

SERMON XV.

(By grace ye are saved.)—VER. 5.

THE words of this 5th verse fall into these three particulars. Here is—

1. A repetition of our condition which we were in by nature, to illustrate grace the more; ‘When we were dead in sins,’ saith he, ‘he hath quickened us together with Christ.’ Here is—

2. The first benefit bestowed upon us, and that in this life, which is the seed of glory; our being ‘quickened,’ and that ‘with Christ.’ Then—

3. The Apostle’s note, by way of observation upon it, in a parenthesis, whereby he sets a mark, as it were a finger in the margin, to note this as a result from hence; ‘by grace ye are saved.’

I opened the benefit, which is here bestowed upon us, in the last discourse. I shewed what was meant by quickening, and why it is said we are quickened ‘together with Christ.’

First, I shewed what was meant by quickening, and went over all those particulars. Both—

1. In respect of justification. I shewed you, according to the Scripture phrase, that it is a quickening, a giving life. So in Col. ii. 13, ‘He hath quickened you together with Christ, having forgiven you all trespasses.’ And—

2. I shewed you how that all the fellowship we have with God, and his fulness, it is in the Scripture called *life* and *quickenings*. All the joy we have in the favour and loving-kindness of God, which is better than life, it is called quickening. And then—

3. The image of God, which consisteth in holiness, it is a Spirit of quickening. And—

4. The putting in the Holy Ghost into our soul, and his dwelling there for ever, as a soul in our soul, and the union of the Godhead of Christ to us, of Christ who is our life; by this also we are quickened. And then—

5. Lastly, Every stirring of the regenerate part, every spiritual affection, every holy end and purpose, that is raised up in the heart of a believer throughout the whole course of his life, all these are quickenings, and they are from our having been quickened together with Christ. Ps. lxxx. 18, ‘Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.’ The ability which a man hath to pray in a spiritual way, is a quickening.

Secondly, I shewed you how we are quickened together with Christ; and how our quickening dependeth upon his being quickened. For he was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the Spirit, as the Apostle Peter speaks, 1 Peter iii. 18.

I added a *third*, which is the scope of the Apostle here, and that is the greatness of this work. For I take it that quickening here contains not simply only our first conversion, though eminently that, but all that is done upon us in this life; as on the other side those that follow in the 6th verse are the works which God will work in our persons one day in the world to come.

The greatness of this work I demonstrated by such things as are proper to the text. As—

1. That he quickened us thus when we were dead ; as in Ezek. xvi. 6, ‘I said unto thee, in thy blood, Live.’ It was not only a child cast forth in its menstruous blood, but a dead child too. And so likewise—

2. In that it is called quickening, and quickening having those relations to death, it importeth a mighty work of power. In Rom. iv. 17, it is made a great matter in Abraham’s faith that he believed in God ‘who quickeneth the dead ;’ but yet it was but the quickening of the dead womb of Sarah. There goes an infinite deal of mercy to quicken the dead heart of a believer ; nay, to quicken his graces, which are not dead in sin, but they are dead of themselves, without the quickening of the Holy Ghost. Ps. cxix. 156, ‘Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord ; quicken me,’ saith David.

3. It is a great work likewise in respect of the life which we are quickened unto, and of which it is the beginning : it is the beginning of all that life of glory which we shall have hereafter. It is not only quickening us unto that life which Adam had, but it is quickening us unto that life which Christ himself leadeth, ‘who is our life,’ Col. iii. 4. And therefore in 1 Cor. xv. there is a comparison made between Adam and Christ. ‘The first man Adam,’ saith he, ver. 45, ‘was made a living soul ; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.’ The comparison lies not only in this, that Jesus Christ can raise up a dead creature, a dead soul and a dead body ; but the comparison is of the life itself with which both the one and the other are endowed, for the excellency thereof ; as appears evidently by what he saith of the body there, that from a natural it is raised to a spiritual life ; and it holds much more in the soul. Therefore in John x. 10, Christ saith, ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ Now then, do but consider ; if thou feelest the beginnings of spiritual life, the least stirring that is in thee, though it be but in a way of quickening, for so you see he expresses it by that which is the lowest, think what this quickening is the beginning and foundation of. When Mary did feel herself quick with the Son of God, little thought she what a life that quickening was the first motion of, even of that life which the Son of God now leads in heaven, which was his due then. ‘Your life,’ saith he, Col. iii. 3, ‘is hid with Christ in God.’ The truth is, we have little of that life which we shall have hereafter ; it is but quickening here, we may be said only to live hereafter. ‘Your life,’ saith he, ‘is hid with Christ in God : and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.’ Here it is but a seed of life, buried to grow up hereafter ; it is a drop of life to be swallowed up in that sea, in that ocean of life hereafter. And then likewise consider, it is a quickening together with Christ, the same that Christ hath ; our lives are bound up with his, and in his.

But now the chief is the mercy, for that is the Apostle’s scope to exalt ; the mercy of it doth lie in this, that Jesus Christ must die, and be quickened again out of death, before such time as this life shall be given us. In John xii. 24, Christ compares himself to a grain of corn, which ‘except it fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.’ If I had not died, saith he, I had been in heaven alone, none had ever had any quickening by me. I had not brought a soul to life, if I had not died. That is the mind of Christ’s comparison there. And—

This leads me now to that which is a fourth thing to be considered here in this place, which I mentioned not in the last discourse. I told you, when I handled and opened to you the greatness of the love of God to us, that I

would keep to such things as the text affords, to set it out unto you still, as they fall in my way. I shewed you how great a love it was—

1. From the *subject* of it ; God.
2. For the *kind* of it ; his love.
3. For the *time* he hath borne it to us ; even from everlasting.
4. From the *persons* ; us—us nakedly, and distinctly, and definitely ; and us, not others.
5. From our *condition* ; when we were dead.

And now, which I will but speak to in a word, the greatness of this love is set out by this, that to the end we might be quickened, he gave his Son to death. It is but couched in the text, and therefore I will but briefly speak to it, and so proceed.

My brethren, when the Scripture would set out the love of God to us, it speaks not much of it, but the chief and eminent thing it holds forth is this, that God gave his Son, and gave his Son to death for us. You have it in Rom. v. 8, ‘God commendeth his love towards us,’—or, as the word signifies, he makes it noble and illustrious,—‘in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.’ It is not only that when we were sinners he loved us, or quickened us when we were dead, but that he gave his Son to die for us to effect this, there lies the emphasis ; that is more than quickening, and more than all the benefits we have by Christ. You have the like in 1 John iv. 9, ‘In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him ;’ we had never had any of this spiritual life else. And ‘herein is love,’ saith he, ver. 10,—that is set out by two things,—‘not that we loved God, but that he loved us ;’ so that God loved us from everlasting, and began to love us first ; and then it follows, ‘and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.’ ‘Herein is love :’ that is, in this is the highest manifestation of the love of God. It is such a phrase as that in Rev. xiv. 12, ‘Here is the patience of the saints ;’ that is, here it is tried, here it is seen.

