention? Not only making them holy, making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, but likewise for delivering them from the power of darkness. The word *ἐξέσωσεν* implieth not merely a delivering or freeing, but a freeing by violence, a snatching out of a power that else would never yield. I remember Zanchy saith upon it, They are freed, saith he, not only that have a desire to be free, but they are snatched out, *eripiuntur*, that have no desire to be free. And that is the condition of a man in the state of nature.

But you will say, all these are but metaphors; all that is spoken of the state of corruption and the power of God in delivering a man.

Shall I tell you in a word? When you come to hell, you will not then say they are metaphors; you will then find all these things true of your natural condition. And let me tell you this too. If ever you come to be humbled, you will not find them metaphors, but realities; for the soul of a man is humbled under the real sense of all these things when he turneth unto God; and yet when it cometh to a dispute upon the power of God in working upon a man's heart, creation, and the like, these are you say but metaphors. My brethren, they have the greatest reality in them in the world.

To give you but an instance, that now your own hearts may be judges: go take all the powers of man, when a man cometh to turn unto God, and do but see what a mighty opposition there is; go take the *understanding* of a man. God beginneth there; what doth he find there? He findeth not only ignorance of all spiritual principles, and such an ignorance as a man is not capable of knowing; he cannot know, so saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15,

he is blind. 'Now it was never heard,' saith he, 'from the creation of the world, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind;' yet this is the power that must convert a man. But, I say, that is not all, there is not only an incapacity, a blindness, but there is an opposition, and the strongest that may be; and this must be taken away.

I will quote but one place for it; it is in 2 Cor. x. 4. He describeth there, as the text doth here, the mighty power of God in converting of a man. 'The weapons of our warfare,' saith he, 'are mighty through God.' Mighty? Wherein lieth their might? That he might shew the might that is drawn forth, he describeth the opposition that the understanding of a man makes against the ways of God; he telleth us that there are strongholds: 'Pulling down of strongholds,' saith he; 'casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.' Here lieth the power, the might that God sheweth; he speaks of that opposition that is in the understanding of a man, as the word *νῆρυξ*, reasonings, implieth; high thoughts, a devil to a strong man. He compareth the opposition to what is in a besieged town; there are strongholds, and there are such as plainly will take no quarter, they must die for it, or else they will never yield; therefore he calleth it pulling down the holds; there is no way else to get them, the Holy Ghost must batter them about their ears, yield they will not. They consist in reasonings and in imaginations; a bottom light doth it. When a man cometh to turn to God, let him have never so much knowledge, when he shall come to turn to God in earnest, he hath a thousand dislikes and not fancyings of the ways of God, he hath a world of arguments and objections, and an infinity of reasonings against them. My brethren, when a man's heart is put to it what is the right way of worshipping God and serving him, personally and otherwise, there is nothing but a world of reasonings that come in against it; and there are high thoughts that exalt themselves likewise. These must all be brought into subjection.

My brethren, when a man turns to God,—I will express it to you in a parliamentary language,—you must have this fundamental law, this bill pass, this must be the predominate rule, the *suprema lex*, the highest law that must guide a man's whole life; namely, that it is best to obey Christ in all things, at all times, and in all conditions, whatsoever the state be. This bill must pass with the consent of the whole heart. Now, to advance Christ, to bring all, every high thought into captivity, into subjection to the obedience of Christ; this will never be without an army, without the mighty power of God, that must throw all these strongholds down; 'our weapons are mighty through God,' saith he; they must be mighty through him, they will never do else. Now, do but think with yourselves what an uproar there must needs be in the state of the soul at the introducing such a law as this into a man's heart, if it be in earnest, if he sees he must live by it for ever. You shall have all the three states against it, both the understanding, will, and affections; you shall have big swelling reasonings and thoughts of absurdities. What? If this law take place, we must all come down then; all projects, all corruptions must go down.

My brethren, if all the apostles were now alive, and should set themselves to persuade one man; and, besides them, if God should send all the angels down from heaven to the earth to persuade one man, they could not make this law pass in a man's heart, they could not persuade him to it; it must be the might of God to throw down all opposite reasonings. And God doth this, he doth come with a little light, a bottom light into a man's heart,—for

he createth there,—and letteth him see that excellency that is in himself and in his ways ; and he doth not stand reasoning much with him neither, though all reasonings are for it ; but God letteth in a light, answereth all objections, throweth down all strongholds, bringeth every thought into the obedience of Christ. Paul was in his height ; how opposite was he unto God ? What a world of reasonings had he against Christ in his heart ? Jesus Christ did but tell him, ‘ I am Jesus whom thou persecutest,’ and there was a light shone in his mind, as much as that which shone round about him, and in an instant saith he, ‘ Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?’ All the disputations in the world would never have wrought thus. So the poor jailor cometh in trembling at midnight, ‘ Sirs, what shall I do to be saved ?’ He was converted before morning. All the reasonings in the world, and all the moral persuasions that men or angels could have brought, would never have done this ; it was the mighty power of God casting down strongholds, putting in a light that goeth beyond all a man’s objections.

