

SERMON XXIX.

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

THAT which is said here of the resurrection and exaltation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is to be understood two ways. Either—

First, comparatively; as he compareth the work in our hearts, or upon us, with the power that wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. Or—

Secondly, the words in the 20th verse, and so on, are to be considered simply as setting before us the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

I must first handle these words in their comparison. The meaning whereof is this: that the same power that wrought in Jesus Christ in raising him from the dead, and setting him at God's right hand, works in our faith, in our believing. 'Who believe,' saith he, 'according to the working of his mighty power, the same which wrought in Christ,' &c.

You shall find that the Apostle handles both parts of this comparison. He speaks of the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, what a great work that was, from the 20th verse to the end of this chapter. And then he speaks what a great work it is to raise up our hearts and to work upon them, that us, who were dead in sins and trespasses, God should quicken and raise up together with Christ, and make us sit in heavenly places; this he speaks of in the second chapter, from the 1st verse to the 11th.

That which is proper to the opening of this 19th verse is, to speak only of the power, both which raised up Christ from death to life and which works in us that believe. And to that I am to keep at this time.

There are therefore two things to be spoken to—

First, That there was an exceeding greatness of power shewn forth in Christ's resurrection and setting him at God's right hand.

Secondly, That in a proportion, there is an exceeding greatness of power shewn to us-ward when God bringeth us to believe.

I must begin with the first, to shew you the exceeding greatness of power in raising up Christ. I quoted for that, Rom. i. 4, where it is said he was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. And a parallel place to this, which I then omitted, is that in 2 Cor. xiii. 4, where it is said that 'though Christ was crucified through weakness,'—he was left to all the weakness of man's nature, so as to take in sufferings, though the power of God was seen in upholding him under it,—'yet he liveth by the power of God.' Though he was crucified in weakness, yet his life, his raising up again, was by the power of God. So you see express scripture that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ there was shewn forth a great power; and such a power as he was declared by nothing more to be the Son of God.

Now, you will ask me wherein was the power shewn, both in raising up of Christ from the dead and in exalting him? For you must take both in; it is not only the power that was shewn in raising him from the dead, but also the power that exalted him. Take both in, I say; and so there was an infinite power in it: to raise him up, him that was laid so low in the grave, and to exalt him to sit at God's right hand, to wield all the affairs of heaven and earth, and who shall be the judge of the world, that is far above all principalities and powers. Take the distance between these two terms, the grave, and what he is in heaven, and there is an exceeding greatness of power indeed, the highest instance of power that can be imagined.

First, then; to shew you the power that was put forth in his resurrection, in his raising up from death to life. Of all works still the raising one up from death to life hath been counted an evidence of an omnipotent power. Our Saviour Christ had done many miracles, yet, saith he, John v. 20, 'My Father will shew me greater works than these, that you may marvel.' And what are those greater works? Look ver. 21, 'As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.' To raise one from the dead therefore is a greater work than all those miracles Christ wrought; and therefore though he was declared to be the Son of God by all his miracles, yet that which struck the stroke, and put it out of question that he must needs be the Son of God, was that he was raised from death to life.

But you will say, wherein lieth so extraordinary a power in raising of Christ as was never shewn in raising of any man? For that is the thing the text holdeth forth; for otherwise the raising up of Lazarus, the raising up by the prophets, shew an omnipotent power. But here is a peculiar exceeding greatness of power attributed to the raising of Christ from death. Wherein, you will ask, was that shewn?

It was shewn in this, that Jesus Christ rose not as a single person, but he rose as a Common Person for all his elect; and therefore in 1 Cor. xv. 20-22, he is called 'the first-fruits of them that sleep;' and it is said that in Christ all shall rise, and all did rise when he rose. Now, if when Jesus Christ rose he broke open all graves, set them all open,—Dead men, saith he, your bonds are loosened, you shall come forth one day by virtue of my resurrection,—then the raising up of Christ was as much as the raising up of all mankind at the latter day; for he took the gates of hell and death, and carried them up to the hill, as Samson did; therefore saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' He spoke of Christ's resurrection. When he rose all rose, and his resurrection had all the power of all resurrections contracted in it.—That is the first.

But then, secondly, you must know that when Jesus Christ rose, he rose not like an ordinary man; he rose for our justification, he rose in the stead of sinners, to justify sinners, as having borne their sins and satisfied for them. He was not to rise—mark what I say—unless he had fully satisfied God for all the sins of his elect; and to satisfy for those sins, which must be done before he riseth, required an infinite power. I take it that Peter holdeth forth this in Acts ii. 24. I opened the words in the last discourse. I shall but in a word or two repeat the sum of what was then said. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ, saith he, 'Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.' He telleth us first, that there were certain sorrows of death,—that is,

deadly sorrows, or, as the word in the Greek signifieth, there were birth-throes of death, that were deadly. They were not pains he endured after he was dead, for then you know the body endures nothing, and his soul was in Paradise; therefore, these pains of death, these deadly pains, must be endured before; yet there were those that hindered his resurrection, that had he not overcome those pains first, God had never raised him up. Now, our Saviour Christ did scatter, did dissipate all these pains of death; he paid them to God, he bore all our sins, and God's wrath; and when he had done this, Now, saith God, I can raise him up when I will; now let him die. When that was finished, he gave up the ghost; for when he hung upon the cross, you know he said, 'It is finished.' I take it, he had relation to that great brunt which the Apostle to the Hebrews saith he feared, which was these pains, these deadly pains of enduring the wrath of God for man's sins. Now, saith he, the great brunt is over, it is finished; and when these were scattered, then did God come and raise him up; and herein lay the greatness of the power shewn in the resurrection of Christ, that God raised him up, he having loosened the pains of death first, or Christ being loosened, or having overcome,—the words will bear all this,—then God raised him up. Therein, I say, lay the power, and therein lay more in his resurrection than in all men's else besides.

