

## SERMON XXV.

*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.*

WE are handling of this, the ‘exceeding greatness of the power’ which God in this life putteth forth toward believers. I have proved at large that the power here extended toward believers is not to be restrained only to the resurrection at the latter day,—that he will raise up our mortal bodies, as he raised up Christ’s body unto glory,—but that he speaks of the power of God in this life, as the same Apostle expresseth it, chap. iii. 20, ‘according to the power which worketh in us,’ that worketh at present; that is the power he here meaneth.

The power of God is either seen in the first work of turning us to God, and that is mainly and eminently in the Apostle’s eye; for, saith he, in a coherence to these words in the second chapter, ver. 1, ‘And you who were dead in sins and trespasses’ (it must have a verb) ‘hath he quickened,’ speaking of their conversion; and so at the 5th and 6th verses you find it plainly expressed.

Or else this power is shewed toward us in continuing the work of faith; and it is hard to say in which more power is shewn and spent.

I have made entrance upon the first, as an instance and a demonstration enough of all the power that works afterward; for we are kept by the power of God unto salvation, so saith the Apostle.

The power that God sheweth, the ‘exceeding greatness of his power,’ I propounded for the method of handling it these two things—

The former, That there is an exceeding greatness of power shewn in it.

The second, That it holdeth proportion with that power which wrought in Jesus Christ when he was raised from the dead.

For the former, for the demonstration that an exceeding greatness of power is shewn in working faith, and in quickening us at our first conversion unto God; that power, I said, was shewn in two things—

Either, first, (I went by degrees in it,) in what he doth for a believer, though not upon a believer; the word *εἰς ἑαυτὸν* will not only bear what is done *in him*, but what is done *for him*, and done *toward him*. As the throwing out of Satan out of a man, as I shewed out of Luke xii., is a work that is done *for* a Christian; but it is not a work so much *upon* him as upon Satan that is cast out. ‘Now,’ saith he, John xii. 31, ‘is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out;’ he speaks, when the world should be converted to Christ, that conversion is called the judgment of the world; as in John xvi. 11, ‘He shall convince the world of judgment,’ that is, of that holiness and righteousness which they ought to take up and walk in; and he addeth, ‘for the prince of this world is judged.’ That this is

done by a strong hand, I shewed in the last discourse : 'If I by the finger of God cast out devils.' The finger of God must go to it.

Then, secondly, if you come to the work that he doth in us, it ariseth not only to a greatness of power, but to an exceeding greatness of power. I paralleled it with the first creation, in which there was a greatness of power shewn ; there was a making of something, yea, of all things out of nothing, and between nothing and the least thing there is an infinite disproportion. But when he comes to work upon the heart of a man that is dead by nature in sins and trespasses, he doth not only find nothing to work upon, but he findeth all things against him, so that his power is not simply drawn out in creating grace out of nothing, but in subduing and destroying of corruption ; and so I shewed you the Scripture expresseth it. There is not only nothing to help or further, but there is all things to oppose. I shewed this at large in the last discourse, and how to subdue that which opposeth there is required a greatness of power.

But then, in the second place, there is an exceeding greatness of power, there is a doubling of power. There is not only a power to destroy what is opposite,—as I shewed both upon the understanding, the will, and affections,—but there is a putting in and a creating of a new principle, a contrary principle, maugre all the opposition that the heart of man makes against it. And so, because there is a doubling of power, there is an exceeding greatness of power cometh to be spent in this work.

In handling of this I shewed that the very creation itself of the new creature was of a higher kind, as the Scripture expresseth it, than the first creation was ; because that grace is the most excellent of all God's creatures. James i. 18, speaking of the work of conversion, and of God's begetting us again, 'Of his own will,' saith he, 'he hath begotten us.' And what followeth ? 'That we should be a kind of first-fruits ;' but, as I shewed you in the last discourse, the eminent first-fruits of all his creatures, the choicest of all ; for so doth the grace given by regeneration make a man.

And that it was a higher creation than the first, the putting in of new principles thus into the heart, I shewed you by the phrase that is used, Col. ii. 11, where he calleth the sanctification of a sinner the circumcising the heart, which, as in Deuteronomy, is that we may love God. He calleth this new work in us sinners a circumcision made without hands. I observed this upon it, that that phrase, 'made without hands,' is used only of three things, whereof grace or the new creature is one. It is used of that glory which God will put upon his saints and children hereafter in heaven ; which all the world must acknowledge is a work transcending that first creation : 'We have a house not made with hands,' saith he, 2 Cor. v. 1. It is used, secondly, of that framing the body of Christ, the human nature of Christ, both body and soul, and uniting it to the Godhead ; that human nature, so united, is called a tabernacle made without hands, Heb. ix. 11. And then, thirdly, here, in this Col. ii. 11, he calleth the sanctification of a sinner, and working holiness and grace in him, circumcising the heart to love God ; he calleth it a circumcision made without hands.