Come to a man’s *will*, and you will have as much to do there. A man’s will must have a new end put upon it. And come to the will and affections, you shall find as much difficulty there to oppose. For example, there are two great principles in the heart of a man, that if ever God’s Spirit cometh to deal with in good earnest, will hold tug with him as long as they can. What are they ? You shall have them in 2 Tim. iii. 2, 4, ‘ Men shall be lovers of their own selves ;’ there is the first ; and then followeth, ‘ covetous, proud, boasters,’ &c. And the last is at the 4th verse, ‘ lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.’ Here are the two principles that are in a man’s will and affections, and they will try it too. This same Self-love, that is the General, that goeth before, the captain ; and Love of Pleasure, that is the lieutenant, that followeth after this army. One is the first, the other is last, backs all these lusts that are between.

Love of a man’s self ; first begin with that. It is the great devil ; absolutely it is Beelzebub, it is the prince of devils, it is the bottom of original sin ; and to throw this devil out of a man’s heart, to depose him, to bring him down, it must be a mighty power indeed to do it. It was a great power to cast the devil out of a man ; but to cast out this great devil out of a man’s heart, to depose him, and bring another king in, this is a hard work. When God was thrown out of a man’s heart when Adam did sin, then Self-love was next heir, and stepped up into the throne. All that God had, saith Self-love, I will have, I will serve myself as much as ever I did God. Now, as all the heart was for God before, in the same manner it is for itself now. All the strength that a man hath doth back Self-love, stands for the king. It is a king of an absolute sovereignty ; and because it is a king, therefore when God cometh and tells a man, You must be subject to me, Self-love bustleth. What ? I am absolute, saith he. It is enmity against the law and against all that shall proclaim war against Self-love in a man. I am for myself, saith he, and all that is within me is for me ; there is but poor Conscience, that standeth contesting a little ; but the whole heart is for it, that is certain. Now, when the Holy Ghost shall come to depose this great king, this absolute monarch, as it is in a man’s heart, especially it shall be a foreigner that shall go about to do it, as God and the Spirit of God is. ‘ Love is strong as death,’ it is a proverb, Cant. viii. 6. Self-love much more ; all the strength that a man hath is for himself, he will give all for his life, for the life of this king ; a man will never yield ; all in nature will rise up against him that shall go about to depose it, all will be in arms. Yet notwithstanding, though the heathen imagine a vain thing, though the people and kings of the earth

rage against Christ, and though all in a man thus be up in arms, yet God will set his Son upon this holy hill, upon a man's heart, before he hath done.

My brethren, this must be an almighty power that must do it ; it is not all the persuasions in the world will do it. You may persuade Self-love to much ; to serve God, and to do many things so far as will stand with its prerogative, so that he may remain king still ; but to depose him, and that God shall be king, and he God's favourite, this must be an almighty power to do it.

So likewise for the love of pleasures, that is the second thing. When Self-love cometh to be deposed thus, as in conversion it is, from being king, saith every lust, every poor inferior lust, if this government be altered, I shall lose this pleasure and that pleasure, if you turn the world upside down thus. There is nothing in the heart, my brethren, but is for pleasure in some kind or other. A man liveth in pleasure, that is the expression, as a fish doth in its element. Take him out of carnal natural pleasures in some creature or other, his soul dieth ; it will fight for pleasure as for his life. Saith the Apostle, 2 Peter ii. 14, 'They have eyes full of adultery, they cannot cease from sin ;' they cannot, till a further power cometh. Luke xiv. 20, 'I have married a wife,' saith he, and in plain terms, 'I cannot come ;' he makes that his excuse ; for such lusts as these are have a mighty power upon a man's heart. How great ? See what Christ's own expression is, that was the Saviour of souls, and knew what belonged to the converting of them, for he died for them. In Matt. xix. 24, there was a rich man came to him, and he was an ingenuous man. Christ preached the gospel to him, moved his heart a little, he used all moral persuasions to him that could be, told him that he should have eternal life ; yet he goeth away. What doth Christ infer upon this ? You shall find the story of that young man is the introduction to the words I quote this place for ; 'A rich man,' saith he, 'shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Hardly ? That is no great matter. What doth our Saviour Christ ? He riseth higher in his expression : 'And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God ;' not for one that is rich simply, but Mark telleth us, chap. x., for one that 'trusteth in his riches,' that is his expression.