Or else, secondly, the power that wrought toward Christ mentioned here referreth to his exaltation; for you see he doth not only say the power that wrought in Christ in raising him from death, but in setting him at his own right hand; you must take both in. Now, what is wanting in the one is supplied in the other. Suppose there was but a small power in raising him up from death to life; yet to take a poor carpenter's son, whom all would have despised, and to carry him up to heaven, where he flingeth off flesh, the frailty of the human nature, and appeareth more glorious, infinitely more glorious, than all the angels, and is filled with more knowledge, and that all that God meaneth to do shall run through the hand of that human nature; here was a power, to raise him up thus high, beyond what the thoughts of man can reach.—And so much now for the power that was shewn in raising up Christ from death to glory. That part of the parallel is despatched.

Now, to come to the *second* part, and that is this, *That in God's working upon us there is a proportion of power to us-ward who believe, answerable to the power that raised up Christ from death to glory.*

For my clear proceeding in this, I will set limits to myself, which shall help you to understand my scope.

First, I will not speak of the likeness that is between Christ's resurrection and the working of grace in our hearts, although the Scripture telleth us, in Rom. vi. 4, that like as he was raised up from the dead, so we are raised up to walk in newness of life; he makes a likeness between the one and the other. The words, 'according to his working in Christ,' note not so much a likeness, as a proportion, and therefore it is *κατὰ τὴν ἐνεργεσίαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ*, 'according to his effectual working,'—the proportion of working that efficacy of power put forth,—'which he wrought,' saith he, 'in Jesus Christ.' So that now it is not my design to handle a likeness between Christ's resurrection and our conversion,—that is not the scope, though that other scriptures hold forth, for I must speak pertinently to what this place holds forth,—but that it is the same power, in a proportion, that works in the one and in the other.

And then, in the second place,—let me add that too,—it is not a proportion of equality; that is, that an equal proportion of power is put forth in us and

in Christ. No, let Christ have the pre-eminence above all his brethren ; he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, as he is called, 1 Cor. i. 24. But yet there is so great a nearness as that when God would speak of the power that goeth to quicken our hearts, to work faith in us, of all the works that ever he did he chooseth rather to instance in his power in raising up Christ from death to life, than in any work else whatsoever.

Then, thirdly, I shall not mention the power of God in general, in converting,—I have handled that already, and handled it largely,—but only so far as the similitude will hold forth a like power in the point of believing, in the point of faith. That is the thing I am now to speak to.

If you ask me now wherein there is the like proportion of power put forth toward us that was toward Christ ? I answer you, first, that you must take in all the works of God upon us first and last ; you must take in the first resurrection and the second resurrection, both which the Scripture seems to hold forth. You must take in all the works of God upon a believing soul from his first conversion till God hath set him in heaven ; take them altogether, and the power that raised up Christ from death to life and glory, holdeth some proportion with that power that shall work in us first and last, before God hath done with us.

Now, to shew you that all the works of God upon us are a resurrection. You all take for granted, therefore I shall not need to speak much of that, that the raising up of our bodies at the latter day will hold proportion with the raising up of Christ. But, my brethren, the work of conversion holdeth proportion with it, and our growth in grace and carrying us on in holiness holdeth proportion with it.

I shall give you Scripture that both these are called resurrections. John v. 20, 21 ; you shall read there of the Father's raising up of the dead at the 21st verse, and the Son's likewise quickening whom he will. Now read on the chapter to the 29th verse, and you shall find a double resurrection there mentioned. You have first the resurrection of conversion, whereby he works faith in men's hearts ; that you have at the 24th and 25th verses, ' He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death to life.' So saith the 24th verse ; then he addeth at the 25th verse, ' Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear it shall live.' Here is the first resurrection. He telleth us at the 20th verse, that the Father would shew him greater works than any he had yet done. Now, in the 11th chapter, you shall find he raiseth up Lazarus, when Lazarus stank, and had lain four days in the grave. Then read chap. xiv. 12 ; you shall find he tells his apostles, You have seen, saith he, Lazarus' raising,—for he was raised at the 11th chapter,—when I am gone, you shall do greater works than that. What were those greater works they should do ? They should convert souls ; men that were dead in sins and trespasses, they should be turned unto God. Our Saviour Christ converted few, but the apostles had three thousand converted at one time, as you know there were at the first sermon that ever Peter preached. It is hard to instance what was a greater work than what Christ did, but only that which here our Saviour calleth, that ' the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live.' He speaks, my brethren, of conversion ; for if you mark it, he had said in the verse just before, that ' he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, is passed from death unto life.' He useth the same phrase, ' I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the

Son of God; and they that hear it shall live.' And then, comparing it with the 28th verse, it appeareth more manifestly he speaks there of a second resurrection, of a general resurrection. 'Marvel not,' saith he, 'for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation.' There is this difference between these two resurrections mentioned, the one in the 25th, the other in the 28th ver-e, that that in the 25th verse is spoken but of some, for all men are not converted, they do not rise in that sense; 'they that hear his voice they shall live;' but the truth is, all do not hear his voice. But when he comes to speak of the resurrection at the latter day, saith he, 'The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth,' &c. And then he putteth a difference between their deaths; the one, he saith, is a bodily death; therefore, by way of difference, he expresseth it thus, 'All that are in the graves shall hear his voice,' so it is ver. 28. But when he speaks of the other in the 25th verse, he saith they are simply dead; 'The dead,' saith he, 'shall hear his voice, and they that hear it shall live.' Yea, in this 25th verse, he corrects himself, 'The hour is coming,' yea, 'and now is,' saith he,—it is coming, and coming presently,—wherein those that are dead shall hear his voice and live; therefore, he doth not speak of the general resurrection.

