

SERMON XXII.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—VER. 8-10.

THESE words do contain the great contrivement of God's free grace in the application of, and bringing us to salvation through faith. As the words before had spoken of the manifestation of an unknown treasury of grace to be broken up and spent in after-ages, in heaven, for ever; so amongst other coherences of these words with the former, they come in as a demonstration to raise up their minds to consider how infinite God's contrivements will be in shewing riches of grace in heaven, and when that time is come, seeing that in the way and in the foundation of it laid here in the works of faith and application by the Spirit, he had shewn forth and given so great a declaration of the riches of his grace. And so now the word 'for,' as I shewed last discourse, I refer even to the words immediately foregoing in that sense.

My brethren, the doctrine of the free grace of God in the application of salvation to us, hath been in all ages subjected to corruption, and a derogating from that free grace, either by denying of the application at all, or not regarding it; or else by attributing that to the thing wrought in us which should be attributed to free grace itself which works it.

The free grace of God, take it in the spring and fountain of it,—give me leave to preface this by the way,—that is, as it was in God's heart from everlasting, purposing and contriving our salvation, as it resideth in God's own breast, it is most pure and crystalline: for as so considered, it had no other spring but only the pure thoughts of his own love. And again, consider this grace in the current and streams of it, as they run through the heart of Christ, and are manifested in the works of his mediation, performed by himself; although there they are mingled with a full price paid for all that free grace hath done for us, yet still there is nothing lost of its glory, nothing of its freeness, but ran on clear, pure grace still, notwithstanding a price of Christ's blood mingling with this grace and paying a satisfaction to it. And the reason is this, because still it was in the hand of one that was God, who would detract nothing from it. But the hazard of prejudicing this grace is when free grace shall come to apply and bring home the salvation purposed by God and purchased by Christ to our hearts; when, through grace wrought in us, he shall endow and invest us with the whole and entire title to salvation, in our own persons, through faith. And, my brethren, as it runs through our hearts, as it comes there, there is a danger of contracting mud from the mixture of man's will, and self, and leaven of grace wrought in man, with this free grace of God brought home to man. And this comes to pass through the pride and self-conceit of man, which is apt to attribute those works of grace in us, without which salvation cannot be applied and

made ours, to something or other that shall be to the diminution and impairing of that grace that saveth us and is the author of all.

In all ages, but especially in these latter ages of the world, there hath been many attempts and devices in the hearts of men to detract and diminish from the sovereignty of free grace : and if not to pull down that sovereignty, yet to weaken it, and to undermine that throne which God hath invincibly erected for it ; and it is evident in all those goings forth, in all the progresses of it towards our salvation, especially in these of application of salvation to us, whereof the text speaks.

Now, although in God's heart grace runs pure from everlasting, yet notwithstanding, attempts have been made to detract from that grace, even from electing grace, either by making it universal, or making faith foreseen to be a motive to God of this grace, or to make Jesus Christ's merits to be the foundation of his love to us ; which it is certain they were not, for he did give his Son out of that love. Yet all these attempts have been to corrupt even that very grace which is in the heart of God towards us from everlasting. Now if men will dare to defile these springs of grace, as residing wholly in God's breast, as they are immanent acts contained within himself and rising out of himself, if they will go and mingle their dirt and dung, for so faith and works and all things else are in comparison of this grace,—give me leave to use the comparison that Paul doth, speaking of his own righteousness in relation to Christ's, so I speak in relation to this grace,—I say, if men will dare to mud this pure spring as it runs in God's heart, and mingle faith and works and Christ's merits ; how much more the streams of grace bringing salvation to us, when they shall come to run and flow into the heart through faith, and run through holiness, carrying us on to eternal life, till it hath made us possessors of it,—how much more will, I say, the heart of man corrupt the doctrine of grace here ? The danger doth specially lie when it comes to this. Therefore the Apostle here speaks so eminently of grace, it being the controversy of those times, for so it was. It was the great controversy in those two churches of Jerusalem and Antioch, viz., about works and grace, in Acts xv. 11 ; where Peter before the whole council delivers his opinion : ' We believe,' saith he, ' that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.' Mark, ' through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,' that was all they believed to be saved by. It was in opposition to works. This controversy likewise troubled the church of Galatia, therefore Paul spends whole chapters upon them concerning it ; it troubled the church of the Romans too, and he spends whole chapters in his epistle likewise upon them. But these Ephesians were not tainted with it ; but yet, to fortify them against it, he draws in this piece here, ' By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' and states the controversy as exactly as it can be stated for the exaltation of free grace.

My brethren, many of those who have kept the doctrine of God's free grace in election pure and unstained with any thing in man, yet in the application of grace unto us they have miscarried, attributing more to faith, or to repentance, or to the new creature, than the free grace of God and Christ's blood will bear. Many of the Papists have been sound in free grace as it hath been in God's election ; yea, they are as right as can be in the business of redemption, take it as it hath been wrought by Christ : they give as much worth to his merits, and value to his satisfaction, as any other, and cry up both as much as we, and upon the same grounds. But when it comes to the application of salvation, and to this ' ourselves,' as here, and when it

comes to what salvation shall be attributed to, whether to faith or works or what else, in this they miscarry, this is the great stumbling-stone they all fall upon, and which multitudes are broken to pieces with ; and so it hath been in all ages. When it comes that this same grace and Christ's redemption should be applied to us, then what do they do? They set up the new creature, this workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works, to be made our righteousness, and not the righteousness of Jesus Christ. They set up grace within us, and not grace without us. It will not be yielded so much that Christ's satisfaction is reckoned ours for the pardon of sin. And with others, those good works which are the fruit of the new creature must be preferred to the honour and title of merit, to procure heaven for us. And the truth is, with them God's free grace and Christ's righteousness may very well think themselves satisfied, if they be remotely, and at a distance, and at second-hand taken notice of. It is enough honour to Christ's merits with them, to have so much worth in them as to merit as our good works merit : and so free grace is, they think, honoured enough if it be faintly acknowledged that all is from grace, because the new creature and all is from grace assisting us.