First, he saith it is *hard*.

Secondly, it is *so hard*, as it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. It was a proverb among the Jews, and it is in many of the rabbins extant to this day. You will say that it is an absurdity to use such an expression, a camel to go through the eye of a needle ; the more absurdity there is in it, the more it expresseth the impossibility.

In the third place, saith Christ, 'with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible ;' it is impossible for all men in the world to do the work for another man ; that is simply impossible ; but with God all things are possible : why doth he say *all things* ? If it were a slight work he would not say so ; but, saith he, with God that works all things else, that hath an omnipotent power to subdue all things to himself, with him it is possible, he must do this.

I find this word, 'all things are possible,' used but in one or two cases. It is used upon the incarnation of Christ ; when the angel had told Mary that Jesus Christ should be born of her, saith he, 'with God all things are possible,' and that was the highest work that ever he did, he 'shewed strength with his arm' there. So it is said of his working in us, Eph. iii. 20 ; and the like you have, Phil. iii. 21, 'According to the power whereby he subdueth

all things unto himself,' that is the power that works in us; that is the power that must work a man off whose heart is set upon his riches, and is set upon any pleasure.

My brethren, it is not the offers of eternity, it is not all the persuasions of men and angels, nor of the Holy Ghost himself, if they be but mere moral persuasions, will make a man part with a bird in the hand for two in the bush. My meaning is, that will make a man part with his lusts, or his pleasures and sin, and take and accept the offers of eternity; but it must be the power of God, with whom all things are possible, and he must put forth as much power to work this as he putteth forth to work all things else.—And so now you have seen the power that is shewn in destroying this opposite, sin.

I will but speak a word of *the power that is in creating*. There is yet something to be done, there must be a new creation besides this destruction. There is a taking away the old heart; old things pass away, you see what a power that requireth. The second thing in Ezekiel that I mentioned, because that place holdeth this out, is a new heart and a new spirit, and to work that is a work of creation; it is an almighty power of God. Now, creation is a work that hath no matter to work upon, that is properly creation, and therefore requireth an infinite power. 'Create in me,' saith he, 'a clean heart,' Ps. li. Saith he in Job xiv. 4, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' If a man's heart be unclean, if he come to have a clean heart, certainly it must be created. We are therefore said to be the 'workmanship of God, created to good works,' in that second to the Ephesians. Mark it, it is not only a working upon the heart, but a workmanship it is called. And if you will know the manner of setting up and producing it, it is by way of creation.

I might be large in shewing you, that besides this destroying old things, there is a creating of new principles and gracious dispositions in the heart before a man turneth to God, which are the foundations of his turning to God. 'Turn me, and I shall be turned.' I will name but a scripture or two; and then I will shew you the mighty power that goeth to create this disposition.

First, I will shew to you—because those that make the power of God to be only external, assisting, do detract from the power of God—that it lieth in *creating new dispositions* in the heart, and then *assisting*, and then working upon them. I will name a scripture or two. I have shewed you what goeth to destroy the old; I will shew you then what power also goeth to the creating and rearing up of the new.

First, I will shew you that *there must be a new principle created*. Saith he, John iii. 6, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which born of the Spirit is spirit.' See how I argue out of these words. Here you see there is flesh and corruption, which is by one birth; here is spirit, a distinct thing from the Holy Ghost, that is a fruit of a second birth. Now, my brethren, take a man in his first birth; all the world yieldeth that there are habitual principles and dispositions unto evil, there is a habitual aversion from God, and conversion to the creature; there are dispositions and inclinations only to what is evil. Now then, in the second birth, answerably the spirit that is made and born by the Holy Ghost must be oppositely holy, and have dispositions to the contrary; for otherwise, nature is not healed if the Holy Ghost only works acts in a man, and did not work habits; the second Adam did not answer the first. And therefore you shall find, Gal. v. 17, the Apostle saith, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit

against the flesh ; for these are contrary.' I appeal ; dare any man say the Holy Ghost lusteth in us against the flesh ? No, it is the spirit, a habitual frame of heart that lusteth in us against corruption. So now there is a new spirit wrought ; that is, there are dispositions that are contrary unto sin, as sin is unto grace. As there are habitual dispositions to sin, both through nature and custom ; so there are habitual dispositions to good that do lust against the flesh in a man. Therefore he compareth this spirit in that 5th to the Galatians to a root, 'The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,' &c. He compareth the spirit or frame of grace, begotten by the Holy Ghost, unto a root.