Here, you see, is a double resurrection. Now, take both these together,—the first resurrection, wherein men are quickened that were dead in sins and trespasses; and the last resurrection, when all that are in the graves shall rise,—take, I say, both these works together, and you have a mighty power put forth; for you have the work double.

Our Saviour Christ had a double resurrection: he had one of his soul, as I may so call it, when he overcame the pains of death,—that I spake of in Acts ii. 24,—'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;' and there was a resurrection of his body, 'Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One,' namely, his body, 'to see corruption.'

Now, my brethren, we likewise have a double resurrection too. We have a resurrection of our soul, which is done in this life, whereby grace is wrought in our hearts, being dead in sins and trespasses; and at the latter day we have a resurrection of our bodies. Now, as the greatness of his power in Christ's raising lay not in taking him out of the grave so much as in rescuing his soul from what he feared,—from those pains, those birth-throes of death, the wrath of God which he was to undergo,—that resurrection of his soul was the great resurrection; so Peter quoteth it. So it is here; the great resurrection is the first resurrection.

That you may yet see this clearer, you shall find in Scripture that our new birth and the resurrection are parallel expressions, they are put one for another; and Jesus Christ's resurrection is called a begetting, and our being begotten again is called a resurrection, because that the same power that is put forth in the one is put forth in the other.

It is evident that Christ's resurrection is called a begetting of him in Acts xiii. 33: 'God,' saith he, 'hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' Here you see Jesus Christ's resurrection is called a begetting; and you shall find, in Col. i. 18, he is called 'the first-begotten from the dead.' Mark it, his resurrection is called a begetting.

Now, as his resurrection is called a begetting of him again, or a begetting him rather, so our being born again, our conversion, is called a resurrection,

as you have it Col. ii. 12. I shall come to it by and by. Yea, Matt. xix. 28, he calleth the resurrection of the just, when they shall rise again at the latter day, their regeneration, their being begotten again; saith he, 'Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones,' &c. Those words, 'in the regeneration,' refer to the time when Jesus Christ will come to judgment. There the general resurrection is called the regeneration, the new begetting of the sons of God; and therefore one of the Evangelists calleth them sons of the resurrection, because it is a begetting them again.

You see, my brethren, how the Scripture speaks of conversion; it calleth it a regeneration, it calleth it a resurrection, and it calleth the resurrection at the latter day a regeneration; it calleth Christ's resurrection, likewise, a begetting of him again.

You see, therefore, now, that conversion is called a resurrection, as well as that at the latter day. Now, I am to prove this likewise, that all our growth in holiness is called a resurrection too. And for that I shall quote you Phil. iii. 11, 12; 'If by any means,' saith he, 'I might attain to the resurrection of the dead.' Interpreters do most of them carry it to this sense, namely, that Paul had in his eye the reward at the latter day, and that is his meaning when he saith, that he 'might attain to the resurrection of the dead.' But it is evident, by his scope, that he meaneth perfect holiness, growing in grace; his aim was to grow as holy as men shall be when they are risen from the dead. It appeareth so plainly; for, saith he, 'not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus; forgetting those things which are behind, I reach forth to those things which are before.' His meaning is this: saith he, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath taken me to work so much grace in me, such a portion and measure of grace is to be wrought in me by Jesus Christ; and, saith he, I desire to know the power of his resurrection to that end, as the 10th verse hath it; I would fain, saith he, have that holiness presently, and stay no longer for it, 'for which I am apprehended of Christ.' I would be as holy as I shall be when I shall rise again at the latter day. So that every degree of holiness he doth account a part of the resurrection from the dead; and that this is his meaning appears by those words, 'not as though I had already attained.' All the world knew that he had not attained the resurrection from the dead,—that is, the glory of the world to come; what need he have corrected himself if that this were the meaning? Therefore he speaks of holiness in this life, which is a continual resurrection till he cometh to be perfectly holy: 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect,' in holiness, namely; there was a perfect holiness in his eye,—which he calleth the resurrection from the dead,—to be as holy as they shall be that shall rise again, which he followed after, forgetting what is behind, and pressing at what is before, at what is to come.

And in this sense, as you read in Ezek. xxxvii., the dried bones were not raised at once, but by degrees; the bones first came together, and then the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and then the skin covered them above. So, the truth is, this power raiseth us up by degrees; every new degree of grace is as after the bones came together in conversion, then flesh cometh, and then sinews, and so by degrees we attain the resurrection from the dead.

You see now that all the works of God upon us, both of conversion at first, degrees of grace and growth in grace afterward, are called a resurrec-

tion; and, lastly, the great work at the latter day, when he will raise up our bodies, and bring our souls to them, and raise both up to glory. Now then, take all the work of God upon a Christian, first and last, and before God hath done with him, there will be so great a power found working in him as no pattern can hold forth the like, but the raising of Christ from death to glory.

And, my brethren, if you doubt of the proportion of power between the working on us and on Christ, do but consider the state that God raiseth us from. He saith we are dead in sins and trespasses before; the Apostle insisteth much upon that; he runneth out at large upon it in the second chapter, where he makes out the comparison; and you shall observe that he makes the difference between God's raising up of Christ and of us to lie in this. When he speaks of the power that was shewn in raising Christ, he runneth out here, in this first chapter, much upon his glorification, as if the greatness of his power was chiefly spent there. When he speaks of his power in raising us up in the second chapter, he spendeth a great part of his discourse in shewing that we were dead in trespasses and sins; the *terminus a quo*, the term from which we were raised, that is it which setteth forth the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward. Consider, I say, what we were,—dead in sins and trespasses,—that these men should be converted to God, should be carried on in holiness till they be perfectly holy, till they attain to that estate which men risen from the dead shall have in holiness, and withal have their bodies raised out of the grave, bodies that have seen corruption: Jesus Christ's body never saw corruption, he was never dead in sins and trespasses; he died for sins and trespasses indeed, but we were dead in sins and trespasses. Now then, compare the state out of which we are raised, and all the works of God upon us, and all the degrees of it, which are all little resurrections, and put them all together, first and last, they will hold a great proportion with the power that raised up Christ from death to life and glory, so as there is no work that ever God did, holdeth the like proportion in power with this as the resurrection of Christ doth.