And, my brethren, even when it comes to the work of the new creature, they go half-share with God. They say it is of ourselves as well as of grace. Yea, they make our wills the lords of grace therein ; that is, that grace doth but merely like a servant help us, either to choose if we will, or we may refuse if we will ; but our wills are the masters.

And others, that of late years seem to distinguish themselves from Popery by denying the merit of good works, yet in the meantime teach works to be for justification as much as faith, and both equal and alike evangelical conditions of salvation.

And those again that would reject works, yet notwithstanding will needs set up faith even whether it will or no ; whereas faith is the most modest grace that ever was in this point ; but, I say, they would set up faith or something that must have a throne and share with Christ and grace. Some would have the very habit of faith, whilst asleep,—a miserable thing ; they will take it asleep, when it hath neither done good nor evil, and say we are saved by faith in that sense. And others would have the act of faith ; yea, and in so doing would put off grace with this, that it is and shews the more of grace to take so small a thing as faith, a peppercorn, and they think that Jesus Christ is enough honoured, and all is for his sake.

Thus I say, in the way of application, still free grace hath been subject to lose its right. I will not stand to enlarge upon it. The Apostle therefore, in regard of this aptness that is in the heart of man to encroach thus upon the grace of God, doth here set down the royalties of free grace in this respect, reduceth all that is wrought in man to their due place or bottom, there to keep them from lifting up a hand, or raising up a thought, or taking in above what is meet or due to them. And, my brethren, it is a matter of as great concernment to preserve the doctrine of grace in its sovereignty in the work of application, as it is to attribute a sovereignty to it in election and redemption. And our comfort is this, that God hath entrusted one that is God too even with this work also, who will be sure to carry it on, and work out all mud in the hearts of his own people, if they mingle any with it ; and that is the Holy Spirit. And were it not a great deal of pity, that after all the glory of God which grace hath in election, and which Jesus Christ hath in redemption, when it shall come to dispensation and application, in the winding and closing of all, he should be robbed of it again ? As if a king or great prince, his whole and entire revenue should

be truly recorded and set down, and by his treasurer faithfully raised and collected, yet when it comes to be expended and laid out in his family, as it goes through under-hand officers, he should be cheated, and that wasted and spoiled to his dishonour. This dishonour is the grace of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ subject unto. It concerned therefore both God and Jesus Christ to look to this back-door. Therefore they have shewn as great a wisdom in its kind in this work of application, as in the contrivement of the work of election or redemption; and as in creation, they created all in number, weight, and measure, so they ordered all here, lest they should lose anything; that though they had it given them in the lump, in that work of redemption, they should by retail come short of their glory and honour: that when free grace should come to be minted and stamped in our hearts, it should come to be embased and lose of its value. The Apostle therefore is vehement in it in all his epistles; you see here how he heaps up negatives one upon another. Not of yourselves, not of works, saith he. It is one of his masterpieces, and indeed the masterpiece of God himself, for to set down the right limits, and what is to be attributed to grace, and to shew how that our salvation is so ordered and contrived, that nothing of grace is diminished or impaired at all. I may compare this free grace of God to a diamond; as it came out of the rock it came pure and whole and fair, and it was as curiously cut, as I may so express it, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that all the lustres of it might have their utmost advantage: but now all the hazard is, when it comes to be set in the ring, set in our hearts, set in faith,—though faith be gold,—lest it should be so unskilfully set as that any of the lustres of this diamond should be impaired, that though there be never so much in us, good works or whatever it be, yet all may say,—faith speaking in the name of all the rest,—We do but serve to hold forth the glories of this grace, and the full brightness of them, without obscuring any. And therefore, I say, God hath entrusted one that is God, and that is his Spirit; and the Spirit hath here through Paul's hand delivered to us the truth herein; and the Apostle doth prevent all the corruption of the hearts and spirits of men in this doctrine, as I have in part shewed, and as in the opening of it will appear. And so now I come to the opening of the words, having thus given you by way of preface the scope of them.

Here are two things, which I spoke to in the last discourse:—

I. What is meant by '*grace*.'

II. What by '*saved*.' 'By grace ye are saved through faith.'

By '*grace*,' as I said, is meant the free favour of God out of us. He useth no less than four words to express it by, from the 4th verse to the words I have read to you,—mercy, love, kindness, grace. You have all the very same words used in Titus iii. 4–7. You have kindness and love, ver. 4; 'after that the kindness and love of God toward man appeared.' You have mercy, ver. 5; 'according to his mercy he saved us.' And you have grace, ver. 7; 'being justified by his grace.' All these are synonymous; if mercy, if love, if all these be things out of us in God himself, grace is also.

Only there is one question which I did not speak to so fully in the last discourse, and that is, Whether that applying grace,—as I may call it, that being the subject of this text,—dispensatory grace, that applies salvation to us, be the same with electing grace, yea or no?

For answer to this,—for it is a matter of moment, and the want of considering it is the ground of mistakes in some,—I take it that there is—

First, The grace of God—that I may give you the distinction the Scripture gives—purposing of salvation and all things to us, which you have in

that famous place, 2 Tim. i. 9, 'Who hath saved us according to his own purpose and grace.' And this is proper to the Father.