Now mark you, to follow this, in Matt. xiii. 21, speaking of those that are temporisers, what doth he say of them ? He saith they wanted a root in themselves ; that is, they had not habitual dispositions of grace created in their hearts, that might be a root to the fruit of the spirit ; for you know the root and fruits answer one another. Nay, if you ask me what that root is, the parable there explaineth it, a good and honest heart, a heart made holy ; therefore our Saviour Christ saith, Matt. vii. 17, compared with Matt. xii. 33, 'make the tree good, and the fruit will be good,' but the tree must be good first. Therefore you may read in Matt. xxv., the foolish virgins had lamps, they had assistance from the Holy Ghost for present performances ; but the wise virgins took oil in their vessels with their lamps. When themselves were asleep, and their lamps were out, yet they had a holy disposition, a spirit of grace ; they had oil remaining in their hearts. I will not stand to open this ; it is the law written in their hearts. I could shew you that the written law in the heart is not the Holy Ghost, for he is the writer, as it is 2 Cor. iii. 3. It is called the 'inner man' renewed daily. It is the Holy Ghost that strengtheneth the inner man ; it is not the soul that is the inner man properly, but the inner man is that which is opposite to corruption ; and he saith, Eph. iii. 16, 'they were strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man.'

Well, here therefore is an inner man to be wrought, to be created. Now if there be an inner man to be created, and holy and gracious dispositions, here is an almighty power to do it.

My brethren, you know that John Baptist was sanctified in the womb ; he had not the Holy Ghost only working upon him in way of acts, for he did not actually believe and actually repent ; children do not. If you take away habits of grace, you must take away all grace from infants, from that pure part of the Church as one calleth them, *purissima ecclesie*, for so they are.

Now for the creation of these habits of grace, all holy dispositions, there must be an almighty power go to do it. I will give you a scripture for it ; it is 2 Peter i. 3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue : whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises : that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'

Here you see wherein the mighty power of God is seen in working upon a man's heart ; it is in giving him all things belonging to life and godliness. The meaning is this, he furnisheth him with tools ; it is called a workmanship. If you would set up a man's trade, you will furnish him with all instruments, with all utensils necessary to a trade ; so here, it is a workmanship created, he hath all habits in him necessary, all things pertaining to life and godliness, and this a mighty power must do answerable to the creation. Yea, let me tell you this, that although the creation of the world and of a

man's soul be a mighty work, yet to create grace, especially the second time, to fit a man for heaven, is a greater work, it is more than all the first creation; it is a transcendent thing. There is no work that God doth so great as this, especially this new creation of grace, for it fitteth a man for heaven. Therefore saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 5, 'He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing;' he hath wrought us for heaven. Adam's grace did not fit him for heaven. That which must carry a man into heaven is a grace, as the grace of faith is, higher than what Adam had in this world. He was not fitted for heaven by what he had; but we are 'made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.' It must be a more transcendent grace than what Adam had; raised up to higher acts at least.

Though grace be but an accident in the soul of a man, yet it is more worth than all men's souls. It is not so in philosophy; that will tell you otherwise, that will tell you that a substance is better than an accident. But it is so in divinity. Saith he, James i. 18, 'Of his own will hath he begotten us, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.' The meaning is, Hath he put grace into us? To what end hath he done it? He hath made us thereby, saith he, the choicest of all his creatures: as Christ is called the first-fruits of them that sleep, the choicest of them; so, saith he, we are made the choicest of all the creatures, having grace wrought in us, he having begotten us. Israel is called, Jer. ii. 3, the first-fruits of God, because he was the choicest of all the world; and though that word seemeth to be a diminishing, yet the truth is here it heighteneth it,—it is ἀπαρχὴ τινα, and it is of the creatures, κτισμάτων, in the plural number,—it makes a man most excellent of all creatures whatsoever. It is a good saying of Aquinas: 'The good of grace,' saith he, 'is a greater good than the good of the world; it excelleth all creatures.'