You have the like, as you shall see by and by, in Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. Only observe first what followeth there in Heb. ix. 11, when he said that the body of Christ is a tabernacle made without hands. What doth he add by way of explication ? He saith that it is 'not of this creation ;' so the word in the original is ; as if he should say, the tabernacle and the bodies of men, of ordinary men, though the one made by man and the other made by God, yet they are a more slight, a more ordinary kind of work. But, saith he, this

body of Christ is made without hands ; that is, it is not of this creation, it is not of the old creation, it is of a more transcendent creation. And so is grace.

I backed this interpretation with Acts vii. 48, compared with Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. In Acts vii. 48, Stephen proveth that God will not dwell in temples made with hands. Saith he, 'Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; as saith the prophet,'—now mark what the prophet saith,—'Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool ; what house will ye build me, saith the Lord of hosts ? or what is the place of my rest ?' Therefore man's hands cannot make him a house good enough. Nay, heaven and earth, the old creation, is not good enough for him ; for, saith he, 'Hath not my hands made all these things ?' Well, what is it that he will have now to dwell in, that both exceedeth all the houses man can build, and exceedeth the house that himself hath made, if you take the material heavens, and the earth that is his footstool ? Look in Isa. lxvi. you shall find that it is a gracious heart, that is a thing made without hands ; that is not of this ordinary creation of God, for it is spoken in opposition to things made with hands. 'All these things,' saith he, 'hath my hand made ;' he slighteth them so, these are but an ordinary sort of works, I will not dwell in them ; 'but to him will I look that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word,' so it is ver. 2.

So that now, to have the least spark of grace begun in a man's heart is a work made without hands, in comparison. It is of a higher kind of work than all the works of men and angels—yea, than the works of the first creation. These things hath mine hand made ; but I will dwell in a circumcised heart made without hands ; that is not of this creation, that is of a higher creation than all this.—And so much for the general, That the putting in of grace into the heart is a matter of more transcendent power than the first creation was.

Now, my brethren, as I shewed you in particulars the power of God in destroying what opposeth ;—I went over the understanding, shewed what opposeth there, what a mighty power went to destroy the strongholds there ; I went over the will and affections, shewed you what opposeth there likewise—self-love, and all inordinate affections and love of pleasures, and the like ;—as I did this in the negative part, in the destructive part, so I will do the same also in this positive part. And I will shew you, this is the scope, that for God to work grace in your understandings, to know things aright, which you think is most easy, there is an exceeding greatness of power going to it, no less than went to the first creation ; yea, much more ; it is not of this creation : so likewise to put in holy principles into your will and affections. Therefore, all that goeth to frame a Christian from first to last must needs be an exceeding greatness of power. I am forced thus to repeat things, that I may clear my method as I go along.

And, first, *What God doth upon your understandings when he doth convert you.* Why, it requireth an exceeding greatness of power, though you little think it, to believe : 'Who believe,' saith the Apostle, 'according to the working of his mighty power.' I will not run over all things that may be said of believing, but I will speak of spiritual knowledge, to know things spiritually and aright as Christians do, that it requireth an exceeding greatness of power to work it. I shall demonstrate this unto you, in the first place, in a more general way ; and, secondly, more particularly by two things.

In the first place, *in the general.* For to make a soul to take a thing

upon God's bare authority, and therefore to believe it, is as great a work as any God doth ; and it requireth as much power,—mark what I shall say to you,—it requireth as much power to work faith in the heart to believe God will do such a thing, as it is for God to do it.

For instance, to explain myself,—though I shall not follow my instance in the opening of it, but for illustration's sake,—this is my meaning : at the latter day, God will raise up all our bodies from the dust to glory. To believe this spiritually and aright, and to work your hearts to believe it, requireth as much power as for God to do it, when he cometh to do it. So you have my meaning.

I shall give you a place of Scripture for it, and it is in Mark ix. 21, 22. There is a poor man cometh to Christ to have a miracle done for him ; what doth he say to Christ ? If thou canst do anything, saith he, wilt thou heal my son, and throw the devil out of him ? ' If thou canst do anything ; ' so he saith to Christ. Then mark what Christ saith to him : ' Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.' To open these words a little. You see when the man said, If thou canst do anything, help my child ; saith Christ again, If thou canst believe, all things are possible. He makes it of equal possibility for him to do the thing, and for the man to believe. It was as hard a matter for the man to believe this, and required as much power to work faith in him, as it was for Christ to effect it. Therefore our Saviour addeth, ' To him that believeth, all things are possible,' for faith commandeth all the power in God ; as if he should say, There is as great an infinity of power required to work faith in thee to believe it, it is all one, and to do the thing. So far as anything is possible, so far it is credible, it is believable.