You know it was the highest trial of Abraham’s love to God that he had a heart to give his son for him. ‘Now I know,’ saith God, Gen. xxii. 12, ‘that thou fearest God,’—that word *fear* is put for love, and for all religion, according to the language of the Old Testament,—‘seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.’ You see how God was taken with it, though it was but in the purpose of Abraham’s heart to do it. But how much more is it for God actually to give us his Son ! In John iii. 16, it is said, ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.’ Still you see the Scripture runs upon it. He loved and he gave, for love presently thinks of giving ; and if it be a great love, it will express itself by gifts answerable. Now God had a Son, and he so loved the world that he gave this Son. The truth is, that God himself could not do a greater act, nor give a greater gift. I may say of this act, as it is said in Heb. vi. 13, that when God made promise to Abraham, ‘because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself ;’ so, because he could manifest his love no greater nor higher way, he gave his Son, and his only-begotten Son. You see there is a *so* put upon it ; he *so* loved the world,—that is, his elect in the world, for so, I take it, it is meant. Such expressions have an import in them of unexpressibleness ; as, ‘so great salvation,’ Heb. ii. 3, and ‘such contradiction of sinners,’ Heb. xii. 3. If Satan say, Thou hast *so* sinned, reply again, God hath *so* loved the world that he gave his Son for us. The Apostle putteth an unexpressibleness upon the love of God in making of us his sons, 1 John iii. 1, ‘Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,

that we should be called the sons of God !' What manner of love then is this, that God hath given us his only Son !

You have it again, in Rom. viii. 32, emphatically mentioned, where the Apostle speaks with an amazement, as if he had even run himself out of breath : 'What shall we then say to these things?' Having spoken of the love of God, such a sea of love came upon him as overcame him. And what follows? 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' Do but consider the words a little. 'He spared not his Son;' the word implies that God was sensible enough what it was to give such a Son, it implies the greatest tenderness; he felt every blow, yet he gave the blows himself. Even as when of loving parents it is said they do not spare their children, when out of the greatest tenderness they do correct them. And he is said not to 'spare his own Son,' who is more his own Son than our sons can be, which are differing from ourselves, but Christ of the same substance with himself. And the truth is, none knows how to value the gift but God himself, that gave him, and Christ himself, that was given. And he did do it freely too: the word that is used, *ζαρίσσειν*, imports it; with him he shall graciously give us; he gives Christ, and all things else freely with him, therefore it implies that he gave him up freely also. Abraham gave his son, but he was commanded to do it; but God gave his Son freely, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him. And to shew that this was the greatest gift that God could give, or had to give, what follows? Now he had given us his Son, take all things else, saith he. I do not value heaven, now I have given my Son for you; therefore take that. I do not value grace, nor comfort, nor creatures; take all freely, even as you had my Son. 'If he spared not his Son,' saith he, 'how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' He hath given the greatest pawn of his love, in giving us his Son, that ever was.

Take another scripture, in 1 John iii. 16, 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.' Do but consider whose life it was that was laid down. The Apostle greatens this love from the person, the owner of this life. Was it the life of men? Alas! what are the lives of men? They are but as the lives of gnats and flies, such as came out of nothing but the other day; no, but this is the life of God. The life which God, dwelling in a human nature, hath, and is due to that human nature, God dwelling there; the Apostle puts an emphasis upon that, that it was the life of God, and his own life, and so dear to God in the proportion of it as the lives of creatures are, in their several degrees of excellency and happiness they enjoy, to each of them. The life of a man is more dear to a man, than of a beast to a beast, of a fly to a fly. And among men, of a king to a king, than of an ordinary man to himself; because he hath more of an outward life and happiness to lose. And look, how much reason God hath to love his own life more than men their own, by so much was it greater love in God to lay down that life; a life so dear to him, that none knew how to value this life of God but God himself, and Jesus Christ, who is God, and dwelt in that human nature.

All this, my brethren, God did, when he could have saved the world otherwise too, let me put that in; and this when all our lives, and all the glory he shall have from us, is not worth that life, that glory of Christ that was debased. And yet God found a sweet-smelling savour in it, he did so heartily and freely offer him up. The truth is, this love cannot be set out, unless God shed it abroad in the heart of a man by the Holy Ghost, who knows

the heart of God, and knows the valuation of this gift, and who by his report of it takes the heart with it; all the discourses in the world otherwise will do a man no good. And so much now for that head likewise, the greatness of this love, that we are quickened together with Christ, and so he must die, and then be quickened, before we could be quickened; 'We are quickened together with him,' saith he.

Now I come to the next words, the third thing here in this verse, and that is this—

By grace ye are saved.

The Apostle brings this in, as an inference from both the other, that 'when we were dead in sins and trespasses, God did then quicken us together with Christ:' and he brings it in by way of parenthesis, as setting a mark on it, as making it that thing he would have them, as the result of all, observe and carry in their eye. Three things are to be considered in it:—

1. The manner of his bringing of it in.

2. The occasion.

3. The matter itself.

All these are worthy our observation, and will afford observations to us. I shall handle the second, viz., the occasion, last of all.

For the manner of his bringing of it in:—

1. He brings it in here abruptly, and in the midst of a sentence, before he had made an end of enumerating the benefits we have in and by Christ. And he repeats it again in the 8th verse in so many words; insomuch as some have thought that it did creep into the copy by the addition of some writer, and that it was not the Apostle's own. But far be it from us to think so; for by saying this of whole sentences, and especially of so rich sentences as this, is to open a gap for all heresy, and to make of the Scriptures what they please, and to have no foundation for our faith therein; for the like exception may be made of any. But, my brethren, it is the Apostle's indigitating here, in this discourse, this thing again and again. To say, 'By grace ye are saved,' and to say it again; to say it briefly first, and largely afterwards to open it, to that end they might have in their eye this as the chief result and scope of all his discourse; for him to do so it is no wonder. He did so in mentioning our lost condition: first he mentioneth it largely, in ver. 1-3; and yet he repeats it again, to set the consideration of it the more upon our hearts, in this ver. 5. Answerably, when he would speak of that grace by which we were delivered out of this condition, he gives us in the beginning here a brief touch of it, 'by grace ye are saved,' and then insisteth largely upon it afterwards in ver. 8. It was meet that this seal should have a double impression upon the wax to make it the deeper, for it is God's seal; it is that grace by which he knows who are his. It is the first great end and design of God. So, ver. 7, you have it, 'That in the ages to come, he might shew the riches of his grace.' It is both the first cause, and the middle cause, and the ultimate cause of our salvation; and therefore no wonder the Apostle mentioneth it three times. And then—