Now, I should indeed lay open to you the greatness of the death in which we were in sins and trespasses; it would set forth this power, how low we were in this respect; but because that belongeth to the second chapter, I will therefore pass it over.

I come now more particularly to shew you—for the point is worth the insisting upon, for these are but generals—that in a more especial manner in the work of faith (for, if you observe it, the text here instanceth only in believing) there is a like power put forth as was in the raising of Christ from death to life. 'Who believe,' saith he, 'according to the working of his mighty power, which God put forth in Christ when he raised him from the dead.' *Who believe;* so that to handle the power of God in working of faith is that which is proper to the text, and is certainly the scope of the Apostle; for read the second chapter, where he makes up the comparison, at the 5th, 6th, and 8th verses, 'You who were dead in sins hath he quickened: by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' That was the life which had quickened you, in working which lay the greatness of his power to us-ward. And, my brethren, I shall shew you that the work of faith, if any other work of God upon us should be a resurrection, then there is a resurrection in that. The work of sanctification is a resurrection, and a great deal of power is put forth in it; but the work of faith is in a special manner a resurrection from the dead, and the like power put forth in the working of it that was put forth in raising Christ from the dead. This you see is proper to the text.

I shall first prove it from Col. ii. 12. It is a place I quoted before. Saith he, 'Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.' *Risen*, how? 'Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' Here, you see, he makes believing to be a resurrection; risen, saith he, through faith; and this faith, he saith, is of the operation of God. He saith they were dead in sins and trespasses; they were dead in the guilt of sin, and they rose by faith from under that guilt. That is his scope, as I shall shew you by and by.

To open these words unto you a little, and to shew you the parallel between the work of faith and the resurrection of Christ, and that in point of power. It is called 'faith of the operation of God,' because it is especially wrought by God. As when you commend a receipt, you will say it is a receipt of such a man's making, it is a precious thing, there is none makes it but such a one that is an eminent physician. So he saith here of faith. 'Faith,' saith he—which is a precious grace, for it is called precious faith, 2 Pet. i. 1—'of the operation of God,' and of such a power as raised up Christ from death to life; 'Faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' You see he speaks only to the point of believing.

Now, my brethren, to shew you how faith is a resurrection, and from such a power put forth in the working of it as was in the resurrection, you must know this, that a man is said to be dead, as well in respect of the guilt of sin, as of the power of sin. As thus: take a man condemned to die, the man is alive still, there is not the power of death upon him, but there is the guilt of death upon him, and you will say he is a dead man; his pardon now would be a resurrection from death to life. You find it in John v. 24, that 'he that believeth is passed from death to life;' and, in John iii. 18, you find that 'he that believeth not is condemned already;' that is, really he is condemned, he is under a state of death whether he believeth it or no. Now, on the other side, look in Rom. v. 18, and you shall find our being justified is called 'justification of life.' Here, you see, he that believeth not, take him in his former estate, is a dead man; he is condemned already. He that is justified is a living man; it is justification of life, it is thus really. Now then, what is it whereby a man is raised up from this state of condemnation, and brought into this state of life? It is faith. 'He that believeth,' saith he, 'is passed from death to life;' and 'He that believeth hath eternal life.'

Now, my brethren, as really and indeed a man in the state of nature is a dead man, and a man in the state of grace is a living man, is in the state of life; so now, that God may make the soul to apprehend his love, what he doth for him, he doth not only change a man from a state of death to life by a real pardon,—as a king useth to do, he only pardoneth a man outwardly; he was a dead man before, he is a living man now, he is passed from death to life,—but God doth so deal with his soul in working faith in him, that what he doth really the soul may apprehend it, and in making him apprehend it, which is the work of faith, there is truly a resurrection from death to life. And therefore, in that Col. ii. 12, 13, faith is called a quickening of a man. 'You, being dead,' saith he, 'in your sins and uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him,'—he speaks of faith, which he mentioned in the verse before, where he saith, 'Ye are risen with him through faith,'—'having forgiven you all trespasses.' Mark those words. So that now, that faith whereby a man looks out for forgiveness of all his trespasses, apprehendeth pardon of sin, that faith is said to be a resurrection; for it makes a man to apprehend the justification of

life; it makes a man that apprehends himself to be a dead man, to be a living man, and putteth a new life into his soul.

You shall find often in the Scripture that it is said the just shall live by faith.

Now, when he saith in this place of the Colossians, we are 'risen by faith,' and that we are 'quickened by faith,' ver. 13, it is plain he meaneth faith as it hath justification for its object, as we believe to be justified; because, 'having forgiven you all your trespasses' cometh in in the 13th verse.

Now then, having given you this general proof that faith is a resurrection from the dead, I will particularise you the work of faith, and shew you that it is truly a work of resurrection. I must open it by these two things:—

I must shew you, first, that when God bringeth a man to believe, he strikes him stark dead to get life in him again, and he putteth such a new life into him, as all creatures, men and angels, can never put into his soul: so that you do rise through faith,—faith of the mere operation of God, which none else could work,—when you do lay hold upon Christ for forgiveness of sins. First, I say, he strikes the man dead. I will explain that unto you by these particulars.