Let me put you a supposition. If God should reveal by me infallibly, as he did speak by the prophets and apostles, that he would make a new world to-morrow, it were as hard a thing for God to work this faith in you, as for him to make this world ; he might make this world upon the same rate as he would work this faith in your hearts. To believe a thing upon divine authority doth require an omnipotent power. To believe things upon slight grounds, that is easy ; ' The fool believeth everything,' saith Solomon in the Proverbs ; but to believe this in earnest is a work of an almighty power.

And so much in general, that the power of God in doing anything for us is but proportionable to the working of faith in us that he will do it, or that he is able to do it ; yet you think this is easy, and yet you see what the Scripture saith.

To come now *particularly* to shew you what a mighty power goeth to work faith and spiritual knowledge ; and it is but to believe the thing, not to believe that it is yours ; but to believe the thing in a spiritual manner requireth an exceeding greatness of power. I shall shew you it by two things :—

The first is, to work a *principle of faith*. You know I told you in the last discourse that this new creation, much of the power of it was spent in working habits as we call them,—that is, inward abilities,—to work a formal principle, such as is to work sight in a blind eye. You know there is the act of seeing, or seeing itself, and there is a principle of seeing, a power to see ; a framing of an eye and of a soul to see, as I may so express it, or of a faculty of seeing. Now in the understanding, to understand things spiritually and aright, there must be an almighty power go to it, to put a new principle in you, to make you capable to believe and know spiritual things.

I remember in the last discourse, when I shewed what expressions the Holy Ghost useth to express the work of conversion, I quoted Rom. xii. 2, where it is called a transformation, an altering the form of the mind, the shape of the mind; it is a metamorphosis, as I then expressed it, and indeed the word is so in the Greek. Now the transformation there, what is it applied unto? It is applied unto the understanding of a man, it is but the changing of the understanding that that word is used of. You think that to believe and to know spiritual things is no great matter, and that all the difficulty lies in doing of them, and in being affected with them. But the Apostle saith plainly, that you may know things aright, that you may approve of them in a spiritual way, of their goodness and excellencies; you must be metamorphosed, saith he, in your minds, you must have a new form come in to your understanding; so the word signifieth.

He useth two words there: 'Be not conformed to the world,' saith he; and the word he useth for that is *συσχηματισθεσθαι*; it signifieth an outward form, an artificial form; for the world is but an empty show, an empty shape, as the Apostle calleth it: 'The fashion of the world passeth' away; it is the same word. But when he speaks of the other, the transformation of the understanding, the word is *μεταμορφωσθεσθαι*: it signifieth an inward cause, such as the soul is to the body, a natural form, not an artificial; an inward one, not an outward one.

So that now, for a man to approve of spiritual things in a spiritual manner, look as if he would make a beast understand as a man, you must bring a new soul, a new form: so if you will make an unregenerate man understand spiritual things aright, you must bring a new form, a new soul, as it were, into his understanding. The Apostle expresseth it, 1 John v. 20, 'He hath given us an understanding that we may know him:' not but the same for substance, the same natural power of understanding, is in a wicked man and in a godly man; but there is a new ability, a new principle, a new quality put in that fits him to understand spiritual things, which the other cannot do.

To illustrate this further unto you, and to shew you that to work this requireth no less power than in the creation. Look first into 1 Cor. ii. 14. I shall tell you to what purpose I quote that by and by. 'The natural man,' saith he, 'receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; but he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.' To open these words: by a natural man he meaneth a man that is not regenerate, that is not born again, for he doth oppose him to a spiritual man; a man that hath no other principles in him in respect of grace than what he brought into the world; he hath the same natural understanding he had without any spiritualness put upon it by the Holy Ghost. This is a natural man. Now, saith he, this man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; nay, saith he, he cannot know them. But he that is spiritual is both able to receive them, and he can know them; so the opposition runneth. And all cometh to this, that there must be a new principle put into the understanding of a man; not only a new light come in, but a new principle, if you would have this man understand spiritual things aright. And that is the scope I quote this place for—that the understanding must be altered, a new principle must be put into it, a new habit as we call it. All the expressions do carry it to that sense.

For, first, he saith, otherwise, if he be not made spiritual he cannot receive spiritual things; that is, he wants a capacity. It is such a phrase, as if you would speak to a deaf man, you will say he cannot receive what you say, for

he wanteth a faculty of hearing. If you bring a blind man into the sun, he cannot receive the light of it, for he wants a natural faculty so to do. He expresseth it in a way of nature; he is not capable of it, which argueth, I say, a want of a principle whereby to do it.