2. Why he should bring it in by way of parenthesis, in the very midst of his discourse of the benefits we have in and by Christ, before he goes on to speak of the rest, having spoken only of quickening; for him to say, 'by grace ye are saved,' by way of parenthesis, it argues that he had this thing in his thoughts, his thoughts were full of it; and it breaks out presently upon the first just occasion. He had but mentioned the first degree of salvation, 'he hath quickened us;' yet because whoever hath that degree his salvation shall be completed, he presently cries out, Are ye quickened? ye

are saved. He speaks as if the whole work were done, for done it shall be. He cries out, Ye are saved, upon the very mention of the first degree of salvation; and he tells them by what: Ye are saved by grace, saith he. You have just such a parenthesis in Hab. i. 12, where the prophet, in the name of the people of God, prays unto God: 'Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One?' What follows? 'We shall not die.' He did presently gather that from it, and it came in as a note by the way: he had no sooner said, 'Thou art my God from everlasting,' but, 'We shall not die,' and then he goes on in his prayer. So here, when the Apostle had but named that work which insureth salvation to us, and that engageth God for ever to go on, and that he that hath begun a good work will perfect it, he presently brings this in by way of parenthesis, 'by grace ye are saved,' and so putteth a more real emphasis upon grace than in the former upon mercy and love, simply and alone considered. He gives them greater epithets indeed, and yet he gives grace the same afterwards too. But he brings this in here as an eminent observation by the way, as that which he would have them of all things observe. And so thereby he gives it a more real exaltation than the other. And then—

3. If any one shall say, Is there any difference between his scope in bringing it in here and in the 8th verse? I answer, Yes; and this I desire you to observe and remember, for it shall steer me in the handling of it; for some things are proper to this place, and other things are proper to what belongs to this sentence in the 8th verse. To shew you the difference then. It comes in here by way of general premise, as a touch by the way of what he would more largely open and particularly speak of. It comes in here as the chief cause of salvation simply considered, a cause of all those benefits which we receive, that we are quickened, and raised with Christ, and sit in heavenly places with him; it is placed in the midst of them as the sun is in the firmament. But in the 8th verse it comes in comparatively and more largely; it comes in there excluding what may seem to put in as causes of our salvation;—if you will make them causes that are not causes, and yet will go about in the hearts of men to share the honour with free grace, 'by grace ye are saved,' saith he, 'through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works,' &c.;—he brings it in there, I say, by way of exclusion, by way of cutting off the pleas of whatsoever would pretend to any title or honour herein, or which the hearts of men are apt to mingle with and ascribe salvation unto. You see clearly, then, the differing way of handling and speaking to these words here and in the 8th verse. Here I must speak of it simply as it is the cause of our salvation; but there I must speak of it as it is a cause of our salvation, excluding all things else. There is nothing hath been more corrupted in all ages than the causation that free grace hath in the salvation of men, by Papists, and by Remonstrants, and by legalists, and by carnal hearts, that still will mingle with it something of themselves. Now all these things I must speak to, as the text shall give occasion, when I come to the 8th verse. Only that which I am now to do is to shew you, and that in a more general way, how that grace, and free grace, is the cause of all salvation. And herein I will observe this method—

1. *Open to you what is meant by 'grace.'*
2. *What is held forth under this word, being 'saved,' as here it is brought in.*
3. *I shall put them both together, 'by grace ye are saved,' and speak to them jointly.*

There is an observation which I should have mentioned, drawn from the manner of the Apostle's bringing this in here, 'by grace ye are saved,' by way of parenthesis in the midst of his discourse, and then that he should afterwards so largely insist upon it again and again : it holds forth this to us—

Obs.—That the dependency our salvation hath in the whole, and all the parts of it, upon free grace, is *the greatest thing in the gospel*. It is that which the Apostle would have these Ephesians above all things else take notice of. He sets therefore this mark upon it by this parenthesis, as if he had said, Remember this, saith he, as the great result of my discourse, to hold forth this to you, to beget thoughts of this in you, that by grace ye are saved. But of this when I come to the 8th verse. At present I shall inquire—

First, What is meant by 'grace' here?

To be sure, it is not meant the graces in us, though they have also the name given to them. The Papists run altogether upon that. If you read their books of the Attributes of God, you shall not find, as I remember, that title, *De Gratia Dei*, in any one of them. No; they run upon the grace that is in us. Indeed the graces that are in us are called grace in the Scripture, as in 2 Cor. viii. 1, 'We do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed upon the churches of Macedonia;' and, ver. 7, 'As ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.' So in 2 Cor. ix. 8, 'God is able to make all grace abound towards you;' and, ver. 14, 'We long after you, for the exceeding grace of God in you.' But yet the graces that are in us, they are called graces merely because they are the gifts of a higher grace, by which higher grace we are saved; and salvation is never attributed to our own graces. Or indeed and in truth, they are part of salvation itself, even as the benefits that God bestows upon us out of love, they are called love so in 1 John iii. 1, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!' There adoption and sonship is called the love of God which he hath bestowed upon us, because it proceeds from love; so these are called graces because they flow from that grace. Even as regeneration, the thing begotten in us, is called spirit in us, because it is begotten by the Spirit; so these are called graces, because they are the gift of grace. And therefore in Acts xi. 23, the effects of the grace of God are there called grace. 'When he had seen the grace of God, he was glad;' that is, he had seen men turned unto God, for he speaks of the conversion of souls and of the graces of God wrought in them. My brethren, they are but improperly called grace. It is that which hath misled the Papists and school-men; and you may see how dangerous a little mistake is. They thought to call it grace, because it made us accepted, and rendered us gracious in the eyes of God, therefore they called it that grace by which we are accepted. But the truth is, these are only called graces because they are the gifts of grace; and therefore in that place I quoted before, 2 Cor. viii. 1, it is called 'the grace bestowed.' And you shall still find that when our grace is spoken of the word *given* is mentioned, as in Eph. iii. 2. And twenty such instances more there are, which I could give you. They are called graces, I say, because they are bestowed by grace. They are not *gratiae gratum facientes*, but *gratia gratum facientis*, that is, the grace of God making us gracious. And therefore the Holy Ghost hath invented a word for it, which we find used in no heathen author, as the learned have observed. He calls them *χαρίσματα*, that is, gifts out of grace and out of

favour. And in Rom. v. 15 there is mention made of the grace of God and of the gift by grace, which indeed is plainly meant only of the righteousness of Christ; yet in relation unto us, and as flowing from that original grace in God, it is called the gift by grace, or the gift of grace. So that now you must take the favour of God, that which is in the heart of God towards us,—which is called in that Rom. v. 15, in distinction from all gifts given by God, yea, from Christ himself, ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, the grace of God,—to be that which the Apostle means here in the text; and though he hath given the graces in us the name of grace, yet, as I said before, he never attributed salvation to them.

