

SERMON VIII.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.—VER. 7.

I STAND here, at the 7th verse, between two of the greatest—what shall I call them?—heights or depths of God's wisdom and grace towards us; and as that angel in the Revelation had one foot upon the earth and another upon the sea, so I stand with one foot upon the blessings ordained us from eternity, and intended us when we come in heaven, and the other upon the blessings intended us here in this world. They are both of them two vast arguments, and therefore you shall give me leave to be somewhat larger than ordinary about them. For of all the mysteries of the gospel, since I knew it, this hath most swallowed up my thoughts.

Two things I shall observe about these two sorts of decrees and blessings.

First, I shall shew you how these blessings differ, as before I shewed you what was common unto them among themselves.

And, secondly, *I shall give you a glimpse of that infinitely glorious harmony between these two contrivements, and of the wisdom of God that shines in them both.* The greatness of the point deserves this.

For the first, *How these blessings differ.*

First, The first sort of blessings, perfect holiness, adoption, &c., were ordained us without the consideration of the Fall, though not before the consideration of the Fall; for all the things which God decrees are at once in his mind. They were all, both one and other, ordained to our persons. But God in the decrees about these first sort of blessings viewed us as *creabiles*, as creatures which he could and would make so and so glorious. For God can easily ordain the subject, and the utmost well-being of it both at once; and this might well be the first idea taken of us in God's purposes, because such is the perfection of God's understanding that he at first looks to the perfection and end of his work. But the second sort of blessings were ordained us merely upon consideration of the Fall, and to our persons considered as sinners and unbelievers. And the first sort were to the praise of God's grace, taking *grace* for the *freeness of love*; whereas the latter sort are to the praise of the glory of his grace, are with an *ἀνξίσις*, an endearment of a greater degree of his grace, unto a further glory of his grace and an illustration of it, taking *grace* for *free mercy*.

Secondly, Those first sort of blessings are ordained to have their full and plenary accomplishment, and to take place in that other world, and are suited to that state into which we shall then be installed. And as in God's primary intention they are before the other, and therefore are said to have been 'before the foundation of the world,' ver. 4, so they are to take place after this world ended; they being the centre of all God's thoughts towards us. Then we shall be so holy as Satan himself shall find no ground to carp at us. Then we shall receive the adoption of children; and though we are now the sons of God, yet then it shall appear to us and all the world,

by that infinite glory that God will then bestow upon us. But those second sort of blessings were ordained for our entertainment in this world, and are suited unto that condition which we shall run through unto the day of judgment.

Thirdly, The first sort are founded merely upon our relation to the person of Christ, as is manifested in all those three mentioned, ver. 4-6, 'chosen in him,' and therefore holy; because as he, being the Son of God, was to be holy, Luke i. 35, 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;' so are we, we being members of him. And as this is true of holiness, so of the other two it is more plain. But this second sort are founded merely upon the merits of Christ; as redemption through his blood, and so forgiveness, conversion, &c. In a word, these latter blessings are but the removings of those obstacles which by reason of sin stood in our way to that intended glory. In the fulness of time God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, Gal. iv. 5.

I come now to the *second* thing propounded, *That glorious harmony of wisdom and grace, &c., that shines in these two designs*, and in the reducing them unto these two heads; the one subordinate and subserving the other.

It is true, if we speak rigidly, there is but one act and one entire object of God's decrees; for God doth all at once. Yet according to the language of the Scripture, wherein God condescendeth to our apprehensions, and hath plotted all things to our apprehension, to take us the better, you shall find that there are two plots or designs that God had towards us.