You must know, first, that every man, though he be dead in sins and trespasses, as you all are, yet he is alive in himself. Through that great self-flattery that is in all men's hearts, you think well of yourselves, and that you are living men. I will give you an instance for it: You would think that a man that is used to nothing but the preaching of the law, and knoweth nothing but the law, that that man must needs be a dead man in his own thoughts, and that he must apprehend nothing but the sentence of death, and that he is a child of wrath, for the law is a killing letter. Yet take the instance of Paul: he was a man that had as exact a knowledge of the law as any unregenerate man in the world hath. Now, saith he, Rom. vii. 9, 'I was alive without the law.' He saith two things of himself: first, that he was without the law,—that is, I was without the spiritual knowledge of the law, without the knowledge of the law in the spiritual strictness of it. And then, saith he, I was a living man; I thought I should have gone to heaven as certainly as any man in the world. It is strange that a man should be able to bear the law, and should yet think himself a living man; yet, you see, Paul did. He could not deny but that his sins had deserved death; but yet he framed to himself such an interpretation of the law as to think himself to be a living man.

Well, you live under both law and gospel; I assure you this, that all of you by nature, though you have never so much outward light by the preaching of the word,—though you think yourselves living men, and you frame to yourselves what is faith, and what is repentance, and what will save you; that you will live, and think yourselves to be living men,—yet if you have not an inward spiritual light struck upon your hearts, you are but dead still.

Now, my brethren, in the second place, whensoever God cometh to work faith in any man's heart, what doth he? He killeth him, strikes him dead; whereas naturally, through self-flattery, a man apprehendeth, whatsoever the word saith, that he is a living man. 'I was alive,' saith he, 'without the law,' that is, without the true spiritual knowledge of the law. God cometh and killeth him, slayeth him. In Gal. ii. 19, 20, saith he, 'I through the law am dead to the law.' This was when Paul came to understand it aright; he was struck stark dead with it; he that thought that if any man living should have gone to heaven, he should, he received the sentence of death in himself, and now you may know where to have him; 'Behold, he prayeth,'

saith he. He was struck off his horse, and there he lay stark dead ; that is, all the sinews and principles of life, the heart-root of it was struck ; he saw that interpretation of the law of God that made him to see that he was a dead man, and that if any man in the world went to hell, he should. This was Paul's case, my brethren ; you may find this in Rom. vii.,—it followeth there in the same place,—how he was struck dead. 'I was alive,' saith he, 'without the law once, but when the commandment came,' and arrested me, 'sin revived, and I died : and the commandment, that was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.' I went upon a mistake, saith he ; I thought I should have been saved by my works, by doing : Do this, and live. I was mistaken ; I saw the law did nothing but condemn me, and that all my works were dead works ; the commandment came, came in the spiritual knowledge of it : he saw the spiritual holiness the law required, when this commandment came into his heart, as you see the sun cometh and shines into a house ; then it struck him stark dead.

Now, my brethren, to work this, to kill a natural man thus, that is alive through self-flattery, and to lay him for dead, it is a mighty work. Why ? Because every man having self-love in him, self-flattery will never give up the ghost of itself ; all the reason a man hath will fight for arguments to prove himself a living man. This same self-flattery, which you are all born with, will struggle for life ; it must be killed, it will never yield of itself ; and to kill it is a mighty power. What, to kill the Benjamin of original sin ; what is a man's Benjamin ? To think well of himself, that he shall be happy. Now, to make him think that the state he is in is a state of damnation, if he go on in it, and to strike all self-flattery at the root, to lay the axe at the root of the tree and kill it ; my brethren, what saith the soul ? Nay then, saith he, if this Benjamin be once killed, I shall go with sorrow to my grave ; I shall never recover that, I shall never have a good day more, if I entertain such a conceit, that I am in a state of death. To keep up this opinion in a man's heart, that he is a living man, all in a man will fight for it.—So that, first, to kill the man is a mighty work.

And the truth is, my brethren, it is never thoroughly done till there cometh in a spiritual light created in a man's heart. For my part, I think that which strikes a man dead, and dead to purpose, and prepareth ultimately for grace, it is a spiritual light, the same light wherewith I see Christ afterward ; there is nothing else will kill a man. God indeed may come with terror upon a man's conscience, knock him into a swoon ; but self-flattery will revive again when the terrors are off, and he will have a good opinion of himself again. But to kill a man wholly from ever rising again, that a man shall say, as Paul, I am dead to the law for ever, I can never recover this wound, I can never have a good opinion of my former estate more, or of myself more ; nothing can do this but a spiritual light : the commandment must come, there must be a spiritual light to discover a man's sin, and his state of death, or he will never die.

Well, when a man is thus laid dead, what followeth ? Saith the Apostle, 'sin revived.' Why, I was guilty of sin before, it never troubled me ; I had thoughts of God's being merciful, I could set my good works amongst them, and one should answer the other ; but when God had laid me for dead thus, all my sins revived. I looked upon my sins before as dead serpents that had no stings ; but now they are all living serpents, and they begin to revive, and to kill me, and sting me worse. For when a man seeth himself in a state of death, all his sins come in upon him ; I died, saith he, and sin revived. And as when self-flattery is once killed, a man is dead for ever from having

any opinion of himself: so when a man is once dead thus, he is apt to be swallowed up with despair, as the Apostle's expression is of the incestuous person, 'swallowed up with sorrow;' not only dead, but buried. If God be not merciful to the poor soul, he is not only killed, you see, but he is likely to be buried.

Now then, when the soul lieth thus,—to come to the second head,—when a man is thus dead, thus killed, to work faith in this soul is a resurrection; 'Ye are risen,' saith he, 'through the faith of the operation of God, that raised up Christ from the dead.' It must be a resurrection, my brethren. For, first, you can never fetch life into this soul again, if he be rightly wounded. A man terrified may, for he is but in a swoon; but he that hath a spiritual insight into his condition, all the world will never fetch life in him again—that is, he will never have a good opinion of his former estate, nothing but the resurrection of faith will do it, a new light put in; a new light through the righteousness of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, that will revive his heart.