And that here grace is so taken, I suppose I shall not need to stand long in it. You see the Apostle brings it in here as a cause of salvation, together with mercy and love in God; therefore the grace here meant is the grace of God also. And so, ver. 7, 'That he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace.' It is not the grace in us, but grace in God, which he calleth also 'kindness' in the same verse. So that in a word, by 'grace' here is meant this, the favour of God freely accepting of us. Eph. i. 6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, whereby he hath made us accepted;' accepted with himself. This is the great grace that is here intended. I could give you another place for it; it is in Rom. iii. 24, 'Being justified freely by his grace.' There is, first, his grace; and, secondly, to shew that it is not anything in us, he addeth the word 'freely' to it. He doth not only call it grace, but 'his grace,' by way of distinction; and then he adds 'freely' to it, to cut off all things from it.

The observation from hence, by the by, is only this:—

Obs.—That we should now have our heart set upon seeking of the grace and favour of God, as the highest, supreme, and chief cause of all; and to seek graces as the fruit thereof; to pray, though for inherent grace to be wrought in us, yet chiefly to seek after the favour of God, to have our hearts affected with it. To apprehend, and seek after, and to have our hearts taken with the favour of God, and to be the subject of it, is in itself infinitely more than to be taken with the fruits of it. And so likewise, to seek after the vision of this favour in itself; as Moses, 'Shew me thy face,' saith he. God knew what he meant, and therefore answers, 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious;' and I will be gracious unto thee. Our hearts now and our comfort should be pitched upon the grace that is in God.

You shall find the expression in 2 Thess. ii. 16; I shall but quote it to you: 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.' What is it that will be everlasting consolation, that will never fail you? And what is that good hope that will be everlasting? It is when the grace of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and the love of God is shed abroad in our souls, in a more immediate manner. That he speaks of that love is clear; for he saith, God, that hath loved us with an infinite love, and saved us with his free grace that is in himself, out of that love he hath given us eternal consolation, and good hope in that love, and in that grace.

Now then, this being cleared and opened to you, I come, in the second place, to shew you what this expression of grace doth superadd to mercy and love; for you see here he brings in three causes of our salvation. Therefore as I have opened the thing itself, I shall in the second place open it as it is a cause of salvation, distinct some way from mercy and love. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 'The Lord, gracious and merciful;' he makes grace a distinct

thing from mercy. It is the same for the substance with love and mercy, yet it holds forth something more eminently than both.

1. It noteth out, not simply love, but the love of a sovereign, transcendently superior, one that may do what he will, that may wholly choose whether he will love or no. There may be love betwixt equals, and an inferior may love a superior; but love in one that is a superior, and so superior as he may do what he will, in such a one love is called grace: and therefore grace is attributed to princes; they are said to be gracious to their subjects. Subjects, though they love their princes, yet they are not said to be gracious to them. Now God, who is an infinite sovereign, who might have chosen whether ever he would have loved us or no, for him to love us, and to love us with a special love, this is grace. In that of Exod. xxxiv. 6, when God proclaims his name, what is the first word? 'The Lord, the Lord,' and 'gracious' is the next. 'The Lord, the Lord, gracious.' I am the sovereign Lord of all the creatures; if I love, if I shew mercy, this is grace. And in the chapter before, ver. 19, he speaks like a king, and like the Lord of heaven and earth; 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.'

2. Grace here, as it is in God, notes out, not simply love, but the height of love, a love that will shew all its goodness. Exod. xxxiii. 19, I will, saith he, shew thee all my goodness; what follows? 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.' For God to be gracious to us, is so to love us as to bestow all that becomes creatures to have from him, all that is suitable to the condition of creatures. When the apostles, therefore, would wish all good to those unto whom they wrote, still they wish grace, because it brings the utmost good with it, it is love extended to the utmost; if it be grace, they shall have his Son, and all things with him: 'He will graciously with him give us all things.' So I told you the word signifies in that Rom. viii. 32.

3. Hence therefore, thirdly, it notes withal the greatest freeness. You have the phrase in Hosea xiv. 4, 'I will love them freely.' Where God loves, he loves freely; and grace denotes the freeness of that love, it superadds in the significance of it freeness; and love in that respect is called grace, and grace is but free love. You shall find it in Rom. iii. 24, 'Being justified freely by his grace.' And therefore, where the Apostle useth the word 'grace,' or God is said to give us out of this grace, our interpreters often render the word, to *give us freely*. Thus in 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'The things that are freely given to us of God;' the word is, things given to us out of grace, or graciously. So in the place quoted even now, Rom. viii. 32, 'He will with him give us all things freely,' or graciously, as the word signifies.

Now for God to give freely, it implies these five things, that I may open them distinctly to you:—

First, To set his heart and his love on us, merely out of his own good motion and good will. Mark, therefore, how they are joined together in Eph. i. 5, 6. In the 5th verse he had said that God 'predestinated us unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will;' and in the 6th verse he saith, 'to the praise of the glory of his grace.' When he doth it thus in a freedom, merely out of the motion of his own will, this is freeness, and this makes it grace. Grace implies more than to give, though it implies that too; and though still you shall find both joined, it implies to give freely.

Secondly, It is not only said to be grace in regard of the freeness of it towards us, but in respect of the sovereignty of God's will, that he may choose to love whom he will, and do what he will, merely as a sovereign:

for so it is most certain that all that Adam had might be called grace in that respect; for what God did for Adam, all the holiness he had, it was freely done, which yet in the Scriptures is not called grace. It might have been said unto Adam, 'Who made thee to differ from another?' It was the free will of God. 'And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?' So that grace here implies more than merely the freeness of a sovereign, that God doth it merely out of his superiority. But we find that grace is opposed to all that dueness which in a way of justice becomes God to reward the creature with under the covenant of works. In Rom. iv. 4, you shall find that grace is opposed to *ὀφειλῆμα*, to a debt, or a due; the Apostle, speaking of the justification of a sinner, opposeth to it the justification by works: 'To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.' I take it, that there by *debt* is not meant as if the creature under the covenant of works could oblige God, or that God was a debtor, strictly taken, to the creature. For that of the Apostle is certain, in Rom. xi. 35, 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?' But yet this we may say, that there was a dueness and a meetness between God as the Creator and the creature: that if the creature were holy, as it was meet God should create him, if he made him reasonable, and if he continued in that holiness, it was meet, it was according to the law of nature between the Creator and the creature, he should live, and be esteemed righteous, and be in God's favour, and have his approbation in so doing; and likewise that God should make a promise that he should do so. It was meet that God, seeing a holiness in Adam, and seeing him to continue in that holiness, should approve him and justify him, as a creature that was holy, and continued holy, as a creature under that covenant.