And not only so, but he saith in the following words, 'he cannot know them,' he wants a *δύναμις*, a power; *ὃ δύναται γινῶναι*, a *potentia*, as the philosopher calleth it; for the Apostle speaks suitably here to philosophical principles; that, as we say in philosophy, nothing can work but it must have a principle of working, a man cannot see without the faculty of seeing: so this man wants a faculty of knowing spiritual things, therefore he cannot know them.

Thirdly, the reason he giveth evidenceth this; for what is the reason why a natural man cannot know them? Because, saith he, they are spiritually discerned. He speaks just like our school-men, for we use to express in a way of distinction, in a spiritual manner, that is, spiritually. The meaning is, to see it in its own spiritual nature, abstracted from all considerations besides, so he cannot see it; that is the meaning of this, 'he cannot discern it spiritually.' If he would know it aright, he must know it as it is in itself; now so he hath not a principle suited and fitted to this object as it is spiritual in itself, he may know it otherwise in other considerations, but take it as it is spiritual and he cannot know it.

As, for example, it is as if he should say, the mind of a man, or the eye of a man rather, cannot see an angel. Why? For an angel is spiritually discerned. One angel can see another; but take an angel merely as he is a spirit, let him not take a shape, take him in his spiritual nature, and the eye of man cannot see him. Why? For he is a spirit, and he must be discerned spiritually. Just so it is here. Take spiritual things in their own nature, and he wants a faculty, a spiritual principle, to see them with, to know them with.

Therefore, in the fourth place, which is a fourth reason why that the Apostle here would have a spiritual, a new principle to go to help a man to see spiritual things spiritually; this is a fourth reason, in that he calleth him that discerneth, a spiritual man. 'He that is spiritual,' saith he, 'discerneth all things.' What doth he mean by a spiritual man? You have it interpreted John iii. 6, 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' What is it that is born of the Spirit? It is not an act of knowing, but it is a principle of knowledge; for always that which cometh by birth is nature, it is natural dispositions that are derived to us by our birth; therefore we use to say of what is a man's disposition, he hath it by nature. Therefore now his meaning is this: he is a spiritual man, he is regenerate, he hath a new understanding, a new principle put into him, a quickness, a disposition of understanding, which a carnal man wants, and therefore he is not fitted to know spiritual things as he is. You shall find in 1 Cor. xv. 44, that the Apostle saith, 'There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body;' they are the same terms in the Greek that are used here, a natural man, and a spiritual man. Now by spiritual body there, what is meant? Spiritual endowments; as to shine like the sun, to have agility and nimbleness to move as an angel, to have all such spiritual endowments put upon it; herein lieth the spiritualness of the body, in opposition to this natural body of ours. So a spiritual understanding lieth in having new endowments, which enableth a man to know spiritual things in such a manner as no natural man in the world can know them.

Well then, this is the scope of this place, and so I will leave it: That if

you desire to know spiritual things aright, you must have as great a change wrought in your minds to make them spiritual, as your bodies one day shall have to make them spiritual at the resurrection; new qualities and endowments put upon your understandings, new forms, so the Apostle expresseth it—to be ‘transformed in the renewing of your minds to know him’—in that 12th of the Romans.

Now then, to gather up this first head, this must necessarily be done by a creation, no less power than went to create at first. Nay, it is not of this creation neither.

To make that plain to you, that a man cannot know spiritual things, cannot have this principle of knowledge unless he be made a new creature; it must be a creation that must do it. For this I do quote 2 Cor. v. 16, 17. Read what the Apostle saith there; he speaks of the different knowledge he had when he was an unregenerate man, and a regenerate man. See how he expresseth it. ‘Wherefore,’ saith he, ‘henceforth,’ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, that is, hence from the time of my conversion, for indeed a Christian reckoneth his life from his conversion; ‘Wherefore henceforth,’—that is, from the time of my conversion,—‘know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, from henceforth know we him no more.’ He speaks of knowledge, you see, and of such a knowledge as he had wrought in him from the time and instant of his conversion, differing from that before.

Before, I knew men after the flesh. That phrase, ‘after the flesh,’ referreth both to the things known; that is, I valued all men and things as they were in the flesh: if I looked upon a man that was rich and honourable, I valued him by his riches and honours, and what he was in fleshly things, by this I did set my esteem upon men, and accordingly upon things also; and this was all the understanding I had both of things and persons. Or the phrase referreth unto his manner of knowing, or notes out the principle by which he knew them; knew them after the flesh, saith he,—that is, from carnal principles; my understanding was nothing but flesh; ‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh.’ And so was my understanding, like the things I valued, suited to them; as the things were fleshly, so I valued them as such, by reason of my fleshly understanding: and so the Apostle useth the phrase, Rom. viii. 5, ‘They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh;’ that is, the disposition of the mind, and the things, are suited each to other, as a natural object and the faculty, as the eye in the body and corporeal objects. A man that is nothing but of a fleshly understanding, all his delight, and knowledge, and approbation of things is according to the flesh. As on the contrary, in the same place, he that is ‘after the Spirit,’ he savoureth and knoweth the things that are after the Spirit;’ valueth them according to what they are in God’s Book, at a spiritual rate.