Nay, he will not only never have a good opinion of his former estate; but set him a-work to do new things, that which he never did before, from all his doing of them he will never come to have life again; nothing but faith will do it. Tell him thus, You were a dead man before, because you did not these and these things, you had not these and these workings which now you have; but all these new workings, of themselves considered, merely as workings in him, will never fetch life in him; it must be faith, and faith on him that raised up Christ from the dead, that must do it. In this case nature is apt to fall a-doing, and to fall upon new duties, evangelical duties, never practised before, to wash the heart, to reform the life, and twenty such things; when it hath tried all these, all is in vain; when the soul is rightly wounded, it will never live by all these. If he could weep his eyes out for sin, if a man could be all holy, as I may so express it; if his heart could set itself to all sorts of duties, all these would never fetch life in him again; nay, holiness itself would never fetch life into this heart. It must be faith only that must recover this man out of the deadness that God hath struck him with. So that there is a rising again by faith. Saith the Apostle, Gal. ii. 19, 'I am dead to the law through the law,' I am dead to it for ever, I can never live to it again. What doth he mean by *law* there? He doth not only mean merely the law of Moses, but he disputeth there against the opinion of the Galatians, who did not only take in the law of Moses to be justified by, but they took in works after conversion to be justified by them. That is clear out of Gal. i. 9. He telleth us, in the preface of the epistle, what his scope was; it was not to confute another law, but another gospel. 'If any man,' saith he, 'preach any other gospel unto you; yet not another,' saith he. They would have made another gospel, they would have joined works with Christ. Saith he, I can never live by this other gospel; I must have pure gospel, saith he; it must be Christ alone that must revive me; mere faith in the Son of God, as he saith chap. ii. 20. I am dead to all new laws whatsoever. Take the gospel itself, the law written in the heart; sanctification will never revive me again, I am dead to all those courses, it must be nothing but sheer faith. If ever you will fetch life into that soul again, you must have a cordial of Christ purely, and no mixture of law, or works, or qualifications, or anything else in it.

Now, my brethren, a man goeth and trieth all sorts of duties—sometimes men do so—to get life in themselves; but they do but set up new wares in old shops, while they turn these duties into a legal way. A man is not only

dead to the condemning power of the law, but he is dead to the law as it is a covenant. A man is not dead to it in respect of the precepts of it, the matter of it, but in respect of the form; to the covenant of it he is dead. And if you will turn all the duties of the gospel, repentance, and all sorts of qualifications, into works of the law, a man is dead to them for ever; all these will never fetch life into that man again. Now mark what the Apostle saith in that same second to the Galatians, ver. 19. To what end was he dead to the law thus? 'That I might live unto God,' saith he. This death was to this end, that there might come a new life to him from God, and to God; which life he describeth afterward in ver. 20. It is the life of faith in the Son of God. 'The life that I now live,' saith he, 'I live by the faith of the Son of God.' Here, you see, now cometh in a resurrection, which all the world could not work in him. Dead, you see, he was. I am dead to the law for ever, nothing will recover me, all the legal ways in the world will never do it. 'The life I now live is by the faith of the Son of God.' Here is death and life, and here is faith, a resurrection from death to life. He saith, a man cannot live to God till he is thus dead to the law; and by death to the law I do not understand terrors, my brethren. No, they do but stound a man; but it is a spiritual insight into a man's natural condition, taking him off from whatsoever he is, or can be supposed in himself to be at present, or hereafter, that he can never have life in any of these,—this is a being dead to the law. And being so, he is now fit for a resurrection, to live by the faith of the Son of God alone.

Now, my brethren, there was a mighty power to kill a man thus; but now there is as great a power to raise up this man's soul, to believe only, and purely, and nakedly on Jesus Christ, and to come alone to him, and to set him only in his eye; there is as great a power as answereth his resurrection. I will but give you a scripture or two for it in general, and then make it good by particulars.

This man being thus dead, twice dead, as I may say;—for he is dead in his own righteousness, past, present, and to come; he is dead in the guilt of sin, all sin cometh in upon him, as the deadly sorrows came in upon Christ, to hinder him from rising again by faith: for when a man attempteth to believe, all his sins, like those deadly sorrows you heard spoken of in Christ's soul to hinder his resurrection, revive and come about him. Now, I say, to raise this man up requires a mighty power. Take one instance; it is in Ps. lxxxviii. It is a place to the purpose, for I shall quote those scriptures that speak in the language of the resurrection, of raising from death to life, and that in the business of faith, in the point of justification; for that is the point in hand. In that psalm you shall find a poor man lying in desertion, a man that was dead in his own apprehension, killed as Paul was. It is Heman; he was a godly man, but he lay under desertion; he had faith already, he had some revivings, but yet so as he was given up to desertion. Now, see what he saith of himself, ver. 4, 5: 'I am counted with them that go down into the pit; free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more.' His meaning is this: I am a man that do apprehend myself to be one of those that are free of hell, 'free among the dead;' a man that am slain, stabbed with the guilt of sins reviving, like to the slain that lie in the grave, that lie in hell. And what saith he at the 10th verse: 'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave?' Can my soul ever come to think, I shall live in thy favour, in thy free grace and loving-kindness, to be justified by it, to apprehend myself a

living man, and all my sins forgiven? To do this, saith he, is as great a wonder as to raise a man up from death to life; therefore he useth that expression, 'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead?' He calleth it a wonder; for of all works else, still in Scripture you shall find the resurrection from the dead hath been counted the greatest wonder.