But the grace which the gospel speaks of, and by which we are saved, is a grace opposed to this dueness that is between the Creator and the creature, simply so considered. Therefore now God, that he might make way for this grace which was in the purposes of his heart, and to lay the creature low in itself, and to manifest the riches and greatness of his grace and love, downs with Adam's state, he suffers that to be ruined. Adam forfeited that bond which was between his Creator and him, and it is a forfeiture that cannot be restored again, no, not by God himself, to a sinful creature, as the state of innocency cannot. Now then, when God had dissolved that dueness, that debt, as I may call it, that obligation, which according to the law of nature, in a way of meetness and comeliness, it was fit for God as a Creator to deal with a creature, there is now room for grace. For now he is not only free as he is a sovereign, but he is free as a judge, in respect that he is free as to that his own law which, though sovereign of the world, he had condescended unto, by reason of the relation of being a Creator. He is not only free in respect of prerogative, as a king is over his subjects, and is therefore said to be gracious; but he is gracious now as a king unto traitors. In Rom. iii., when he comes to speak of being justified freely by his grace, which he doth, ver. 24, how doth he make way for it? He tells us before that all men were become guilty before God; so, ver. 19, 'that every mouth may be stopped,' saith he, 'and all the world may become guilty before God.' All had their necks upon the block. Now, saith he, if ever these be saved and justified, it must be by grace. So you have it after that discourse, at the 24th verse, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,' when we were thus obnoxious, and were all become guilty before God. Grace hath a further freedom therefore.

Thirdly, The freeness of this grace lies in this, that God's resolutions of

love are firm, and so free and noble that nothing shall divert him. Grace always hath a generousness accompanying it: that as God is the King of all the world, and will be gracious to whom he will be gracious; so he resolveth for ever to be so, and nothing shall hinder him from being so. There shall be neither *ifs* nor *buts*. 'If my people forsake my laws;' what then? I will not take my mercy away from them for all that, he saith in Ps. lxxxix. 33. And saith Paul, in 1 Tim. i. 13, but I obtained mercy for all that, though I was injurious and a persecutor, &c. And then—

Fourthly, It is free in this, because he casts it upon what persons he will. Therein is freedom of grace also, whereas there was no difference, as the Apostle saith, Rom. iii. 22, 'but all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;' then comes in, 'being justified freely by his grace.' He hath here a freedom now, in respect of persons, to this or that person, and not to others. Therefore again, in Rom. xi. 5, they are said to be 'a remnant according to the election of grace;' that whereas all were in a like condition, this free taking of a remnant, this choosing of these and not others, is out of grace; it is therefore called, 'the election of grace.'

And then, in the last place, as it respects no persons, so no conditions upon which he gives salvation to us, pardon of sin, justification, and heaven at last. I say, that he doth it freely without conditions. There is indeed a freedom that God hath given away, and that is, by having made promises to his people; but it is free grace that made him promise. There is also a declaration of his will, that without such a thing he will not bestow another thing, which yet he bestows, both the one and the other, out of grace: without holiness no man shall go to heaven, &c. But yet they are not conditions, they are indeed the effects of this grace, as the Apostle terms them. 'The grace of God was exceeding abundant in faith and love,' 1 Tim. i. 14; that is, in working faith and love. And indeed, that I may speak more plainly, what is faith, and love, and repentance, and all these, to salvation? They are salvation itself, they are part of it. When God requires of you that you should believe, and repent, and mortify sin, and walk holily, doth he require these as conditions? No, he requires them as parts of salvation itself, as the essentials to salvation. My brethren, they are the essentials unto salvation itself. For what is faith and holiness unto glory and salvation to come? It is as reason is to learning. All the world must needs say that reason is a part of that knowledge a learned man hath, or he would never be learned; it is not a condition so much of his being learned, as it is a part of it. So when God bids us believe, what is it? It is to bid us be saved, it is to bid us have eternal life, and the comforts of eternal life in our hearts; it is to tell us, I will give you my Son freely, I would have you marry him, I would have you believe in him, I would have you be one with him. As if a man should say, I will give you meat upon condition you eat it. Why, he hath no sweetness in it, unless he eat it; it will do him no good else. So saith God, I will give you my Son; believe in him.

Is faith such a great condition, think you? It is that without which Christ cannot be yours, you cannot possess him else, you can have no sweetness by him, he will do you no good else. They are, I say, essentials to salvation, essential requisites. But perhaps I shall speak a little more to this when I come to the 8th verse. My brethren, this is certain, that look, whatever contrivements free grace in God could have that might not imply a contradiction, that might stand with holiness, that might stand with the wisdom of God, that might effect the thing, viz., to save men; all that advancement of his free grace he hath ordered, and designed, and plotted in all

the works of our salvation. In Rom. v. 21, it is said that 'grace reigned through the righteousness of Christ unto eternal life.' It reigneth, mark it; of all things else, God hath set up his free grace as a monarch, and hath so set it up as that it shall reign; and there is no work of man, or anything in man, that shall in the least impair the sovereignty of it. If a sovereign have the making of his own laws, he will be sure to make himself sovereign enough. Why, free grace is a sovereign. We are therefore said to be 'under grace,' in Rom. vi., and that therefore 'sin shall have no more dominion over us,' because we are under the dominion of grace, implying that grace is a mighty king and sovereign.

If grace therefore have the making of his own laws, if he have the contriving of all the things in our salvation, doubtless he hath contrived it so as that himself will be the immediate bestower of all, and that all that cometh shall come immediately from free grace, and shall be so acknowledged, and thereby be magnified. It is the property of kings, if they do any great good, they will do it themselves; so free grace being this great lord and sovereign, it will, though it may use instruments, yet use them so as itself will have the glory. It is like majesty, it cannot endure anything else to come up into the throne. Saith the Apostle, in Rom. iv. 16, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace.' He speaks as if grace had a design still to keep close to that end, that he will have it by grace. He hath taken in faith indeed. Why? Because faith will magnify and apprehend that grace; it is a pure receiving thing, as afterwards I shall open. I quote the place only for this, that free grace hath designed the way so as that still itself might be magnified in all. And therefore, whether faith and repentance and holiness, &c., be conditions or not conditions, we need not dispute it much; they are parts of salvation,—I would salve it so,—they are that indeed without which no man shall be saved. 'Without holiness no man shall see God;' and without faith no man is actually justified in his own person; he may be justified representatively in Christ. But, I say, they are parts of salvation itself; therefore, when he saith, 'He hath quickened us together with Christ,' he presently addeth, 'by grace ye are saved;' for quickening is a part of salvation. So that this is the thing I aim and drive at, that God hath so ordered all the business of salvation, that free grace shall be magnified.