Now, saith he, when I was thus carnal, I knew all things thus after the flesh; I counted myself, saith he in Phil. iii. 5, 6, to have these and these privileges; I was a Benjamite, a Hebrew, touching the law a Pharisee, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. He was a scholar, and profited more than his equals; and these things he valued himself and others by. And the truth is, a carnal man, take him practically, and thus he knoweth and esteemeth of things. Yea, saith he, I knew Christ after the flesh. It is the highest instance that can be. One would think, that if he should know anything spiritually, he should know Christ spiritually, if he knew him at all; for there is no carnal comeliness in him to desire him; that object is so spiritual as is not capable of fleshly knowledge. Yes, saith he, I knew Christ after the flesh; for the truth is, when he was a Pharisee, he

thought the Messiah would have been a great king, and should have come in pomp and state to deliver his nation, as you know the opinion of the Jews was, Luke xvii. 20, 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,' or with pomp, for so good interpreters render it, and the opposition in the 21st verse makes for it: 'The kingdom of God is within you,' it is spiritual. Now, as the rest of the Jews, so I valued the Messiah thus, and I thought thus carnally of him; but, saith he, when I came to be converted, from henceforth, from the time I was converted, I knew him so no more. I saw then the Messiah to be such a one as the 14th and 15th verses hath described him; not one that should come with pomp, but one that should be crucified, and die, and rise again, and thereby take away our sins, for so in the 14th verse he is described, which is the occasion of this speech. This was the Messiah I began to know when I was converted, and I valued him according to pardon of sin and working grace in me. He came to know this Messiah spiritually, and after another manner.

Well now, to draw up to that I aim at: how came the Apostle, or what was the reason the Apostle, after his conversion, should have this change in his knowledge, that before he should know all things after the flesh, and now he knoweth all things in another manner?

Read the next words, 'Therefore,' or, as the word *ὥστε* will bear, 'Therefore, because,' (so Piscator renders it, and says it is an illative particle put for a rational, or the reason of what went before, 'wherefore,' or 'because,') 'he that is in Christ is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' As if he should have said, Will you have the reason why that I know nothing any more after the flesh; no, not even Christ himself? It is because I am a new creature, that is the reason of it. I have had a new principle wrought in my understanding, by which all my thoughts are turned; all my former thoughts perish, as a man's doth when he dieth. I do not set a value upon men for honour and riches, and for their comforts in this life. I set that value once upon Christ himself, and judged of him; but now I judge of men and things in a spiritual way, according to what they are in holiness and the world to come. I judge by God's books, and not what they are in men's books or in the world's books. You see that which caused this was a new creation. 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'

So that for a man to have true spiritual knowledge, which yet men are apt in their thoughts to slight, and think to be the least of all things to be wrought, it must have no less power than what went to the creation, it must have the exceeding greatness of the power of God to go to it.—So much for the first particular, the work on the understanding.

Now then, secondly, when this new creature is wrought,—that is, when a man hath a new eye given him,—there must be another creation before a man will know anything actually, before he will see it. This new creation, this new understanding gives him a new eye, a capacity indeed which a natural man hath not; the other is blind, he hath an eye. But still his eye will not help him to see; this new understanding will not see, except God doth somewhat more, it will not see aright and spiritually. You will ask, what is it that is further required?

As great a thing as the former. It is this: it is for the Holy Ghost to create in your understandings a new image of things, a new *species* or representation of things, such as never any carnal man in this world had; and this must go to spiritual knowledge, or you will never know things aright; you all come easily by it, but this power goeth to work it. It is the point in



hand. You shall find, too, that an act of faith is expressed by an act of sight: 'He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him,' that is the expression of Christ, John vi. 40. There is such a sight of God and of Christ, by the understanding of a man renewed, when he doth know them, when his mind works upon them spiritually,—there is such a sight wrought in his mind of them as all the men in the world have not, nor are any way capable of. If all the angels in heaven—mark what I say—should go and describe God and Christ upon their own knowledge, and all their excellences; they saw Christ upon earth, they see him now he is heaven; and if a man should go and quicken up his understanding and natural parts, yea, and have the utmost assistance of the Holy Ghost, so as not to renew his understanding; all these will but raise up a shadow of Christ, in comparison of what a godly man hath of him in his heart. It will be but a *φαινόμενον*, it will be but as we call a false sun. You know there are sometimes more suns than one appear in the clouds; look what that is in comparison of the true sun, such will all that knowledge be that a man hath that is merely a natural man. Take a man in nature, raised never so high, all his knowledge is but a false Sun of righteousness in comparison of what a godly man seeth; because the Holy Ghost createth in him, stampeth upon his mind another manner of image and representation of him, than he doth in the heart of the most enlightened men in the world.