He had a primary plot, which was first in his intention; and he had an after plot, subordinate to the other. His first plot was to choose us to that state which we shall be in in heaven. His after plot, that he had towards us whilst we are in our way, was to redeem us and reconcile us unto himself by his Son Jesus Christ. To open the glory of this mystery unto you:—

First, God made two worlds for us. He made this world, and put us into it holy once, in Adam. But, alas! we stood not long in that state, but fell into sin. Then God hath made the world after the day of judgment. Now, answerably, he hath two designs about us. Whilst we are in this world, under sin and misery and imperfect holiness, he hath the design of redemption; to justify us, to forgive us our sins, and to abound towards us in all wisdom and prudence. And when we come into that other world, namely heaven, there he hath ordained perfect holiness for us, and acceptation with himself in Christ's person as the beloved. Again, answerably, as God hath two worlds into which he puts us, and two designs about us in those worlds, so he hath ordained us two sorts of blessings answerable to those two designs; the one for this world, the other for that to come. He hath perfect holiness, glory, and acceptation of our persons, for the world to come; and he hath other blessings, redemption, justification, forgiveness of sins, calling us, &c., for this life and this world.

Secondly, Answerably, Christ runs through a double state; one that was intended him first and simply, which, in John xvii. 5, he calls 'the glory he had with his Father before the world was;' that is, to speak the lowest sense of those words, the glory which God first and absolutely intended him before he had created the world, and before or without the consideration of Christ's coming into this wicked world or earth. For he cannot hereby mean the glory of the second Person, for that must not be begged or prayed for; and, ver. 24, it is said to be given him; and therefore it is **a**

glory which he hath as God-man. He hath a glory now in heaven which was intended him before the world was. But then Christ had another state, even a frail state, clothed with our frail flesh and blood. He came down here, and takes upon him 'the likeness of sinful flesh,' in all the infirmities of it, and here he drinks of the brook by the way; he suffers, and so redeems us.

In the third place, Christ by both these states comes answerably to have a double relation to us: the one of a *Head* and Common Person, simply considered as an author of salvation (as he is called, Heb. ii. 10) more strictly considered; the other, as he is a *Redeemer*. You have them both in Col. i., ver. 18-20 compared together; where the Apostle describeth our Saviour Christ in both these his fulnesses. First, he tells what Christ is absolutely ordained unto, and his body with him, ver. 18, 'He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead,' and so the founder of that state we shall have after the resurrection; 'that in all things he might have the pre-eminence: for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,' even the fulness of all relations to us, ver. 19. And what followeth? 'And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself,' ver. 20. Here is the relation of a Head, and likewise the relation of a Redeemer and Reconciler too. God chose us in him, predestinated us in him, and accepted us in him; and besides this, 'in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,' &c. That place in Colossians answereth this here in Ephesians.

In the fourth place, From both these doth arise unto Christ a double glory, which he is ordained to. The one intrinsical, due to him as he is the Son of God dwelling in a human nature, and being therein a Head of a glorious body, the Church; in whom, as such, and so beloved of God himself, and for his sake merely in respect of his person, they are beloved of God in him. And then, besides this, there is another glory more extrinsical, and acquired by the work of redemption; purchased and bought with the sweat of his soul, as, Phil. ii. 8, 9, 'He humbled himself, and became obedient unto the death of the cross; therefore God also hath highly exalted him,' &c.

And thus, *finally*, you see how these double sorts of blessings come to be bestowed upon a different ground. Those blessings which are the blessings of the end unto which God will bring us,—namely, perfect holiness, glory, and acceptation of our persons in heaven,—they are founded merely upon our relation to Christ's person. Therefore we see it is here said, that we are chosen in him to be holy before God in love; and we are predestinated through Jesus Christ unto the adoption of sons,—he being a natural Son, and we adopted in him; and we are accepted in him, he first being God's beloved; and it is merely our relation to his person that is the foundation of these blessings. But when the Apostle comes to the other sort of blessings, as redemption, forgiveness of sins, and the like; these he founds upon Christ's blood—'In whom we have redemption through his blood,' &c.