So much now for the opening of this first thing, what is meant by *grace*, both simply in itself considered, and as it is a cause of salvation, that hath something in it, some kind of notion, superadded to love and mercy.

Now I come to the *second*, and that is, *saved*.

I will not stand much upon the opening of that; only this. *Saved* is opposed to what is lost: seek and save that which is lost; so the Scripture phrase is. 'Saved' and 'grace' here are well joined together; for when we were lost, free grace then shewed itself, it entered then upon the throne. The Apostle had said, 'dead in sins,' and 'children of wrath,' and oppositely says, 'saved,' which imports a life; *σωτηρία*, *vita*, and so the Syriac and Arabian often translate it *σωτηρία*. All salvation hath a life supposed to be saved, but not *à contrà*; the angels live, yet are not said to be saved. And the Holy Ghost calls that blessedness of the old covenant of works, *life*, but never *salvation*, for you are saved by grace; and accordingly useth a word in the Hebrew peculiar to the grace by which we are saved, importing mercy, which he useth not of that favour which giveth life by the law.

But the thing I would especially note out of that word *saved* is this, that we are said to be saved now, now at the present. He had no sooner said,

we are 'quickened together with Christ,' but instantly he cries out, 'Ye are saved.' I will give you but one parallel place for it; it is in 2 Tim. i. 9, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.' God hath called us according to his grace, and hath saved us.

Now what is the reason that we are said to be saved when called?

I will give you two reasons, and these are both in the text, though I could give you more; as, because calling is the beginning of salvation, and makes the work sure, and gives us a right to it: 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' All that we shall have in heaven is but the appearing of what we now have and are. But to let that pass. Some would interpret the words thus, We are saved by hope. But the Apostle's scope is not here to shew what our hopes are, but what is; and instead of saying, 'By hope ye are saved,' he plainly saith, 'By grace ye are saved.' Now, I say, there are two reasons in the text plainly and clearly.

First, We are said to be saved now because we are now actually under the dominion of grace,—for so I may express it,—which hath *undertaken to make our salvation perfect*. Let grace look to it now, for it is engaged; and in that respect grace is not free, as I said before, and it is well for us that grace hath not that kind of freedom. If our salvation depended upon any thing in us, the Apostle could not have said, 'ye are saved;' but put grace and salvation together, and he might well say it. And the Apostle's meaning is this, as if he had said, You have had experience in your quickening and conversion and hitherto of the grace of God towards you, in quickening you together with Christ, and so in drawing you into union and communion with himself and his Son. Now, faithful is he that hath called you into fellowship with his Son, as 1 Cor. i. 9; and he that hath begun will perfect it, as Phil. i. 6. And 'if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' So if grace have wrought in you this great work, quickening you, you may conclude from thence that, now ye are quickened, by grace ye are saved; the thing is as good as done, for grace hath undertaken it, and this is one property of grace, to be immutable: Rom. iv. 16, 'It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure.' In 2 Cor. xii. 9, when the Apostle was in a mighty great temptation, and did not know what would become of his carnal heart, or at leastwise fearing lest he might be overborne by the temptation, what answer hath he? Ver. 9, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' my grace hath undertaken to save thee, therefore do not thou fear; that is sufficient, and that will look to thee and take care and order for thee. But, might Paul say, or another say, I shall sin and run out grievously against grace. But if grace will pardon thee, what is that to thee? And besides that, grace will reduce thee, and perhaps keep thee, and prevent it; however consider, if grace be able to save thee, if there be any sufficiency in grace, it shall. So that, I say, a man may reckon that if grace be king, it will prevail over all. Grace reigneth, saith the Apostle, and nothing shall hinder, neither guilt nor sin, past or to come. Still you shall have grace that will look to pardon you, and will look that you shall not run into such sins as shall put you out of grace; for this king that made these laws and principles of remaining in the state of grace, looks to all its subjects; if they be under his dominion, they shall not be under the

dominion of sin. If grace therefore be the undertaker, the Apostle might well say that, being quickened, ye *are saved*.

But there is a second reason why he saith *saved* in the present tense; because in the next words he tells us, we are 'raised together with Christ, and sit with him in heavenly places.' In your head, saith he, ye are *in heaven representatively*; and are as sure to be in heaven as if you were now there. Therefore the Apostle having told them that they were quickened with Christ, gives them assurance of salvation. 'Ye are saved,' saith he, for you may see yourselves 'quickened together with Christ, and raised up with him,' representatively, and therefore you shall one day 'sit with him in heavenly places' also. So much now for having explained this word, 'saved.'

I shall now come to the *third* thing, viz., *to speak to these two jointly and together*; '*By grace ye are saved*.' And this is plainly the meaning and the sum of it, which you may make an observation, or an interpretation of, as you will. All our salvation first and last, the whole and all the parts of it, they are to be attributed solely to the free grace of God and not to any thing in us. This latter, 'not to any thing in us,' and how it is abstracted from all things in us, I shall speak of when I come to the 8th verse. But I shall speak now a little to the former, and then I think I shall have opened these words fully. I say, the whole business of salvation, first and last, and all the parts of it, they are all attributed unto grace. The free grace of God, or that free favour that is in the heart of God, is, I say, the sole cause of all the parts and degrees and benefits of salvation. They are attributed unto grace in three respects. .

1. In respect of God's everlasting purposes, looking to nothing in the creature, and decreeing and purposing all benefits to them out of grace; so that every benefit when it shall be bestowed upon us, shall flow from that everlasting good-will and purpose of his. You have this in 2 Tim. i. 9, a place pat to the purpose, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' There now the love of God set upon us freely is called a gift, and every fruit of it in them is according to that grace, because out of that grace. My brethren, let me give you but this notion by the way. Though God hath subordinated in the way, in the chain of our salvation, one thing to another;—as thus, actual justification of our persons upon our believing, for it is clear we are not justified in a true sense till we believe, and then we begin to be justified in our own persons, yet we are representatively justified in Christ from eternity; here he makes justification to follow upon faith, or to be concomitant to faith; and so heaven and glory the consequent of grace, without which no man shall see God; yea, he hath made all these to depend upon Christ meritoriously;—yet, notwithstanding, take all these, Christ, and faith, and justification, and heaven in the end, they are all co-ordinate, and from his own free grace. That is, they do all immediately flow from his own purpose and free grace to us, without dependence one on another; in respect of his purpose I say. And therefore it is said that out of his love he gave Christ and the like; and in Heb. ii. 9, it is said that Jesus Christ died 'by the grace of God.' What was the cause of the death of Christ for us? It was the free grace of God in his everlasting purpose, Rom. viii. 32. Having given us his Son, 'how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' So that Christ, though he was the more excellent gift, yet he was a gift, and all was given with him. He gave Christ out of grace, and with him gives all things