But then there is, in the second place, a purchasing grace, which we are saved by too; and that is the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as you have it in 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' saith he, 'that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor,' and thereby did purchase all that God did purpose towards us.

Then again, thirdly, there is, as the Apostle to Titus expresseth it, chap. ii. 11, the grace which bringeth salvation; both that which revealeth it, as in 1 Peter i. 13, 'Trust in the grace that is brought to light'—it is translated, to be brought to light—'at the revelation of Jesus Christ,' not the revelation of Christ to come, but it is that of the gospel. And then again, it is a grace bringing salvation; because as it reveals it, so it actually bestows it.

Now if you ask me, Whether it be the same grace that electeth that also doth call us and save us?—

I answer, first, it is certain it is the same love, the same grace, that justifieth, sanctifieth, glorifieth, and electeth, and all; it is the same love continued to us. In the 4th verse of this chapter, saith he, 'For the great love wherewith he loved us, he hath quickened us,' &c. And in 2 Tim. i. 9, 'According to the grace given us in Christ, he hath saved us, and called us,' &c.

Yet, secondly, you must consider this, that this grace of election merely *nilhil ponit in nobis*, it wrought no alteration at all in the men, in the persons themselves; but this grace, when it comes to apply, it works an alteration in the persons. And therefore in that respect it may truly be said to have a difference; a difference, namely, between electing love, and that which justifies and sanctifies, though it is but the same electing love continued to us. As it imports the same love in God that doth elect and that doth justify, so withal it imports a love working a work in us, even in application. As now by way of parallel, it is the same love that doth sanctify which doth justify; yet in the work of justification God works nothing in us, but only reckons some things ours; it is an act out of us, in God himself; but grace sanctifying is a work in us. So likewise is it here; electing grace, it did *ponere nilhil in nobis*, it did put nothing upon us at all, for we were not; only we had that grace given us in Christ, who then was in existence, as you have it in that 2 Tim. i. 9. But this, I say, doth *ponere aliquid*. We are saved by grace through faith; and though not of works, yet there is a workmanship created. It is the same question as if you should ask me, Whether that love of God which was from eternity was the same, and no other, that gave Jesus Christ up to death in the fulness of time? How would I answer it? I would say, it is the same; for that God, as the Apostle saith, did in the fulness of time send his Son, it was out of that love that was from everlasting. 'God so loved the world, that he sent his only-begotten Son,' &c. Yea, and it may be truly said, that Jesus Christ's coming into the world was but the manifestation of that grace which was given us before the world was, as you have it in 2 Tim. i. 9. But yet withal, for all that, to send Jesus Christ into the world was a new grace too; and therefore in Heb. ii. 9, he is said to be put to death by the grace of God. And so now, though electing grace is the same with that which justifies, yet when the Holy Ghost cometh to work and to apply,—for all three persons must have a like honour,—it may be said to be a new grace, even as the sending of Christ into the world was; for so far forth as there is a newness in the one, there is a newness in the other. As now, it is a grace of God to make a promise long before of

any mercy to his creature ; and when he performs it, it is all according to his promise, yet it is a new grace for him to do it. So it is here.

And therefore, in the third place, I desire you to consider, that still when the Scripture speaks of calling us, it useth this expression, 'according to the grace given us before the world began.' So you have it in that place so often quoted, 2 Tim. i. 9, which indeed is a place parallel to, and openeth this. 'He hath saved us,' saith he, 'and called us, according to the grace given us in Christ before the world began.' That place sheweth—1. That it is a grace out of us, for it was given us before the world began; 2. That it is a grace without us; and, 3. That calling likewise is a grace, the Holy Ghost therein working according to the pattern of what was given to him. Now add to this that in Rom. ix. 11, 12, a place pertinent to this purpose,—the end why I speak this you shall see by and by,—'The children being not yet born,' speaking of Jacob and Esau, and of the prophecy that God gave out of them long before, 'neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.' I quote this place to this end.

You have here, first, a purpose of God in election, which was towards Jacob.

Secondly, you have a purpose that stood; the very same when Jacob was in the womb, it did continue to stand. 'That the purpose of God according to election,' saith he, 'might stand,' and out of it he called Jacob in the end; and that is called the 'foundation of the Lord.' But yet—

Thirdly, if you mark it, he addeth these words, 'that the purpose according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.' Here is grace now; when it comes to call, it hath an eye to that purpose which was from everlasting, which purpose standeth still, and out of it calleth. And as the grace of God looked not at works in election, so when it comes to call, it looks neither to good nor evil. And therefore prophesying of the calling of Jacob, and not of Esau, he saith, it is 'that the purpose of God according to election might stand, before they had done either good or evil.'

Therefore I conclude thus with it, that as speaking of Christ's redemption we would use this phrase of speech, 'that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that redeemed us;' so in like manner, when he speaks of application, 'that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works,' saith he, 'but of him that calleth us.' Look therefore now, as Jesus Christ did act the work of redemption according to the platform laid, and so it was according to that grace which was given us in him before the world began, and yet it was a new grace too; so when the Holy Ghost cometh to call, he acts according to the pattern of the grace of God in election.

Now then here lies the question, Whether that God did love us with the same love from everlasting, which he loves us withal when he calls us?

My brethren, it is clear that it is the same love, the same grace continued; yet let me say this withal, that there is a new grace in it. The instance of Christ's redemption so clears it, as nothing more; for it was according to the eternal purpose of grace that Jesus Christ came to redeem us, yet it was a new grace. Jesus Christ came not only to manifest the love of God, though he did that, but he came to work salvation for us. So likewise here, when the Holy Ghost cometh to apply, it is not only the manifestation of this grace of the Son and of the Father, or it is not only the same grace; it is a new grace, though according to the old grace.