And thus, *in the sixth place*, we come doubly to be saved; saved over and over; and hereby we obtain a double right to heaven. We have one right founded upon our relation to Christ's person, being chosen in him, and accepted in him. And then we have all these bought over again, when we had forfeited them, by Christ's purchase in redeeming us. And for this you have a scripture in the 14th verse of this chapter, where you shall find that heaven is both an inheritance and purchased too: 'Which is the

earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.' And therefore, Rom. viii. 23, heaven is called both 'the adoption,' in respect to its being an inheritance, by our being chosen heirs with Christ; and also a 'redemption,' as being purchased by his blood.

In the seventh place, Hereby God hath a double glory too. Here are two editions of his attributes besides that in the works of creation, and both in Christ. One in the person of Christ, simply and alone considered, in whom the glory of God doth shine: the other in the story of his mediation and the works thereof, in which all the same attributes are manifested over again and anew by works of his and the merit of them. It would be too long to go over them all; as to shew the double glory of his wisdom, the double glory of his grace, power, &c. A double glory riseth to God's wisdom, in that he could make one Jesus Christ serve for two designs, the greatest that ever were, and either of them worth the incarnation of his Son; I mean his taking our nature upon him. For I appeal to you, suppose that God should have created the man Christ Jesus in heaven, in that glory which now he hath, and he should never have come down hither to suffer and die, as he did; suppose withal, that God had taken up all his elect unto himself in heaven, or created them there at first with him, as he did the angels, so as they had never been in the other Adam, nor in this world, but had been made sons and heirs with Christ and members of him as their Head, and so God delighting himself in them, and they in him, from their first creation;—suppose God had done no more, I appeal to you if this had had not been worth the assumption of our nature? For here had all the attributes of God been manifested; here had been infinite love and free grace shewn; here had been the greatest power, the greatest goodness, the greatest holiness, and whatever else you will, in all these manifested. But you may haply say, here had the manifestation of one attribute been wanting, namely, *mercy to creatures in misery*. I answer, this mercy is but a further extension of the same love, causing God to continue to love them as sinners, whom he loved with a free love as creatures. Love is the foundation of mercy; and so that love in God was so great that it would have turned into mercy, if there had been need: Eph. ii. 4, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us,' &c. Yet, the more evidently to shew forth this, he leaves us to sin and misery, and then sends his Son to take frail flesh upon him, and to suffer and die to redeem us. And in this work of redemption appear all these attributes anew, his power, justice, wisdom, holiness, &c., as I said before.

Eighthly, God ordered it thus so, to take us the more whom he would bring to heaven. Had we at first been brought to that communion with Christ which we shall have in heaven after the day of judgment, without having known either sin or misery, it had been a good and blessed condition indeed; we should infinitely have rejoiced in it, and had reason so to have done. But certainly heaven will be sweeter to us by reason of our having once fallen into sin and misery, and then having a Redeemer that came and freed us from all, and then brought us to heaven. Oh, how sweet will this make heaven to be unto you! Rom. ix. 23, before God brings the vessels of mercy unto heaven, it is said, he 'prepares them unto glory.' Now, what is it that prepares them to glory? It is couched in that expression therewith joined, that they were 'vessels of mercy,' that is, that once had been filled with misery, and then he takes them up to glory. This adds a shadow and a foil to glory, to make it the more glorious in their apprehensions. In an ante-masque you shall have hell first presented; and that being removed,

you have heaven presently before you. Thus doth God with us. All that falls out to us here, together with the whole work of redemption, it is but an *ante-masque* and *prælude* to take us up in our thoughts while we are here in this world : so to render that glory which we shall have in heaven the more resplendent and glorious.