also out of grace; and though in execution they are all to be conveyed to us through Christ, yet in respect of his will, and in respect of his purpose, they are all, even Christ himself and all, co-ordinate from that grace of his. So that in that respect first, because of his everlasting purposes, all doth thus depend immediately upon free grace, originally upon an absolute freedom in God; hence therefore we are said to be saved only by grace. All the things we have are in this respect said to be graciously given us by God; so the word is in 1 Cor. ii. 12, because, as it is ver. 9, God hath prepared them for those that love him. Therefore he is called the God of all grace, 1 Pet. v. 10, even as he is called the God of all comfort; for of all the grace that he bestows upon us, he is the fountain, and the immediate fountain; it was merely out of his grace, and this was before we had done good or evil, Rom. xi. 6. Now then, the grace of God toward us, upon which our salvation in all the parts of it depends, that grace whereby we are saved, it is a sovereign: so that though the grace that is in Jesus Christ as God-man and Mediator is taken up into partnership with the Son of God, and therefore our salvation is attributed to his grace, 1 Tim. i. 14, 'The grace of our Lord is exceeding abundant;' yet if you compare this in order of our salvation to the original grace in God himself, it is but a gift of grace. The Apostle, as Zanchy well observeth, upon Rom. v. 13, speaks of the grace of God and of the gift by grace. What means he by the gift by grace? Even that very redemption of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself, for it was the free grace of God that did order that as a gift to us, for our salvation and justification. So that in this respect we are saved by grace, this original grace of God; and the grace that is in Jesus Christ, take it as it is for us, it is but a second grace, it is but a gift of grace; this is the fountain, it is grace given us in Christ, 2 Tim. i. 9. And this is the first respect in which we are said to be 'saved by grace.'

2. In respect that God hath laid up all our salvation, and all the grace by virtue of which we are saved, in another, namely, in his Son. So that indeed when we come to the point of salvation, it is grace still, take it at the second-hand, as it is in Christ; take it in opposition to what is in us, or in opposition to what is a due or a debt, to what was in the covenant of works, I say that grace we are saved by is laid up in another, and it is a gift of grace, as even now I said, not only subordinate to that original grace in God, but the grace by which we are saved, and to which our salvation is attributed. So that we are never said to be saved by the grace that is in us, but by the grace that is in him for us. It is true we shall go to heaven, and that is salvation; but it is not by virtue of our grace, but by virtue of that grace given to Jesus Christ for us, to sit in heavenly places, and to possess heaven for us and in our room, till we come thither. So likewise, we shall rise again, but it is because there was that grace given to Jesus Christ for us, that he rose in our stead. Therefore the words also follow in this verse, 'he hath raised us up together with him.' So we are justified by a righteousness, but it is that grace of righteousness which is graciously laid up for us in him. It is not our holiness, but Christ's; it is the Spirit of life that is in Christ, Rom. viii. 2. We are sons, it is true, but it is still by virtue of the grace of sonship that is in Christ, which I say, as by virtue of it we are sons, is a grace for us, and it was a grace to the human nature to be united to the Son of God, and in that respect it is a grace to him too, though he be the natural Son of God. Therefore we are said to be made gracious in the beloved, Eph. i. 6. Though we have the counterpane of all grace that is in Christ; yet, notwithstanding, our salvation is by the grace that is in him, which is the other counterpane: and notwithstanding what is in us, our acceptation is by his grace and his

favour. Oh, how far are we removed off from having anything in us that is the cause of salvation! You see first here is the original grace of all; and Jesus Christ himself is but a gift of that grace. And then take all the grace that is in Christ, our salvation when it is attributed as to a cause, it is attributed unto that; it is grace in another, and not in ourselves. And take our graces themselves, they are all parts of our salvation.

3. Let me add this to it too, if I may be distinctly understood. All parts of salvation, when they are wrought in us, though one may be subordinate to another,—that is, thus far that God will not work and bestow this, unless withal he bestows this, as I said before; ‘without holiness no man shall see God,’—yet when God bestows any one of them, he doth it out of that original grace he purposed towards us at first; they are the fluxes and renewings of that grace. Though God hath obliged himself by a promise, and though he will never bestow one gift of grace till he bestow another, yet when he bestows both, the one and the other, they have all an immediate dependence upon, and are the immediate fluxes of that everlasting love of his that concurreth with all this. Whatsoever a Christian is in the whole, or in parts, or whatsoever he shall be, flows immediately from that grace. When God converts a man, it is as if he new chose him; and Jesus Christ is an instrument of this grace and mercy. You have a fit place for it in Rom. xv. 8, 9, ‘Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers,’—to make them all good,—‘that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy.’ Go over all the parts of salvation, you shall see this to be true.

The first step of salvation is quickening, conversion. It is wholly by his grace. ‘He hath called us with a holy calling according to his grace,’ 2 Tim. i. 9. And, Gal. i. 15, ‘It pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace;’ that is, he did put forth a fresh act of that love and grace, as freely as when he first chose him; though between that act and God’s choice Jesus Christ came in to purchase it. So in Eph. iii. 7, where he speaks of his ministry,—I may say the like of our calling as he doth of the gifts of his ministry, for indeed in the Galatians he meaneth both,—‘Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.’ When God means to convert a man, what sets his power a-work? It is the original grace of God, continued and renewed to that man still.

So take justification. Titus iii. 7, we are ‘justified freely by his grace.’ Take the whole state we stand in afterward, take in all; what is the whole state of a Christian after his calling in this life? It is called a state of grace. What, of his having grace in himself? No, it is of being under the grace of God. You are under grace, saith the Apostle; and, Rom. v. 2, we have ‘access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.’ Stand, how? Having peace with God by faith at first, we stand in the presence and in the favour of God: it is the Scripture phrase, when it speaks of God’s acceptance; so Ps. i., ‘The righteous shall stand in judgment,’—that is, they shall stand in the grace and favour of God; so the whole state of a Christian is a standing in grace and in the favour of God. So in Gal. i. 6, he hath called you; unto what? ‘Into the grace of Christ.’ And in Rom. vi. 14, we are said to be under the dominion of grace. Hence therefore all that followeth to a Christian after his conversion is as freely from grace as the first work. One thing may make way for another, that I acknowledge, and God will not bestow one thing without another, yet still they are all co-ordinate and from grace, and are the immediate effects of grace; even in such things wherein