Now, my brethren, if this poor soul under desertion was left thus dead, then much more at first. I do not mean that there is the same sensibleness of it; but a man is much more unable to lay hold on Christ when he beginneth to believe at first, than this man was in temptation. The phrase in the 10th verse, as the Septuagint translates it, is exceeding emphatical. Saith he, 'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the physicians arise and praise thee?' So they read it, and so some good Hebreicians read it also; that is, God send for all the college of physicians, all the angels out of heaven, all the skilful ministers and prophets that were then upon the earth, Gad and David, for he lived in David's time; send for them all. All these physicians may come with their cordials and balms; they will never cure me, never heal my soul, never raise me up to life again, except thou raise me; for I am 'free amongst the dead,' saith he. Now then, my brethren, to work faith in such a one; for this poor soul, being thus dead, to go out of himself, and by naked and sheer faith to go to Jesus Christ alone, whom God raised from the dead, and to believe on him alone; this is now as great a power as indeed to raise a man up from death to life.

I should have enlarged myself much here, by giving you some general scriptures that prove it a work parallel with raising up Christ from the dead; and shewed it likewise by the faith of Abraham, Rom. iv. 24, and Rom. x. 9. But at present I shall only demonstrate it unto you in particulars.

To raise up this soul now, what will do it? My brethren, nothing in a man's self will do it, therefore God's power alone must do it. Saith he in Gal. ii. 20, 'The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.' It is not I that live, saith he. Mark those words, 'It is not I.' All in myself, saith he, could never have wrought this faith, could never have begotten this life; but it is faith in the Son of God only, and faith alone that must put this life into me.

My brethren, all in a man's self is against believing, therefore it must be put in immediately by God. All in a man is against it. To demonstrate this unto you—

First, The way of living by faith, merely upon Christ, which only shall raise this man, is clean contrary to the way of nature, to what *self* was brought up in. What, to go out of myself, to live in another; that all the comfort I have, all the power I have, must arise out of myself, in another, and not in myself. Nature was never thus brought up at its best; take pure nature; saith Nature, I was never brought up to that, for Adam did not live so, he lived in himself; he might say, 'It is I that lived.' But to make this *I* a cipher to all eternity, all in a man's self a cipher, and a man to be nothing in himself till this figure *Christ* be joined to him! He that knows this, knoweth it is the hardest thing in the world; for to live in himself is the way that pure nature itself took, therefore corrupt nature much more.

You shall find this, my brethren, try it when you will; when you go to believe nakedly upon Jesus Christ, you had rather do anything else; you will go I know not how far about, you will take all the pains in the world that you might find comfort from doing. Why? Because by believing you must go out of yourselves, and look for all your comfort in another. And a

man will never go out of himself, to cast himself wholly and merely upon Jesus Christ, that all the comfort he hath shall come from thence. Saith Christ, John v. 40, 'You will not come unto me that you might have life.' They would take all pains, pray and fast twice a-week, for so you know the Pharisees did; they would fetch all the circuits they could, by way of doing; but to come to Christ nakedly and sheerly, to trust their souls with him, and not to look to themselves, this they would not do. Let another man come in his own name, saith he, him you will receive; but 'ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.'

My brethren, the Galatians, to see the vanity of corrupt nature in this way, are an instance. They had believed in Jesus Christ, yet they found a more easy way by way of doing, and looking into themselves; and they had rather subject themselves to the whole ceremonial law again, and join that to Christ, than take Christ alone. What a miserable thing is this! 'This is the way of nature. Therefore now there is nothing in a man's self to help him to believe, all is against it.

Nay, my brethren, secondly, If a man come to believe and live, he must have no ground in himself upon which he buildeth, laying hold upon Jesus Christ. When you come to believe, you will find that self will be interposing a great many grounds. This same *I* will trouble you. Look, as when you come to a sick friend, you will be bringing this and that with you, and say, Take this, and take that, it will do you good. So this self, this same *I*, will be interposing, it will be putting you upon this duty and that duty, and upon doing such and such things, that so you may come to live. Now for a man to come to say, 'Not I, but Christ,' I will live no life else; here lieth the work of faith. In Rom. iv. 5, 'To him that works not,' saith he, 'but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, to him faith is imputed for righteousness.' *That works not*; what is the meaning of that? The meaning is not, that a man that hath no grace in him, or no good works,—for then Abram should not have been saved; he instanceth in him, faith wrought with his works, you know James telleth us so. What is meant then by it, Not to him that works? That is, when a man cometh to believe, he looks not to any works in himself. My brethren, I will tell you this: when you come to believe, you will find this, that if self have nothing else to help you to believe, it will tell you it hath nothing, it is humbled, &c. If you now take that as a ground why you believe,—indeed it is that which driveth you to believe,—then your faith is founded upon that which works. Now, saith the Apostle, 'To him that works not'—that is, when he cometh to believe, he looks to no works, he looks upon himself as if he had nothing at all, no works, no qualifications whatsoever, to ease his heart in point of believing. No, he looks upon himself as ungodly; 'that works not,' saith he, 'but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly.' Those are the terms he believeth upon at first; nay, and the terms upon which he must exercise faith all his days; if he come to exercise naked faith, he must look upon him that justifieth the ungodly. Now, my brethren, this is a miserable case, when a man must have life put into the soul again out of another, from nothing in himself; there is no ground at all in himself that must help him to believe.