And let me tell you this, that the Holy Ghost is as great a person as the Son, and therefore there is a work left for him that shall have a new grace in it, as well as in the Son's work. It shall be left for him to do us as great a favour in his kind as Jesus Christ did do us in his kind.—And so now I pass from that, 'by grace.'

Ye are saved.—I told you, that the whole right of salvation was here intended by 'saved,' but I will not stand upon that. Only let me decide this question too by the way, which follows immediately upon the other :—

Question.—Whether is a man saved so, when the work of application begins through faith, as he was not before ?

I answer clearly, that it may be said of him that he is now saved as he was not before, and that it is not a mere manifestation of his salvation. The text is so clear for it in the coherence, as nothing more ; for do but mark it, 'Ye are,' saith he, 'by nature children of wrath ;' 'by grace ye are saved :' there is an opposition between these two words, for salvation hath relation to wrath, as you have it in Rom. v. 9 ; we are 'saved from wrath through him.' Now if, when we are said to be saved, it were only the manifestation of salvation to us, then when we are said to be children of wrath, it were only the manifestation of wrath to us too : but we were children of wrath really, and therefore we are saved really now, in a true, real sense. And if it were a mere manifestation of being saved, and we were always saved in a true and proper sense, then we were children of wrath metaphorically and not really ; if the one be real, the other is real, or both are not so ; and if so, then I say this was not a real truth, that we are children of wrath by nature.

Now then if you say, Did not God love us ? Doth not the text say, 'You hath he quickened, for the great love wherewith he loved us ?'—

I answer, He hath saved us, and called us according to his grace given us, as he saith in that 2 Tim. i. 4. It was given us in Christ indeed, and it is out of that love he now calleth us and saveth us ; and yet there is a true sense, in which respect we are not to be saved till now. A king in saving a traitor, privately bears a good-will to him, yet there must be a legal act pass from the king before this man is said to be pardoned ; not till such time as his pardon is read at the bar, and he is acquitted ; yea, though the king had sealed the pardon before, yet this man is not reckoned pardoned till this legal sentence of it. And therefore, in Rom. v. 11, we are said 'by Christ to have now received the atonement.' It is an emphatical expression. And in the 19th verse of that chapter, there is a notable variation of the phrase, which is observable. Speaking there of the parallel of Adam and of Christ, saith he, 'By one man's disobedience many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' The one is in the future, the other in the preterperfect tense. What is the reason of the variation of the phrase ? Because that all men, as soon as ever they are made men,—he speaks of that multitude,—in Adam they are all sinners ; but there are a multitude of elect, that are men, and do exist, that shall be made righteous.

My brethren, when the Scripture saith we are saved by faith, and justified by faith, and not of works, there must needs be more meant than a manifestation. Why ? Because our salvation is manifested to others by good works as well as by faith ; as you have it in James ii. 24. But what shall we say to all those places ? 'He that believeth not is condemned already,' John iii. 36. It will be said, 'he shall be condemned.' It is true, but yet you see that text speaks further, and is express in it, that he is 'condemned

already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.' And it must not be put off with this, that he that believeth not hath the apprehension of wrath; but he is really under wrath, and that is his state.

How we are saved, and how we are not saved, I shall give you a distinction by and by.

The Holy Ghost hath left unto him a share, as we say, to effect about our salvation, as really as the Father or the Son had before. We were elected to salvation before the world was. I ask you this, When Christ came to redeem us, whether did he save us by his redemption? You must needs say, Yes. If we were saved before, I ask, How we are saved by Christ? Did Christ only save us manifestatively? Did not he do it really? We shall otherwise make Christ an improper Saviour. I ask again, Was not God's love as much to us before Christ died as after? Assuredly his love was as much to us before as after. Why? Because he did out of that love give Jesus Christ for us, and Christ did commend his love to us.

If it be said, as it is by some, that Jesus Christ was only for the continuation of the love of God for ever, I ask, When we were chosen in Christ before the world began, was not that grace then given us for ever? What needed then the death of Jesus Christ for the continuation of the love of God? Now, my brethren, if notwithstanding God's purpose of grace from everlasting, Jesus Christ be really a Saviour, and he saveth his people from their sins, then notwithstanding grace from everlasting, and Jesus Christ's dying, there may be still left a true sense in which the Holy Ghost saveth us too, when he cometh to apply salvation to us; for he doth run an equal share in honour with the Father and with the Son. Were it his work only to make manifest what the Father and the Son hath done, his share were less. So that whilst men set up free grace in this respect, they detract from the Holy Ghost, and the grace of God in Christ.

As Christ became the author of salvation unto all them that obey him, it was not a bare manifestation of salvation to them, but an alteration of their state: so it is when the Spirit saveth us.

But you will answer me, How can this be, that we should be children of wrath, and yet that God should love us, and out of that love call us, and yet the love be the same?