To open this unto you a little.

I told you even now of raising up a false sun, and seeing the true sun; they are like you know, but they are mighty vast, wide, different things. Saith the Apostle, Eph. iv. 21, when he exhorteth them to put off the old man, and to put on the new: 'If so be,' saith he, ver. 20, 'that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man,' &c. These words, 'If so be ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus,' are a correction of himself in what he said before. All Christians, saith he, are taught not to walk as the Gentiles walk; 'Ye have not so learned Christ;' but yet, because many Christians do learn Christ, and know Christ, and yet do otherwise, he correcteth himself,—'If so be,' saith he, 'ye have heard, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.' If you have seen him in truth, saith he, if you have seen the true Jesus as he is in himself, if you have seen spiritual Jesus spiritually; then, saith he, it will have this fruit upon you, that ye will put off the old man, and put on the new; it is impossible it should be otherwise.

The thing I gather from hence is this: the Apostle, you see, distinguisheth the knowledge of Christians; all have learned Christ in the outward learning of him; but there is, saith he, a learning of him in the mind, 'as the truth is in Jesus.' There is a false knowledge, a knowledge of a false Jesus, but of an appearance of him, a shadow of him, which all carnal men that live under the preaching of the gospel have; but if you have seen Jesus in truth, this followeth upon it, you will put off the old man, and put on the new. So that from hence it is evident that there is such a knowledge of Christ, which a man is taught, and hath wrought in his heart by the Holy Ghost, such an image and representation of him which is in truth, and in comparison of which other knowledge is a false knowledge.

My brethren, shall I shew you the difference wherein this lieth?

All the world yieldeth that the difference of men's knowledges ariseth from the different image or picture of things, if you will so call it, which the mind takes in. That you will easily grant. If you take two men, and the

one sees the picture of a man, and the other sees the man himself, he that hath seen the man himself hath such a knowledge of him as he that hath seen but the picture hath not, nor cannot have, except he see the man himself. Why? Because there is a different image begotten in the mind and fancy of him that hath seen the man, and him that hath only seen the picture. Hence ariseth different knowledges.

Here then is the thing I infer: that the Holy Ghost, when he reneweth the understanding of a man, doth beget in him by his almighty power another representation of Christ and of God, and of all spiritual things in their spiritual nature; whereas other men have but the pictures of them, they do not know them as the truth is in Jesus, as I said even now.

All knowledge is either *per species acceptas à rebus*, when we take the images off from the things themselves; as when we see a man himself, or when I take the image of him at second-hand from something that representeth him. Now herein lieth the difference of the knowledge of a godly man and others, that the Holy Ghost createth *propriis species*, a proper likeness and representation of spiritual things, of God and Christ; whereas all men else know him at second-hand, they hear of him, and have been taught by him, but not as the truth is in Jesus.

Hence is that phrase of the Apostle in 1 Cor. ii. 9. I take it, that which I am now handling openeth that phrase, and is pertinent to the meaning of it. Saith he, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man'—that is, a natural man—'to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.' I plainly take the meaning to be this. There are such revelations, so the Apostle here calleth them, such images, such representations of spiritual things begotten in a godly man's heart, as never entered into the heart of any carnal man in the world, and that is the reason why he cannot know them. Now Jesus Christ, you know, is absent; 'in whom, though we have not seen,' saith he, 'we believe;' he is in heaven. And God is absent; he is a thing not seen: you hear his word and see his works; but beyond all these, the Holy Ghost begetteth in your minds an image of God and Christ, makes him real to you, makes him subsist; makes God that is absent, present, Christ that is absent, present. Therefore it is called *a sight*, so the Scripture expresseth it. 'He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him;' therefore, Heb. xi. 1, where there is a description of faith, he calleth it 'the substance of things hoped for;' they have a substantial image of the things begotten in them. It is not a mere notion.

Now, my brethren, this is the highest art, the greatest power—consider what I say—to beget a real and substantial notion and image of God, and of Christ, and of any spiritual thing, in the mind and heart of a believer, and is more than to create a world. Why? The excellency of any creature lies in this, in its ability to represent God to a man; therein lay the excellency of the creation at first, that it declareth God and his glory, and sheweth forth his handiwork, as the Psalmist saith.

Now the image that the Holy Ghost begetteth in a man's heart of himself, of God and Christ, and of all spiritual things, doth more lively represent God to a man than all the Scripture, simply, or than all the works of God, yea, than it was done to Adam. For, saith he, 'the eye hath not seen, neither hath the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man from the beginning of the world,' (so it is in Isa. lxiv. 4,) no, not into the heart of Adam himself.