This double plot serveth also to make the story of Christ's love the more illustrious to the Church, his spouse. Those that write romances and feigned stories, you shall have them set up some one man and some one woman, whom they mean to magnify and exalt to the dignity of a king and queen, and in the end marry them gloriously together. This they drive at ; this is their first project when they set themselves to write such a book. But that they may take the reader the more, before this conclusion they will in their fiction throw this man and woman into the greatest and most desperate extremities that can be imagined, separate them in the greatest distance each from the other, that the reader shall judge it impossible these ever again should meet in a happy enjoyment and embraces. They will hurry them through all sorts of misfortunes and disasters, and make that lover to endure the greatest hardships, and run through the most hardy and heroical adventures and hazards for that his espoused love, that can be ; so to effect and bring about in the end her and his liberty and mutual content in the enjoyment each of other. This makes the story to be read along with pleasure ; to see all the way the constancy of them both in their begun loves, and in the end to see them both extricated out of the depths of miseries, and to meet together and enjoy each other, and become most great and glorious princes. This useth strongly to take those that are but readers, and that when they know it is but feigned ; but if it were real, how would such a happy catastrophe take with and affect those lovers themselves ! Now, just thus hath God set up Christ and the Church, his spouse, to be married together in heaven for ever ; that is his plot. But he first throws her into sin and misery, and then sends his Son Jesus Christ to rescue and relieve her, so to shew his love unto her to the uttermost ; and all this so to take our hearts the more when we shall come to see his person in heaven. ' God commendeth his love to us in this, that while we were yet sinners, he sent his Son for us,' &c. God loved us in ordaining us to life ; but I will commend it yet more, says God, for they shall be in a state of death, and then I will give my Son for them to redeem them. So that this plot of redemption was but a further improvement or edition of the love of God and of Christ.

And then, *lastly*, God's love is set out unto us by a double gift of Christ to us and for us ; whereof the gift of him as of a Redeemer to us is of the two the least. Thou art a good soul ; tell me whether dost thou prize more the person of Jesus Christ given thee, or the benefits thou hast by his death ? Thou wilt say, I prize the person of Christ most—and thou pitchest right ; it is more worth than all his benefits. I use to say, and it is most certainly true, that Christ's love is more than his sufferings ; his sufferings worth more than all his benefits ; but his person is more than either benefits or sufferings. Now God, in choosing thee in him to be a son, and placing thee in him by election, and in him accepting thy person, gave thee in this, his person, and a relation to him, to live with him, and to have communion with him, and to be like to him for ever. And this is the first gift, and that which first he intended to thee. But then, over and besides this, God gave him as a Redeemer for thee ; and this redemption is but a benefit which thou hast by him. And, indeed, it was but to remove objections that lay in

the way unto that other great plot, as hindering the accomplishment of it; as I remember Cyril well expresseth it, *Præfunditur nobis Christus*, saith he, *ut possit natura humana, superatis malis quæ interim acciderant, ad pristinam gratiam Christi et dignitatem recurrere*;—It was to recover us out of those evils that fell out by the way, unto that dignity which God in Christ first chose us unto.

And, to conclude, the knowledge of Christ, and communion with his person and the glory thereof, is part of the happiness ordained for us in the world to come. But the knowledge of Christ in his benefits of redemption is that which takes up our thoughts here; and both do conduce to make him most glorious and most dear unto us, and us most completely happy in him.

Ver. 7, *'In whom we have redemption through his blood,' &c.*

Here is—

First, *Redemption itself.*

Secondly, *The Redeemer: 'in whom.'*

Thirdly, *The price of this redemption paid or laid down: 'his blood.'*

Fourthly, *One fruit of this redemption instanced in for all the rest: 'the forgiveness of sin.'*

Fifthly, *The spring or source of all this, the benefactor or founder of all this: 'the riches of his grace.'*

First, The redemption itself, which is larger than forgiveness of sins; for redemption reacheth to glory also. Glory was to be purchased anew. And why? Because, though we were predestinated to glory in our relation unto Christ's person as our head, yet we forfeited it all, and it must therefore be bought again; and therefore the glory of heaven, in Luke xxi. 28, is called redemption. 'Lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh,' saith Christ, speaking of the latter day. You have the like place, Rom. viii. 23, 'We groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies.' And, Tit. ii. 14, sanctification itself is called redemption, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Redemption is a large word; for Christ was fain to buy all that God intended us, because we lost it. That is for redemption.