If they will answer me another question, I will answer that; and that is this, How was Jesus Christ beloved and a curse at the same time? Do but answer me. How were they, in Rom. xi, 'enemies' and 'beloved' at the same time? Whether did not God actually and really lay the sins of us all upon Christ, who yet at the same time was without sin? And again, Was not Christ when on the cross really made *sin*; and yet now he is in heaven he is without sin, even in that very respect wherein before, when on earth, he was sin? Was not Jesus Christ once made sin in a true, real sense? Certainly he was. And is not now Jesus Christ without sin in the same sense? So the Apostle saith. Now then answerably we may be enemies, and yet loved of God: we may be children of wrath and condemned already, in respect of that state we stand in, and afterwards saved as truly as once Jesus Christ was made sin. 'He will appear the second time without sin,' saith the Apostle, Heb. ix. 28. Is there such an alteration made in Christ's condition, and a real one? Certainly there may be the like in ours. In 2 Cor. v. 21, the parallel is exact. Him did God 'make to be sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' As on Christ's part there was a time when God laid all our sins upon Christ, and then another time in which he took all our sins off from him, when he

had satisfied for them ; so on ours there is a time when God doth lay the righteousness of Jesus Christ upon us, and takes off that state of wrath that we were in in our own persons. And as it were absurd to say, as some, that our sins are translated upon Christ then when we believe ; so that we were then made the righteousness of God in him, before we are called and believe, in that sense that the Apostle there speaks. The parallel then lieth in this, that as there was a time when God laid our sins on Christ, made him sin which was on the cross, when also at the same time he was personally without sin ; so there is a time when God accounts personally to us Christ's righteousness. And again, as there succeeded a time when Christ, that was made sin and remained under it for a while, is without sin, as now for ever he is ; so there was a time when we, who are now justified, were not justified, but were sinners and children of wrath, and that truly before God, as truly as that now we are saved before God. And that is certainly to me the meaning of that in Rom. viii. 4, 'The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us.' Do we fulfil the righteousness of the law? No, but as it was fulfilled in and by Jesus Christ before, so the same being applied unto us when we believe, is said to be fulfilled in us ; that is, is made good in us, as we may so express it. In that discharge of his, we, as considered in him, are made the righteousness of God.

But you will say, How are we saved in Christ and justified in Christ upon believing, when we were justified from our sins in Christ when he rose, &c., and had sin taken off from him ; did not he represent us then ?

Adam's instance will clear all. Were not all mankind condemned in Adam ? Yet no man is condemned in his own person till he is born, yet representatively in Adam all died. So it is here. So far as we take Christ as a common person representing us, what was done in him was done for us in him, and so from eternity, before Christ died, we were saved in him in that sense. 'According to the grace was given in Christ before the world began,' saith he in 2 Tim. i. 9. Christ himself purchased it, with a reserve till we believe and repent, or else we are not to have the benefit of his death. The bond lay in God the Father's hand till we should come in to him for it. I do not know that the Scripture useth the word 'saved from everlasting,' but only that the grace was given us in Christ, and that Christ died representatively. But when we come to exist in our own persons, then it is applied to us, and we are saved in our own persons by that grace which once made Jesus Christ a common person for us.

The great mistake in this thing to me is this. It is one thing what God doth in his own breast as God, simply considered, and another thing what he doth as a judge, as he will come forth to the world, and proceed by a rule in the eyes of all mankind, and give an account of all at latter day ; what acts are in his own breast, and what are in his breast with relation to the creature externally. Now to save and to condemn, these are acts of God as a judge. Justification and salvation is a forensical act ; it is an act where there is an accusing and where there is an acquitting, as in Rom. viii. you have it, and often in other places. Now though God as God hath saved us from everlasting in his own breast, yet take him as a judge, that professeth therefore to go by a rule, and so we are not saved, according to that rule, till such time as he applieth salvation to us by his Spirit. 'By grace ye are saved through faith,' saith he.

Take the instance of Jacob and Esau. God might prophesy, as God, that there should be a Jacob and Esau, and that his love should be upon Jacob, before he was born, before he had been conceived ; he might have done it,

and after he was born, if he lived in an unregenerate condition, by way of prophecy he might have said, 'Jacob have I loved;' yet notwithstanding still, if he will proceed as a judge, according to that rule which he hath set in his word, Jacob is not saved till Jacob believe.

The ground of this mistake lies in this: men do not distinguish between the grace of God decreeing, and the grace of God executing according to his decree. Application is the execution of God's decree; and as he decreed our salvation, so he decreed this order and this way of execution. My brethren, God doth not save us merely by predestination, he doth not glorify us merely by predestination. Would you never be otherwise glorified than now you are in God's decree? But he saveth us by predestination that works faith. 'By grace ye are saved through faith.' The mistake lies in this: that because it is out of that love, and because that when God begins to work it is out of that grace he chooseth, therefore they conclude there is no other grace, there is no alteration of the state of a man, when this grace comes to apply all to him.

Again, another ground of the mistake is this: the not considering of this distinction,—I speak this to clear it as far as I am able, though I shall do it largely;—it proceedeth, I say, from the ignorance of this distinction, that, first, there are immanent acts which lie in God's breast, as we call them, abiding in himself. 'The Lord knoweth who are his,' and this is called 'the foundation of the Lord;' which he purposed in himself. And then, secondly, there are acts which though they do reside in God's breast, wherein yet he doth proceed by a rule external, as he is a judge; as now to give us the right of salvation, of heaven, and glory, and happiness, and to acquit us from condemnation, it is an act merely in God's breast, and consists in his account; yet so as withal it is an act relating to an external rule given forth, by which he doth this, for it is an act in which he doth go by a rule which he hath set in his word. But then, thirdly, there are acts of God which are out of the same love that both these, and yet they work somewhat in us, as glorification and sanctification. Now to me here lies the pure and true mistake, that men do not distinguish between those acts that are purely in God's breast as God, known to himself; and those which though they are in his own breast, and work nothing in us, as justification and adoption do not, simply considered; they are acts towards us indeed, but are not acts in us, but in God only, yet they relate to an external rule, they are in God as a judge: and upon that respect there is some legal act passeth in our hearts upon which the Lord doth as a judge acquit us. Of which by and by.

And so much now for the clearing of that, 'by grace,' in this sense, 'ye are saved,' of which I have given you my thoughts briefly.