This all divines acknowledge, that faith is a knowledge of God *in se*, not

of God by his works at second-hand, but a knowledge of God in himself, as when you know the sun by a beam of himself; and this is the knowledge that the Holy Ghost works, and therefore there is required as much to it and more, than to create a world.

To give you a scripture for this, and that pertinent and proper to the thing in hand. It is in 2 Cor. iv. 6. The Apostle there compareth the spiritual knowledge which was in his own heart, and which by his ministry the Holy Ghost had begotten in the heart of others, he compareth the very knowledge of it to no less than the creating light out of darkness at first. Read the scripture: 'For God,' saith he, 'who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' He compareth, I say, the knowledge which God wrought in his own heart being converted, and which by his means, being an apostle, was begotten in the heart of others, to that great work of creating light out of darkness. Saith he, the God, the same God that commanded light to shine out of darkness, the same God hath caused us to have the knowledge of God; and, mark it, why doth he add, 'in the face of Jesus Christ?' The word in the original is, 'in the person of Jesus Christ,' ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ. It is a personal knowledge, it is a real knowledge of God; that knowledge I have described all this while, it is not a notional knowledge, it is the knowledge of his person brought down into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is an artifice that transcendeth the power of any creature; it is peculiar to the Holy Ghost to give a subsistence of Christ to a man's soul.

And that the Apostle speaks here of a mighty power that works this knowledge is evident in the next words; for going on in the next verse, he saith, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels.' That we should have such a knowledge in us, and be able to convey it to others, it is a treasure indeed this gift, and it is in earthen vessels. To what end? 'That the excellency of power'—hyperbole—'that the greatness of the power may be of God,' may be ascribed to him that thus createth by an almighty power the light of the knowledge of the person of Christ in the heart of a man.

So that now you see, that the working of knowledge,—I do not tell you of all the great difficulties, for to draw a man to believe in Christ, and to lay hold on Christ, and to love Christ, all which require the same power; but I speak simply of spiritual knowledge, to believe the things themselves in a true, real, substantial manner,—this is from an almighty power. 'That ye may know,' saith he, 'what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.' To work faith in the very understanding of a man, all this is required.—So much now for the first part: that to believe, to have spiritual knowledge wrought in a man, requireth exceeding greatness of power. I could not have made this plain under less time than what I have now spent upon it, and faith, you see, is in the text; for it is *to us-ward who believe*; I have therefore a little larger insisted upon it.

I come now, in the second place, to the *will* of a man; I will be brief in it; and that which is put in there too it requireth an exceeding greatness of power to make that holy, to make a man conformable to the things he knoweth. I will instance but in one thing:—

That the will of man should be raised up to aim at God's glory in all that he doth, and to make God the chiefest good, it must be an almighty power that must put this principle into a man's heart, a higher power than simply was in the first creation, to do it as believers are enabled to do it. Go, take

all creatures that were made by God's almighty power; take men, take beasts; they have nothing of this in them at all, not of holiness to aim at the glory of God; take nature simply considered in itself, as man hath it now, there is no such thing in him, nor in all the creatures besides man; but angels that had it created in them at first after the image of God that created them, indeed they had it, and Adam had it so too. To put therefore such a principle as this is into a man, that his spirit shall love God naturally as now he loveth himself, and subordinate himself unto God,—and herein lieth holiness,—my brethren, this is the greatest work in the world.

You may easily know the greatness of the work from the excellency of the thing. This putteth down all creatures; it makes a man differ from other men, as a man doth from a beast. A man hath three lives that he liveth: the life of a plant, the life of a beast, and the life of reason; here is a fourth life, to aim at the glory of God. It is called 'the light of life,' John viii. 12.

My brethren, this is bringing in a new form indeed, a new soul indeed, to put this principle into a man's heart; this is transformation indeed. Why? It bringeth a new end into a man's heart; and *idem est finis in moralibus, quod forma in naturalibus*, and so *quod anima nova*; that is, what the form is to natural things,—that is, what the soul is unto a man's body,—that is a man's end to his soul when he is converted. It is the best definition I ever heard of conversion, that it is the change of a man's utmost end, and upon that a man's soul is turned to God. A man was before for himself, and so long as himself is his end, let him have never so many changes, yet still he turneth upon himself. Now, do but put holiness into him, to aim at God in all things, it changeth the whole man presently; it changeth all his course, all his affections, everything in him. It is a new loadstone, it will make him sail after another compass. Now, to work this, to make a man's heart to be for God as he is naturally for himself, it requireth a mighty power of God to do it. Saith the Apostle in 2 Peter i. 3, 'According as his divine power hath given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.' Hast thou any godliness in thy heart? a principle of godliness to aim at God? for that properly is godliness, to set him up. It must be a mighty power that must do it; according, saith he, to his divine power; it is a power that only belongeth to God to do this.