Nay, I will go further with you, to shew you that this faith is a pure resurrection, merely put in by God. When a man cometh to the point of believing, he hath not only no grounds in himself to help him, to ease him in it, but he hath no power at all to put forth a hand to lay hold upon Christ. A man is as a dead branch cut off, there he lieth; if God will

take that dead branch and 'graft it in,' he is able to do it, as the Apostle's expression is, Rom. xi. 23. But, my brethren, when he cometh to believe, as he is a dead man in his own apprehension, condemned, so he hath no strength to lay hold upon life in Christ. What saith Heman in that Ps. lxxxviii. 4? 'I am,' saith he, 'as a man that hath no strength.' I remember once a man in great distress of conscience; a friend of mine said unto him, 'Believe you in Christ.' Saith he, 'Yonder is a star; bid me lay hold upon it;' for, indeed, to lay hold upon the Lord Jesus Christ, to close with him nakedly and sheerly by a hand of faith, a man hath no power of himself to do it; but as God findeth you Christ, so he must find you a hand too. The Apostle telleth us, Rom. v. 6, 'When we were without strength,' saith he. My brethren, there is not only a deadness in respect of the sentence of death, but in respect of the power of another life; 'when we were without strength,' saith he.

I have often compared the state of such a man to one that is falling off from a pinnacle; there is a rope, if he can catch hold on it, but he wants hands, his hands are cut off, and so he falleth down and crusheth himself to pieces. Now, for God to create hands, to create faith in a man's soul, whereby he may lay hold upon Christ, my brethren, here is an almighty power; there is nothing in a man's self to be a ground for it, there is nothing in a man's self to give him ability.

And, that I may conclude, it is the conclusion of the Apostle in the second chapter of this epistle, where he makes up the comparison of the power of God in working faith, the same that wrought in Christ when he was raised from the dead. What doth he say? Compare the 1st, 5th, 6th, and 8th verses together. When we were dead, saith he, in sins and trespasses, he hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together; by grace ye are saved, through faith. And what saith he of that faith? 'And that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' Here is all I have been speaking of all this while. No man, saith he, is able to raise himself; he is dead in sin, in the guilt of it. Is he raised up with Christ? It is by faith; so he saith in Col. ii. 12, 13. How cometh he by this faith? Not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. 'It is not I,' saith he, 'but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.' Here is now a resurrection, you see, clearly and plainly; for a poor soul that is thus killed and dead, to be raised up, to come nakedly to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, my brethren, let me speak a little; for it may be in describing the work thus in a high way, though the truth is you may have and may spy something in you that is agreeing to it, yet to take off all doubts in your hearts, let me but add a caution or two, and so conclude.

My brethren, it is not as if God did always at once work this resurrection in the soul of a man; that is, so and so. No; in many God goeth by degrees to kill him, to empty him, to slay him. It may be he had a great death's-wound at first, when he was humbled; he had a good knock, and was terrified, and his soul began to think of Christ, and he reformed his life. Now God leadeth him on by degrees, and never leaves him till he causeth him to see nothing in himself to help him to believe, and enableth him to lay hold upon Jesus Christ nakedly. Here is a work of resurrection. It may be wrought in thee by degrees; thou art emptied, struck dead day after day, week after week, year after year; but so as God goeth on to perfect the work of faith with power: and if thou belongest to him, he will never leave thee till he hath fully emptied thee of thy self, and till thou

canst say, It is not I, nor any power in me, but the faith of the gift of God ; and the life I now live is the life of the Son of God, which is by faith.

My brethren, Abraham, when he was grown a strong Christian, lived by this faith ; for that place, 'To him that works not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,' is spoken upon occasion of Abraham. God is teaching us this lesson all our lifetime. It is the great lesson of the gospel. And, my brethren, leave not till you have gotten this resurrection ; it is the great resurrection of all the rest, wherein the power of God is most seen.

If I were asked how I would define faith, truly I would tell you, that it is the *power of God drawing a man's heart to rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ nakedly and alone for life and salvation.* I say, it is the power of God drawing a man's heart. A man can tell no reason ; he hangeth upon Christ, and knoweth not why. 'As many as are taught of God,' saith he, 'come unto me, and they come whom the Father draweth.' There is a drawing of the heart. A man cannot rest in himself till he cometh unto Christ, and there he lieth, and the power of God holdeth him fast to Christ, he cannot get off.

Look upon temptations, (a little to help you,) when you come to be tempted. It is said, 1 Pet. i. 5, that we are 'kept by the power of God through faith.' Here you see it is the power of God that holdeth a man to Christ ; and wherever faith is, either first or last, God tempteth, as it is ver. 7. Now in temptation you shall find—if you were not thus laid dead at first, at first humbling, yet one time or other in temptation you shall be—that all the grace in you will stand you in no stead. There are times wherein, as Jesus Christ was in the garden alone with his Father, and the disciples and all comforters were asleep ; so your graces will lie asleep, you can have no comfort from them, you are to deal with God alone. Now, in such times as these are, to find your hearts drawn to Jesus Christ nakedly and alone, to have quickenings from the consideration of what is in Christ, and in him only, looking upon nothing in yourselves ; here are some sparks of the resurrection, here is a dew from heaven upon your souls, to make faith spring, which nothing else could do.

Of all works else, *to believe is the easiest and the hardest.* If a man find it out, it is the easiest ; that is, it is the shortest cut. Go which way you will else, go by your graces, you will have a great deal of pudder in yourselves without comfort. Go to duties, I do not say but you should use them as means ; but to find a life in them you cannot, you will find a restlessness indeed. But now to go to Jesus Christ for life is the easiest way, it is the shortest cut ; there is a resurrection from the dead. And yet of all else it is the hardest, for you must come off from this *I* ; this *I* would live, this self would live, it would give you grounds of life ; but to throw away a man's self, and that nothing shall live in a man but the Son of God, and I live in him by faith, this is the hardest thing in the world, yet the easiest when a man hath found the way, and none findeth it but those whom God teacheth. 'They shall all be taught of God.'

Thus I have opened unto you, as plainly as I could, that in the very work of believing—and that is proper to the text—there is a proportion with that power that raised up Christ from the dead ; there is a resurrection. 'Ye are risen,' saith he, 'by faith of the operation of God.'