And therefore, my brethren, let me but add this: Of all creations, the creation of grace is the greatest next to that of glory; and, for my part, I must profess unto you, I think as great, for it is that which fitteth a man for glory; it is the beginning of glory. Of all creations it is the greatest, there are but two to be compared with it. I shall give you Scripture for it. I remember the last day I quoted the second to the Colossians, and the 10th, 11th, 12th verses, where it is said that faith is of the operation of God, and speaking of sanctification, he saith, it is a 'circumcision made without hands.' There are but two things in the Scripture that are said to be made without hands, and it is to shew the excellency of their creation above all creatures else, as you shall see by and by. It is a phrase used of the glory of heaven: 'We look for a house not made with hands,' saith he, 2 Cor. v. 1. It is used likewise of the framing the body of Christ, and uniting it to the God-head: Heb. ix. 11, it is said to be 'a tabernacle made without hands.' And what is the meaning of 'made without hands' there? The Apostle himself explaineth it; 'that is,' we translate it, 'not of this building,' but in the Greek it is, 'not of this creation.' Adam's body was made and created; but, saith he, his was made with hands in comparison with the body of Christ, take it with all his graces. It is not of this creation, saith he, it is a higher creation, so the phrase 'made without hands' implieth; and it is used but of the body of Christ, and of the glory of heaven; and to create grace is as much.

To confirm this to you, that it is so taken; 'made without hands,' is not only in opposition to the work of man, but to the work of God too, and to the work of the first creation. I will give you a scripture for this,—compare but two scriptures together,—that the phrase is so taken, Acts vii. 49. There

Stephen doth quote Isa. lvi. 1, to prove that God would not dwell in a temple made with hands; saith he, ver. 47, 'Solomon built him a house; howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.' That is, you will say, in temples made with man's hands; but you shall see it is not made with God's hands by the first creation: 'As saith the prophet,' he quoteth the prophet for it, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me, saith the Lord? Hath not my hands made all these things?' 'Not made with hands,' hath an opposition not only to the temple made with man's hands, but to the whole creation made with God's hands at first; for otherwise how cometh in this phrase, 'Hath not my hands made these things?' That is, these are but my own creatures; heaven and earth are an ordinary sort of creatures, and all the things in the world you see are but an ordinary sort of creatures; and these, saith he, my hands have made: but I will have something to dwell in made without hands; that is, it shall not be of this creation, it shall be of a higher creation. What is that? Look in Isaiah, 'With him will I dwell that is of a poor and a humble spirit, that trembleth at my word.' Doth God create anew? Doth he create grace in the heart? It is not of this creation heaven and earth were made of; it is of a higher creation: yet there was an almighty power in creating them; and yet, saith he, it is not of that creation; the making of heaven and earth is but an ordinary sort of work; but the making grace in a man's heart is a creating without hands in comparison of heaven and earth.

To use but a scripture more, and it is but a false testimony; when the false witnesses brought an accusation against Christ, they said, 'We heard this man say, I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands;' which though it were a false testimony, yet it may serve for this.

But I say the phrase is only used of us, and of the framing of the body of Christ, which are all transcendent and above the first creation. So that to work grace, to work the love of God in the soul, to put the least life of grace into the soul, is a new creation; it is a work made without hands.

My brethren, I will end all this in one word. You see here is a work of a new creation, that doth put into a man's heart that which is above all creations; you will ask me what that is?

I will answer you in a word: it is putting in all things belonging to life and godliness; so the apostle Peter expresseth it, 2 Peter i. 3. The vast ocean of the heart of man, let his heart be never so far wrought upon by self-love, never so much stirred, there is not the least drop of godliness in it, the least drop of the love of God in it, not the least aiming at God more than at a man's self, of having a man's affections stirred upon considerations drawn from God and not from a man's self. All such dispositions of heart cost more power to work them than the making of the frame of heaven and earth. 'All these things have my hands made;' this is made without hands; it is not of that creation, it will never go to hell with thee.

I should make this more manifest to you, it is a practical point this which I have handled, and I have stood the longer upon it to this end, not only to stand disputing with men of the greatness of the power of God in conversion, but to give you an account of it; and I have spoken the things we have known, and felt, and seen, and to go and dispute with reasons will never convince a man. I remember that ecclesiastical story. There was a man that was a philosopher, and he held out disputing against fourscore bishops that met together in a council, held them all work, answered all

their reasons. There came but in a poor, mean man that gave him but an account of his faith, and of the work of God upon him. Saith he, While these bishops with all their words spake words, I had words to answer them, but this man's words came with power that I cannot resist. My brethren, to dispute what power goeth to the work of grace, men will put it off easily, but to give you an account of it, wherein it lies, and to do it out of the Word, and out of a man's heart, and the experience of the people of God ; this oftentimes hath a power going along with it that no man can resist.