Now then to proceed.—*By grace ye are saved through faith.*

What is the reason that God, when he came to apply salvation to us, chose out faith? I shall only mention the reasons in the text.

1. Because there is a special sympathy between faith and free grace; so as that faith, and faith only, will give free grace all its due and honour. So that if the Holy Ghost must have a work upon us, by which we must be saved, that he may have the glory of salvation as well as Christ and the Father, there could be nothing else chosen but faith. I shewed you this in the last discourse. You have it in Rom. iii. and iv., where the Apostle saith plainly and clearly that it was of faith that it might be of grace; it was of grace because it was of faith. I am now to apply this salvation, saith he, to this soul, and I would have my grace exalted still, therefore I will have

faith. It was of faith that it might be of grace. But I will not stand to open that.

2. The Apostle, you see, maketh salvation a gift, for those words, 'it is the gift of God,' the Holy Ghost hath so penned them, that the grammar of them may refer as well to salvation as to faith. Now if that salvation, the right to salvation, be an entire gift that is given at a lump, then there was no grace that was so fit in the heart of man to answer this gift as faith. For faith is a mere receiver. That which is said of Lydia, in Acts xvi., that God opened her heart 'to attend,' it is in the original, 'to take them to her,' namely, the things that Paul spake, and he opened her heart to take them in, she did not receive them; so elsewhere. 'That they might receive remission of sins and an inheritance through faith,' Acts xxvi. 18. I could give you many places for it. Now—

(1.) It is faith of all graces else that doth first receive; and it receiveth by a revelation. 'The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.' Love and joy, that are other graces, do but flow from this. It is faith that gives the first entertainment to that grace, and salvation brought by grace, and others take it in by faith.

(2.) It is faith that is only a receiver; that is, it doth nothing else but receive; it returns not. Doth the hand of a beggar that takes an alms, return anything to the man that gives? No, it only takes it. The beggar indeed doth other actions, puts off his hat, he bows to him and gives him thanks, and in these there is a return, but the hand that takes it is nothing but a receiver, and that act is only receiving. Love doth reverence to God, and it is officious and laborious, the labour of love as it is called; but faith doth nothing else but receive.

(3.) No other grace could receive it immediately but faith. *Fidei cum solo Deo ex Christo res est, caritatis cum Deo et proximo.* Faith worketh by love; love therefore ariseth from faith, but it is faith only that immediately receiveth. For the right of salvation cometh immediately out of the womb of free grace, as it lay there from everlasting, purchased by Jesus Christ; what is there in the soul that immediately receiveth it? Only faith. There are two acts of faith; the one is upward to God, and the other is downward. *Actus elicitus*, as we call it, and *actus imperatus*. The one brings forth without the help of any other grace,—that is, to receive the grace offered in the gospel,—and the other works by other graces. It is faith only glorifies God immediately; other graces by the help of faith.

(4.) There is nothing else but faith could have taken in the whole of salvation completely. We are sanctified by degrees, we shall be glorified many years hence; it is glory reserved to the latter day; we have it by parcels in the possession. What grace is there that could take in the whole at once? that could look to all that is to come and to all that is past? Nothing else but faith. The Apostle, when he saith here, 'ye are saved,' he referreth to what he had said before: we sit, saith he, 'in heavenly places in Christ,' and we are 'risen with Christ;' these are things to come, if we respect the actual bestowing of them. The right we have now, what can take this right in? Nothing but faith can make me see myself sit in heavenly places with Christ, and see myself risen with Christ. Faith can take in all that was done before the world was, can take in all that God means to do, yea, and give a subsistence thereunto. Love cannot do this; love may make a fancy of the party, but it cannot make the party present; but faith makes all these things present.

And then again, the Lord hath put all salvation and grace that he means

to bestow, in the promise: nothing else in us answers the promise but faith; so you have it in Rom. iv. 13, and Gal. iii. 22. I will not stand to enlarge upon this.

By grace ye are saved through faith.—Ye were children of wrath before, ye are saved by faith. I told you there was an alteration of the state of a man, from being a man condemned, according to the rule of the word, which God, as a judge, will go by; and it is upon believing.

Now what of salvation doth faith then receive, which we had not before, and to which works add nothing? ‘Not of works.’

I answer, The whole right of salvation. This is clear out of the words, when he saith, ‘through faith, and not of works.’ Upon believing, or with believing, (I shall explain it by and by,) the whole right of salvation is given us; but all the holiness and works we have do not serve for the right, but only we are led through them to the possession of it. You have it said in 2 Thess. ii. 13, that we are saved through faith and sanctification. But the Apostle here orders them, how through faith, and how through sanctification. He speaks in common of both there; here, so through faith as not through sanctification. ‘Not of works,’ saith he. How shall we solve that? This is the clear distinction of it. We are saved through faith, as that which gives us the present right, or that which God doth then give as a judge, when we believe, before faith hath done a whit of work else; but we are led through sanctification and good works to the possession of salvation. Distinguish the right and the possession, and you have clearly the Apostle’s meaning; for, saith he, ‘he hath ordained good works, that we should walk in them,’ as being already ‘saved through faith,’ which he speaks before that.