Aquinas saith well, *elevat hominem*, saith he; when a man hath grace to aim at God, it raiseth a man up above all the being and power of nature. Therefore it is more than all the creation of nature simply considered; it is called, therefore, a 'divine nature.'

My brethren, you may know the great power that goeth to work this from the excellency of it; for the more excellent a thing is in being, certainly the more power goeth to work it. This excelleth all beings, raiseth a man beyond all beings; for it raiseth a man up to *live the life of God*. A man liveth the life of a beast when he liveth in pleasures; of a man, when he liveth in honour and in things the reason is capable of; but all this while he is a stranger to the life of God. But to add to the life of a beast the life of reason, and to the life of reason the life of God, you will say that there must be an exceeding greatness of power to do this. To make a man to aim at God and his glory, is more than to make a man, or beast, or stocks, or stones, or worlds. Saith the apostle James, chap. i. 17, 18, 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.' Ἄνωθεν ἐστὶ, it is from above, wholly from above; those gifts that are good, κατ' ἐξουσίαν, by way of eminency, are wholly from above, they are wholly by a divine power. He speaks of grace, read the words after: 'he hath begot-

ten us again according to his will, that we should be the first-fruits.' And he speaks of grace before, as well as in the words after; it is a thing wholly from above, no power can do it. I told you before that the phrase, 'made without hands,' noteth out a transcendency of working; it is applied to Christ's body, and to the glory of heaven. Well, this phrase, *ἀνωθεν*, from above, is applied to none but Christ, and it is to argue the excellency of Christ above all others. Read John iii. 31. When John would prove Christ to be greater not only than himself, but greater than all, what saith he? 'He that cometh from above,' saith he—he useth the same phrase that the Apostle doth here of grace—'is greater than all;' so here, 'Every good gift is from above,' it is wholly divine, and cometh from the Father of lights. For a man to aim thus at God, I say it cometh wholly from him.

I will shut up this point only with this. Do but now look into your hearts; have you any of this perfect gift that is thus wholly from above, and draweth you up to above, to aim at God more than yourselves, and that that steereth your course? My brethren, to be thus turned to God is to have a new end, it throweth the soul upon new hinges, it toucheth the soul as a loadstone that toucheth the knife, draweth it toward God in everything. There is nothing of it in nature, no disposition of it, there is nothing of it in all the creature. Go, take man as simply considered, as reasonable; and take beasts, and all this inferior world, there is no such thing. There is a world indeed, a being, where there are those that aim at God. But take this world, all the creatures, sun, and moon, and stars, take all the sons of men, they have not such a principle as this. It is a higher principle than reason itself, it is the life of God; the other is but the life of reason, or the life of beasts. Do but examine now whether you have any such thing in you, if you would know whether the exceeding greatness of his power hath wrought in your hearts or no.

I may compare a man that is turning to God to one that is going with full sail to such a country or port, and hath taken in lading fitting and suitable to that country, and he hath a compass to guide him thither; he hath the wind fair for him. By nature a man loadeth himself with a world of vanities; he is shipped for this world, and that is it which his eye aimeth at, to make himself happy in the world in some thing or other. Now, my brethren, God meets with him by the way, takes him off from all his ends that were for himself, putteth in a new pilot, setteth up a new loadstar, giveth him a new compass, sendeth his blessed Spirit into his heart, that as a wind bloweth him clean another way; all the lading he hath by nature he cannot vent any of those commodities, he throweth them all overboard. Thus God dealth with a man when he turneth him.

Paul was a ship richly laden. I was a scholar, saith he, and profited in the Jewish language more than all my teachers; I had much to boast of. God comes, and he throweth them all overboard; 'I count all things but as dross and dung in comparison of the knowledge of Christ,' &c. What made Paul do this? God had touched his heart with this loadstone, to the direction of which all must be conformed. He turneth out all old commodities, putteth in a new rudder, a new pilot, a new compass; and now, saith he, I must needs aim at God's glory in all things. My brethren, herein lieth the work of conversion; wherein lieth it else? Then it lieth in this, or it lieth in nothing. Now to work such a work as this in a man, to touch a man's heart thus, is as much as to throw the earth off its centre. Take the earth, if it move as some suppose it doth, if it move still upon its centre, this is no great matter; but if you should see the earth go off his centre, and fix itself

in the same sphere with the sun, and go along with the same pace and with the same motion, you would think an almighty power must go to do all this. This God doth. A man moveth himself; move him which way you will, if you will move him to God, as self-love will sometimes do, yet still he is upon his own centre, all is for himself. God cometh and turns him off his own hinges, takes him from his own bottom, placeth him in the same sphere with himself, makes him aim at him in all things. This is holiness; and to put this principle into a man's heart, nothing but the almighty power of God can do it. It is above all the creation.