Second, This redemption, as is said, we have it in Christ; 'in whom,' saith he, 'we have redemption.' He speaks not of the redemption we receive here, but of the work of redemption which Christ himself wrought—that is the cause of all the redemption we receive; for, he saith, it is redemption in Christ. There are some put this difference between being redeemed in Christ and redeemed through Christ: say they, the elect only are redeemed through Christ—that is, his redemption is applied to them. There is an universal redemption for all men, but it is only efficacious for them that are elected; they only are redeemed through Christ. But it is confuted here out of the text, by comparing the coherence. Who are redeemed? We, saith he. What *we*? Observe of whom he speaks before: according as he hath chosen us in him, and predestinated us in him, and accepted us in him; those *us* that were chosen, they are redeemed, and no other.

In the second place, he saith, 'we' have it 'in him.' What is the meaning of that? What doth that imply?

It is spoken, first, in a distinction from the fathers in the Old Testament. It is true they were redeemed virtually, but the thing was not done. They did not see Christ; 'they saw his day afar off' indeed, and he was 'the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;' but he had not yet done it;

but we have it—Christ hath done it. We see Jesus, saith he, Heb. ii. 9, tasting of death for every man, and crowned with glory and honour. In Heb. ix. 15, you shall find there this expression, ‘For this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament—’ Mark the expression : he was to die ‘for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament.’ The meaning is this : that the world had gone upon the score with God, he received not one penny of money for all the fathers he had saved. They had been redeemed indeed ; they had the fruit of that redemption that was afterward to be done ; but as yet Jesus Christ had not paid his Father one penny of money. Now, then, he comes under the New Testament ; and he is the Mediator, that by means of death he might be for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the Old Testament ; that he might cancel all those bonds. You have the like expression in the 3d of the Romans.

So that, my brethren, it is a help to your faith in comparison of them ; they had redemption only in the promise ; they saw it afar off. We have redemption in Christ ; it is done, it is past. We see Jesus tasting death, see him hang upon the cross, by faith, and see him now he is in heaven ‘crowned with glory and honour ;’ so saith the Apostle in that place, Heb. ii. You have more help to believe than our forefathers had.

Secondly, we have redemption as in a Common Person in Christ. We have it not only when it is applied to us, but we have it in him as we had condemnation in Adam, before we were born in the world ; so we had redemption in Christ when he died.

The next thing I would have you observe is this, and it may mightily and wonderfully instance the love of God towards us : The last words he had said of Christ, if you mark it, in ver. 6, was that he was God’s beloved ; ‘He hath made us accepted in the beloved.’ What is the next word after in this 7th verse ? ‘In whom we have redemption through his blood.’ It is Chrysostom’s observation : It is strange, infinite strange, that he that was God’s beloved, whom he delighteth in as in himself, that God should ever send him to be a Redeemer, and to shed his blood for sinners. What ! was he God’s beloved, and have you redemption in him too ? Should God sacrifice his beloved ? God chose us to be holy in heaven with him, to be sons with him there, to delight in us there. Let that plot stand, let them never come to be sinful, let me have them up in heaven presently with my Son. One would have thought God might have said this. No, God would commend his love yet further. He would let them fall into sins ; to redeem them, he would sacrifice this beloved. He had so much love in his heart that he could commend it to us no way but by sacrificing his beloved. He might have chosen whether he had done so or no ; he might have made us as happy in heaven as now we shall be ; it needed not have cost him the blood of his Son. But now he wonderfully sets out his love to us, in that we have redemption in his beloved.

So much for the Redeemer, which was the second head.

The third is, *The price* ; and that is his ‘blood :’ ‘redemption through his blood.’