But had not we the right before, you will say? Truly, my brethren, as copyholders have the right to their land when their fathers die; but yet they must take it up at the court of the chief lord before they enter upon the actual possession: so it is here. We enter into rest by faith, as the Apostle saith. It is a mighty expression that in Acts xxvi. 18, ‘By faith we receive remission of sins, and an inheritance.’ Let any one now go and interpret those words. How is a man by faith said to receive an inheritance? He doth not receive the possession of heaven by faith; for vision, not faith, gives him that possession. How doth he receive it then? I answer, in the right of it. For upon believing, God, as a judge, doth pronounce this man an heir of eternal life, and, as a judge, he will own him to be so at the latter day. He had before bequeathed him an inheritance by the will of Christ, who died to make a testament; he had a right bequeathed him from everlasting, but the actual possession he enters upon by faith. It is called an inheritance, when he giveth the reasons why it is by faith. In Rom. iv. you shall find that he useth that expression of an inheritance. Abraham, saith he, was justified by faith, that the inheritance might be by promise; and in John i. 12, ‘to them that believe he gave power.’ The word is, he gave ‘dignity,’ as a king doth create a baron; it is a legal form and act. He gives them a dignity, and then bestows it upon them.

Therefore clearly to me, those that say that faith only serveth for the manifestation of justification or salvation are mistaken. Saith Paul, in Gal. ii. 16,—and he spake it as guided by the Holy Ghost, in the name of all the apostles,—‘Even we believed, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.’ If faith be only the manifestation of justification itself, then they believed that they were justified to be justified; but, says he, ‘We, knowing that a man is not justified by the

works of the law, believed, that we might be justified.' Did they know only that justification would never be manifested by the law? No, they knew that they could never have a real justification by the law, and therefore, 'We believe,' saith he, 'that we might be justified;' that is, really, as the opposition carries it, Acts xiii. 39,—which being added to the other, clears it,—'By him all which believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses;' as really by the one, as we could not really by the other.

Again, that opinion must needs make all faith assurance, and so condemn a multitude of the generation of the just; for if faith be only the manifestation of justification, every man that believeth hath his justification made manifest to him, and so is assured of his salvation. And it makes justification also an improper thing, as I shall shew you by and by.

When the Scripture speaks of our being justified, it doth not mean a justification manifested to us only. Read but the 3d, 4th, and 5th chapters of the Romans, and mark the coherence. When he had proved that we are justified by faith, and that before God—it is not only in our own consciences—in chap. iv., he doth by this prove that Abraham was not justified by works, because then he had not been justified before God, and he would have had wherewith before God to have boasted. If he had not spoken of a justification before God, and but of the manifestation of it to us, this had not been a good argument of the Apostle's. And that he clearly distinguisheth between justification really given to us when we believe, and the assurance of it, is clear by chap. v. 1, compared with the former: 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,' saith he: 'by whom also we have access by faith, and rejoice in hope of glory,' &c. So that he makes peace with God, and assurance of salvation, and the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and joy in God, &c., to be the fruit of faith. Now this could not have been, if our salvation and justification had been only the manifestation of our justification, and of the love of God to us.

The truth is, this opinion, first, makes our justification a mere trope and figure in rhetoric, whereas glorification is not; these would not be glorified by a trope only. 'Whom he hath predestinated, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.' Why should not justification be taken in a real sense, as well as glorification, or calling?

It, secondly, makes all faith to be assurance, as was said.

Thirdly, If you will say that there may be any kind of manifestation of election and salvation by signs, be it but probable; and so far all grant, and a use of them all do grant, after the revelation of justification by the Spirit, which is immediate: then if justification be only the manifestation of salvation, so far as they may serve to concur to the manifestation of justification, we must needs hold that we are justified by works; but the text saith clearly that we are justified by faith, and not of works. 'By grace ye are saved through faith.'

Next you will inquire, How through faith?

First, some say, by it as an instrument. The truth is, when you resolve that phrase into its right logic, it is the habit of faith is the instrument, rather than the act of faith.

Many queries may be, How through faith? As—

First, Whether it be to be considered as an instrument of God's justifying of us?

The truth is, when you resolve that assertion into its right logic, it is the habit of faith, rather than the act, must be called the instrument of

either. And thus the most judicious divine I know in that point, and in the point of justification, acknowledgeth it.* There is, saith he, the principle of faith, and there is the act of faith; now properly it is the principle of faith that must be called the instrument, the act is the way or means thereof. And if so, then more is attributed to the habit than the act.

Then again, Whether through faith as a condition, or not?

I would have this word laid aside; I see both parties speak faintly about it. Perkins upon the *Galatians* will hardly acknowledge it a condition; another, in a book called *The Triumph of Faith*, saith it is improperly a condition. If it be not, why do they use the word? There is a danger in it.

First, A condition may be pleaded. I may go and plead this, I have believed, &c. Will any man make this a condition between the giver and receiver, I will give you an alms, if you will receive it? It is not a condition.

Secondly, All those expressions, If a man believeth, he shall be saved, &c., import that he that doth so shall be saved in the event, which the elect only are, to whom he giveth faith. And it is a phrase that imports a pleading. A prisoner is not pardoned unless he plead his pardon, or hath his pardon read at the bar; will you say this act of his is the condition of his being pardoned? It is that without which he is not legally pardoned, he doth not stand absolved else. 'Wash, and be clean.' He could never have been cleansed if he had not washed; was his washing a condition? No, he did not stand upon a condition with him in it. It was indeed a duty, it was likewise a means or a manner by which God did cleanse him.

My brethren, the nature of faith is modest, it never makes a plea for itself, it wholly pleadeth grace, and nothing else. The truth is, if it were a condition, a man might plead it before God, as the Apostle saith, Rom. iv.

That it is called the law of faith, and therefore this must be the condition, it follows not. It is the duty, and it is the command of the gospel, without which God saveth no man; and is not that enough? It seems to me to import as if there were a universal grace, and that it is the condition terminateth it to this man, and not to that.

Then again, Whether it be the act of faith that justifies, or that is accounted a man's righteousness, when we are said to be saved through faith?