our will co-works with it, yet still the text saith it is not we, but grace in us. Take all the good a man doth after he is turned unto God, they are all quickenings, and quickenings by grace. 2 Cor. viii. 1, when they of Macedonia had given alms, they had done it out of love unto God; and to give away their estates, this would seem a mighty good work, and to have something in itself; what saith the Apostle of it? 'My brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:' and the grace there he speaks of is, that God had enlarged their hearts to give away their estates even to penury. So Phil. ii. 13, 'It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' If we work out our own salvation, yet it is of his good grace; it is his good pleasure that worketh both the will and the deed. Take one place more: 1 Cor. xv. 10, 'By the grace of God I am what I am;' it is a speech somewhat near that name given to Jehovah. I Paul, saith he, whole Paul, take me with all my prayers, and all my sermons, and all my sufferings, all that I am and shall be, it is all by the grace of God; and though I have wrought more abundantly than all the apostles, 'yet not I, but the grace of God that is in me.' And then, lastly, for heaven: it is true, holiness must go before; but when God comes to bestow heaven, he doth it out of the same grace by which he chose a man at first, and as freely; and therefore, Rom. vi. 23, eternal life is called a gift of grace; and if you will have a more express scripture, 1 Peter iii. 7, 'heirs of the grace of life;' though they are heirs and cannot be disinherited, that freedom God would not keep to himself, but estated it on us by promise; else it were not an inheritance: yet it is wholly grace in the promise and in the bestowing. So that salvation is in all the parts of it attributed unto the grace of God.

I shall end this particular with a meditation, and that is this:—

Is salvation and all the parts of it, in the whole and in every part of it, nothing else but the grace of God towards us, implying the favour of God which he bestows upon us out of his own heart freely? Then let all our obedience, and all the parts thereof, be nothing else but thankfulness unto God; let it be in that respect *grace*, the counterpane of his grace. In 2 Cor. i. 12, we shall see how grace was the spring of the Apostle's obedience. We have not walked, saith he, in fleshly wisdom; that was not the motive that stirred me,—for he speaks of motives,—but the grace of God, saith he; I have not been moved by ends of my own, but the great wheel that hath moved me hath been the grace of God towards me in Jesus Christ.

Thus now you have had opened to you what is meant by grace; what by being saved; and why saved now; and also how by grace we are saved. I have one observation which I will end withal. I told you of it at the beginning. The Apostle, you see, makes this the main scope of all, from the 1st verse of this chapter even to the 11th. Though he speaks of our death in sin, and our quickening with Christ, yet all this is to have them take notice, that *by grace they are saved*. He brings it in by way of parenthesis, and repeats it twice, yea thrice. What is it then I observe from it? Plainly this:—

Obs.—That our whole salvation by grace, it is the greatest thing of all others, of the greatest moment for believers to know and to be acquainted with. The Apostle, you see, cannot hold speaking out his whole sentence before he brings in this: as soon as ever he had said, 'We are quickened by Christ,' he comes in with 'By grace ye are saved.' He would set the stamp of this seal with a treble impression on upon their hearts. This is the great axiom, the great principle he would beget in all their hearts. And it is to advance the design of God, the glory of his grace, so

you have it, ver. 7. This is the sum and substance of the gospel, and it is the sum of the great design of God. For, as I said, a sovereignty of grace was set up; and what is the gospel? It is the laws and statutes this great sovereign hath made, and grace will be sure to make such laws as shall advance itself.

Therefore you shall find, that when a man doth step out of the way and road of free grace unto anything else, he is said to turn from God. A man may step out of the way, from truths to other errors, and not step out from God; but see what the expression is in Gal. i. 6, 'I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you'—it was because they did not hold the doctrine of free grace—'into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel;' implying that it is a stepping aside from God. It was God's great design to advance grace, and therefore he calls their stepping aside from the doctrine thereof, a frustrating of the grace of God, Gal. ii. 21, which men do by mingling anything with it. It is a frustrating of the grace of God because it frustrateth the great design of God, for to frustrate is to make void a design. This was the great design of God, which he had in his heart. By mingling anything with it you frustrate the design of God, and you turn from him, and not only turn from him, but turn from him to another gospel. For what is the gospel but the laws and statutes of the great king, free grace? Therefore it is called the gospel which bringeth salvation, as being the matter of it. And the gospel is said to have two that are the subject-matter of it: the one is Christ, therefore it is called the gospel of Christ, and the word of Christ; the other is grace, and therefore likewise the gospel is called the word of his grace, and the gospel of his grace. And the ministry which Paul had received, what was it? To testify the grace of God. And to divert from it the Apostle interprets to be a turning to another gospel, and he pronounceth a curse to any that shall do it, even unto angels themselves.

How are Christians described, their persons, and the work of grace upon them? Read the New Testament; how are their persons expressed? 'They that receive abundance of grace,' Rom. v. 17. He might have said believers. No, but 'those that receive abundance of grace,' and he opposeth it to unbelievers and men condemned: they are free-grace receivers, you may well call them so. And so in Acts xv. 11 they are called such as believe through the grace of God. And then how is the work of God upon them described? How is the work of conversion described? Col. i. 6, 'Since ye knew the grace of God:' yea, he doth distinguish, as we use to distinguish upon the work of grace, in saying there is a counterfeit work and a true work; so he likewise by way of distinction calls it the knowledge of the grace of God in truth. 'Since ye knew the grace of God in truth,' saith he; for it is a hidden mystery to entertain it in the true notion of it, and therefore he makes it proper to a saving work. So in Eph. iv. 21, 'If so be ye have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.' It is the greatest thing in the world to settle men's hearts in 'the true grace of God,' as the expression is, 1 Peter v. 12, to have a right knowledge of it, as salvation is attributed to it, and to sever it from whatever is in a man's self, and yet to give that due to what is in a man that belongs to it. My brethren, to trust perfectly in the grace that is offered,—so indeed the original rather reads it, in 1 Peter i. 13,—that is brought to light in the revelation of Jesus Christ, to trust perfectly in it, not by halves, but fully, and to have the right art of doing it, and not to turn this grace into wantonness, to settle the gospel upon a right wheel, for it runs upon free grace, and yet to say that works and faith and

holiness are required, to do this practically in a man's own spirit is the hardest thing in the world. Therefore the Apostle Peter saith, 'I have written to testify to you, this is the true grace in which ye stand;' that is, I have opened the gospel to you. But let me tell you, there is nothing the heart of man is apter to divert from. Gal. i. 6, 'I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ.' Men are easily put by; for carnal reason comes, and that would mingle works and something in a man's self with it; and then self-love will come, and turn the grace of God into wantonness, and make a clean other gospel of it.

This very little sentence, *By grace ye are saved*, is the main thing of the gospel; now what to attribute unto faith and holiness you shall see when we come to the 8th verse. In the meantime let this suffice I have spoken.