The Hebrew word for *redemption* importeth somewhat more than redeeming by price ; but the Greek word that is here used, and elsewhere, imports only a *redeeming by price*, not a *redeeming by force*. When God came to deal about our salvation, considering us sinners, saith he, I will have a full price, or I will not save you ; I will be satisfied to the uttermost. He will

have redemption by a price, so the word signifieth, ἀπολύτρωσις. He will have them bought. What I give I give, saith he; what I sell I sell. I will sell their salvation, and I will sell it to the uttermost. I will have a full price for it. 'You are bought with a price,' saith the Apostle, over-bought. And, 1 Tim. ii. 6, it is called ἀντίλυτρον, an adequate price, a price that if you weigh it in the balance it is heavy, it weighs down the other; it is sufficient for it, it was a full price. In Rom. iii. 26, and so on, you shall find there that when God came to justify a sinner, he saith he will be just too. I would fain save the sinner, but I would be just too. Therefore he will have a price, a full price, and therefore it is called *redemption by price*.

But what is meant by his blood? His blood is only mentioned; not that his active obedience doth not go into it. Take all Christ, good brethren. But because his blood was the last part of the payment that cancelled all the bond, therefore his blood is still mentioned in Scripture. And his blood is more mentioned than the other. Why? To answer the expression of the type in the old law. There was the blood poured out, you know, and there was blood laid upon the horns of the altar, and all things were sprinkled with blood. What did the blood signify in the Old Testament? Blood in the Old Testament signified the soul of the beast; saith he, the life of it, or the soul of it, lieth in the blood. So in the New Testament still, the blood of Christ is mentioned, to signify the sufferings of his soul; and it is mentioned, too, to answer the type. In the Lord's Supper you have bread, to signify the breaking of his body; but you shall find that he ascribeth more peculiarly his sufferings to his blood, signified by the wine, to represent the sufferings of his soul; and therefore his soul is said to be 'poured forth.' Fall down, my brethren, before the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Thou art worthy to receive all honour and glory, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,' say the angels and saints, Rev. v. 9.

Fourth, The Fruit. So much for the price. What is the fruit of it? Forgiveness of sins. What sins? Look in Col. ii. 13, 'Having forgiven you all trespasses'—all, past, present, and to come. He retaineth sin in your consciences to humble you, to break you; and when men are cast out of the Church, he then bindeth in heaven upon their consciences what is bound on earth; yet, considering you in Christ, he forgiveth all sins, strikes off all at once by his blood.

And what is this great business of the forgiveness of sins? We that are poor sinners, when we are first humbled and see our sins, oh, what a mercy is it that our sins were forgiven! True, but it is a small matter, my brethren, forgiveness of sins is; it is buried in the foundation; heaven, glory, eternity, communion with Christ and God, being all in all. I say, it is but a small thing, it is but the foundation of this great building; in heaven all sins will be remembered no more. Yet we poor souls, as we have reason, we come to Christ for forgiveness of sins first, and we do well, as we are sinners. He is the fittest object for us, as he is the Saviour of us from our sins, take him in his blood; but when we are come to Christ once, you find perfect holiness, you find adoption, glory, acceptance in his person; you find in his person more than in all his benefits, than in forgiveness, or whatsoever else.

Lastly, What is the cause he bestoweth all this? The riches of his grace; 'according,' saith he, 'to the riches of his grace.' Grace, you must know, signifieth properly God's freeness in doing it: 'He hath justified us freely by his grace,' Rom. iii. 24. Therefore the love of God is called grace, because it importeth a freeness of his love; and the mercy of God is called grace, because it importeth a freeness of his mercy. Grace is taken in the

first sense in the 6th verse. It is taken in the second sense here in this 7th verse; for the freeness of shewing mercy, for mercy referreth to forgiveness. I shall have occasion to handle these things when I come to the second chapter, ver. 4-7. In a word, now observe what is the reason, when he said he did bless us first, it was 'to the praise of the glory of his grace;' when he speaks of the forgiveness of sins, then comes in 'the riches of his grace.' What is the reason of this difference?

This is the reason of it, saith God. My attributes they are mine, and they are yours; they are mine for my own glory, but they are yours for your benefit; all the riches of my grace, take them to your use, (riches, you know, are for use;) all the riches that are in me take them as they are riches, as they may be employed to the good of the creature take them—they are yours as much as mine, only the glory shall be mine. 'He hath predestinated us to the praise of the glory of his grace;' but he forgiveth sins 'according to the riches of his grace.'