Surely no, for God might have taken works as well; if he would have taken it as an act, he might have taken any act, love itself.

There is this reason lies in the bottom of my spirit against it, besides all that else the Scripture saith against it: that if when I go to God to be justified, I must present to him my believing as the matter of my righteousness, and only Christ's death as the merit of it, what will follow? Two things clearly to me: first, that the heart is taken off from looking upon the righteousness of Christ wholly, and diverteth to its own righteousness, in the very act of believing, for righteousness, and presenteth that to God which the Scripture is clear against. I say, it doth take the heart off from the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, or the eyeing of that, and causeth it to divert into itself, and present its own faith to God. Secondly, every man that will believe to be justified, and go to God and say, Lord, justify me, he must have an evidence that he hath faith, for how else can he present that as the matter of his own righteousness? Now millions of souls cannot do this; they were in a poor case if they should be put to it.

* *Vide* Gerard Loc. Com. de Justif., p. 1325:—'Habitus est instrumentum, actus, ratio, et modus,' &c.

The Apostle saith, it was 'of faith, that it might be sure.' If justification had been founded on the act of faith, it had been as sure on works as faith; for that faith that draws out an act of love is as apt to fail as that act of love. But here is no uncertainty, while I believe to be justified by the righteousness of Christ, but my faith is swallowed up there; though I may doubt of my faith relying on him, yet I have a sure object, I have a sure matter to represent to God for me; whereas if *believing* was that I had to represent to God to be justified by, suppose my faith fail me, I have not a sure matter of righteousness to represent to God.

The very object faith believes on is a contradiction to this, that the act of faith should be the matter of my justification. I yield this, when God doth justify, he takes notice of the act in its kind, of the degree of it. Abraham was strong in faith, but in the point of justification he takes notice of Christ in the heart. The truth is, boasting would be as much of faith as of works, if I were justified by the act of faith; whereas the Apostle saith, 'Not of works, lest any man should boast.'

But how shall we understand this thing, *through faith*?

It is not for faith, it is through faith. This word denotes out causality, then it notes out a way. What is faith? It is the way he saves us by. 'Prepare the way,' Matt. iii. 3. It is also aptly expressed by entering in at the strait gate, Matt. vii. 13.

How are we saved by grace through faith?

Faith lets in that salvation, lets in that grace whereby we are saved, as the sun comes in at the window when the shuts are open, and the soul receives that grace by faith, and take John's expression, John xx. 31, 'that believing you might have life,' by grace you are saved, and that through faith; because faith lets Christ into the soul, and he comes to dwell in the soul; God sees Christ there, and he so justifies us and saves us in and through Christ, through faith, and that not of yourselves. This word, *and that*, refers to faith, it is the gift of God, that is a diminutive phrase; he saith, he saves through faith, and this little thing faith is the gift of God; he magnifies grace, he took the least thing in us, whereby to account us saved, which is our faith. If Christ were now to appear, what is the least thing you could do, or could be expected that you would do? You will say, it were to look up to see him, and to hope for salvation from him. Isa. xlv. 22, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth:' I require nothing else; by grace you are saved, it is but a look, and that not of yourselves, and you shall be saved by that grace. How much of self is against faith I have shewn; his scope is here to magnify grace in application. There is a great controversy in the world, which is the greater grace; this, or for God to vouchsafe a man that he should go and make a universal grace and love to mankind, and give every man means to assist him by degrees, so that if he will not refuse those means, he shall be saved, his own grace having a share with God in it. And he shall be copartner with God, so it shall be of his free-will; this puts much on the spirits of men, and it serves, say some, greatly for the clearing of God. Though I think, to clear God there need not be this doctrine; but we say, it is not in him that wills, or runs, but in God that shews mercy; he works the will and the deed, and by grace you are saved, and you are saved through faith, and the working of this faith is of God, not of yourselves; he carries on the will of man, opens the understanding by a spiritual light, which the common works of the Spirit give not.

The question is, which of these two magnifies grace more? Sure the latter. If the way of salvation had been through faith, partly of ourselves,

and partly of free grace, all mankind would have fallen every day one after another. There is the greatest instance that can be, that of the old world. Noah was a preacher of righteousness; the Spirit of Christ preached unto those souls of men that are now in hell. And, says God, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man,' Gen. vi. 3. The Holy Ghost did strive with man, gave him assisting grace; there was not a man saved by that grace. It is the highest instance that can be; only one man saved and his family, when all mankind thus fell, and every one fell, one after another. How came he to be saved? It was not with that common grace; it is said, 'Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord,' Gen. vi. 8. By grace he was saved, not of himself, it was by a special grace that gave him faith; it was not of himself. When all the rest fell away by that common grace men plead for, he was saved by the special grace of God. The text hath another instance; by faith ye are saved, you that were without God in the world, without the promise, led away with dumb idols, in whom the devil ruled, you were remote from faith; if you had been left to free-will, what would have become of you? How comes it to pass that you are saved who are Gentiles, when the Jews are cast off? If common grace would have got it, the Jews had the advantage: but 'by grace you are saved, not of yourselves.' What is the reason that Christ when he came, said that after his ascension, then the world should come in, and that God should say in ages to come he would save men through this grace? It is merely his free grace. By grace you are saved, and that through faith, which is the gift of God. It is given to you to believe, you are not able to think a good thought of yourselves; 'to you it is given.' Salvation is a gift, Christ a gift, and faith is a gift; when I have found out a Christ, I must find out a faith to lay hold on him; all our whole salvation goes by gift. The grace given before the world began gives Christ for us, and us to Christ. Thus Christ is a gift, and faith also is a gift; God gives that to us. 'By grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.'