And why *riches* of grace?

It is to help your unbelief. When you come and see your sins told out before you, set in order before you, and piled up as high as heaven, and as low as hell, thinks the poor soul, where is the wealth, where are the riches, where is that that shall forgive all these sins? Here it is; here is riches of grace told out before you; here is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ manifested to you. *Riches of grace.* Thou needest not bring one penny. God is rich enough; what shouldst thou bring thy duties or anything to the forgiveness of sins? Here is riches of grace doth it, not a penny of ours; get but faith, it is the key to unlock this treasure, and to possess thee of these riches. There are multitudes of sins, here are multitudes of mercies; riches implieth multitudes, abundance: 'according to the riches of his grace.'

There is one difficulty I must open, and I have done with this verse. I shall be then over the greatest difficulty that I know in this chapter or epistle. I shall do it in a word.

There is this one objection or scruple: How doth God forgive sins according to the riches of his grace when he receiveth a price for it? Doth a man forgive freely when he is paid for it?

This stumbles the Socinians. Indeed, the gospel is made up, say they, with nothing but contradictions. God is paid for what he doth, and yet it is done freely. God chooseth men to life and salvation, and it is done immutably; ordaineth what their wills shall do, and yet they work freely. These are contradictions; we could name many more; amongst the rest this is one.

It is answered, *first*, It is true Justice had a satisfaction, but who called Christ to give this satisfaction? Not Justice, but it was Grace did it. Justice indeed stood upon it, kept her own distance. I will be satisfied, saith Justice. But who spake to Christ to pay this? Grace did. So that here is one reconciliation of it; it is according to the riches of his grace, because grace did move Christ to do all this for us.

Secondly, The merits of Christ, though they be a price of themselves, if Christ had offered, 'I will die for my people now they are sinners,' God might have refused it. *Quando aliud offertur, &c.* It is a law maxim, 'When another thing is offered than what is in the obligation, the satisfaction may be refused.' The meaning is this, as if God should say, I will be paid by them that sinned; I will not take your offer. It is true your merits are worth it, but I am at my liberty whether I will take them or no. Now here is grace; I will take my Son, I will sacrifice him, and accept of that satisfaction.

Again, *thirdly*, you must know this, That it is to God that Christ did all he did ; he calls himself his servant,—‘ my elect,’ saith he, my servant. ‘ I came down,’ saith he, John vi., ‘ not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.’ He did it all upon his Father’s cost, merely upon that motion. Hence then, because that the very death of Christ was the gift of God, as he is called, John iii. 16, ‘ He gave his only-begotten Son ;’ hence to us it is free grace.

And then, in the *fourth* place, That God should accept thee and me through his Son, and forgive us our sins through his merits, it is free grace. Thou art bought without any of thy money ; it is free to thee. Though it cost Christ’s soul dear, it cost thee nought, as the phrase is, Isa. liii. 3, ‘ You have sold yourselves for nought ;’ it is free to us. Thus you see grace and Christ’s merits are reconciled. God takes a price, and yet he doth it freely.

And, *lastly*, let me add this, The more that God paid for to buy us, if it were his own he paid, the more grace it was to pay it. He gave his Son ; he was his own, his only-begotten Son ; he gave him, he gave him freely ; he might have saved you without Christ’s satisfaction, that is certain. Christ, when he was to go to suffer, useth this as the utmost argument with God : ‘ Father,’ saith he, ‘ all things are possible with thee ;’ thou canst save the world another way ; if thou wilt, thou mayest forgive them freely without my satisfaction ; let this cup pass from me. No, saith God, I will do it this way to choose ; I will have thee to die for them. Well, saith Christ, ‘ not my will, but thy will be done.’ Here is free grace more than if he had no satisfaction made, because his grace giveth this satisfaction. He hath redeemed us ‘ by his blood,’ yet according to ‘ the riches of his grace.’ I have done with these words