

SERMON XXI

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 which I have now read unto you are an additional piece, added to that discourse of the Apostle before, concerning the cause and parts of our salvation, in shewing the exceeding riches of grace, in the application of salvation to us, laid forth by free grace from everlasting, and purchased by Christ.

The words here are one of the great forts of the Protestant doctrine, a place which all our divines, in handling of justification, and salvation by faith and by free grace and not of works, have recourse unto, as wherein salvation by faith is spoken of *tanquam in propria sede*, as in its proper place. And therefore it is reckoned as the sum, as indeed it is, of all the Apostle had said concerning this, both in the 3d and 4th chapters to the Romans, and in the 3d to the Galatians.

I will not stand to repeat anything which I delivered for the opening of the words formerly, until I am over the 10th verse. I shall, though not much, yet somewhat more enlarge, because I conceive that the truths delivered therein are of exceeding great moment.

To begin therefore with the exposition of each word apart:—

Here is the Apostle's main assertion laid down, and that is, that *by grace we are saved*; and it is ushered in with this particle *for*. 'For,' saith he, 'by grace are ye saved,' which is a particle of coherence and connexion, and so must refer to the former words.

The word is sometimes used for an introduction to an assertion, or further explication of a thing formerly asserted; sometimes as giving a reason of what had been said before. And I take it that both do stand here, in relation to two several references that these words have.

1. They refer to what he had said in the 5th verse, when he had but begun to mention the application of salvation to us, in quickening of us; his heart being big with it, saith he there, by way of parenthesis, 'By grace ye are saved.' He lets fall there a brief word, which yet was the centre that all his motions and rounds about the text were directed to. Now then, he having but hinted this by the way there, when he had made an end of that vein of discourse which he had in hand and was engaged in, he now comes to reassume that which he had before but scattered by the way, and to hold up this as the eminent thing, as the centre and the upshot of what he aimed at in his whole discourse. And so he enters upon a new commonplace of matter, to shew how by grace we are saved, in the application of salvation to us; he clears it by way of several short *theses*. And so now the word *for* hath relation to what he had said before in the 5th verse, 'by grace ye are saved;' and it is a note of reassuming the same thing again, and ush-

ereth in a further clearing and explication of what he had there said, as if he should say, 'For you must know that by grace ye are saved;' and so he goes on to enlarge upon it.

2. If you take the words in reference more immediately to the words foregoing in the 7th verse, so they are a reason of what is delivered in that 7th verse. He had said there that the utmost end of God was, in the ages to come to shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ: for, saith he, by grace ye are saved. One interpretation I gave of those words in the 7th verse was this: that to shew the exceeding riches of his grace was God's utmost end in the salvation of men. Now here follows a demonstration and evidence of it. 'For,' saith he, 'by grace ye are saved.' This being the fountain, the original, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and end, the contriver of all the salvation of man, he hath contrived all so that the whole shall manifest itself to be by grace. And to evidence it to them he instanceth in the salvation we have in this life, in the application of salvation to us, shewing how in the whole, and in every part of it, it is so contrived as it shall eminently appear that we are saved by grace. And by that also, says he, you may guess that even to eternity, and in all the ages to come, God still drives on the same design, even to shew forth his grace and the riches of it more and more; and by what you have now found in this work of application,—'for ye are saved by grace,'—you may estimate what riches of grace in the world to come (which was another interpretation I gave of the words) are to be spent upon you. This as to the coherence in both these senses.

I may add this: I told you likewise, that in those words in the 7th verse, 'that he might shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace in the ages to come,' his scope was to shew forth the riches of his grace in converting us, in the example of these Ephesians. Now then the Apostle comes in with this word *for* as by way of exemplification, 'for by grace ye are saved;' if ever there was an instance of the riches of grace to after-ages, it is in you. Because he had propounded them as the pattern, as the model of like kindness to others in after-ages, he doth now enlarge, and shew how that in them, and in their conversions, men that were so eminently wicked and sinful, God had shewn forth so great and rich a grace in saving of them. 'For ye,' saith he, 'are saved by grace.'

Only I shall make this observation by the way. In that the Apostle doth reassume and dilate upon it; viz., salvation by grace, and that through faith, and not of works, &c.; in that he so indigitateth this, and insists on this, having let it fall before, and now again prosecuting of it,—you have scarce the like in any epistle,—it argues that this is the great point of the gospel, salvation by grace, through faith, and not of works, which is the sum of these verses. It is that great point which all the writings of the apostles, and of the prophets before them, centre in. There are two things to which all the prophets are said to give witness. And the one is, the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the glory which shall follow upon his coming; which you have in Acts iii. 21, 'As he hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.' And it is called in Rev. x. 7, the mystery which shall be fulfilled, which, he saith, hath been spoken of by his servants the prophets. Now the other point that all the prophets have testified,—and if we search them we shall find,—it is salvation through grace, and through Christ, by faith alone. You have it in one place of Paul, in Rom. iii. 21, 'The righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.' And, Acts x. 43, 'To him

give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins,' or have justification by faith, or by believing, and without the works of the law; which is both Paul's scope in that Rom. iii. and Peter's scope in this Acts x. This is a point which all the prophets gave witness to, and therefore, in Rom. i. 17, the sum of the gospel is delivered to us by this, that 'the righteousness of God is therein revealed from faith to faith.'

For by grace ye are saved.—I confess, I thought I should have found no difficulty at all in this; for when I viewed the words, I thought the Apostle's scope, when he said, 'by grace ye are saved,' had been comprehensively to mean all the benefits we have, which belong and appertain unto salvation, and all the standing works of God upon us, calling, and quickening, and sanctification, and whatever else that are all by grace. And so, 'by grace ye are saved,' runs currently from first to last, both because these are all things appertaining to salvation, and because that they are all by grace. That grace that justifies and adopts us sons, that grace it is that also calleth us, sanctifieth us; electing grace doth the one as well as the other: and all proceed immediately from that grace which is in the heart of God towards us, freely, and without works. And that which did incline me still to think this should be his meaning is, because that 'by grace ye are saved' comes in presently after quickening, ver. 5, and so it would seem here also to include the very work of regeneration, and the new creature, which he in this very paragraph speaks of, ver. 10.

Now the truth is, this interpretation would run currently but for one thing, and that is this, 'by grace ye are saved *through faith*.' Mark it, now this addition here crosseth it, taking salvation here for the whole work of God in us, and upon us, and towards us, comprehensively. Why? Because, first, faith itself is a part of salvation, it is a work toward salvation, and unto salvation in us. And though it is true, as the Apostle saith in Acts xviii. 27, that men believe through grace, as the efficient cause of their believing; yet notwithstanding we cannot be said to have faith through faith. And therefore at least here faith must be excluded out of these words, when he saith, 'by grace ye are saved through faith;' for otherwise there were a *processus ad infinitum*, as we use to say.

But then again, I thought, as the Apostle saith in another case, when he saith, 'all things are put under him,' it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him; so now faith is excepted here, because he saith afterwards, and that as an addition, 'and not of yourselves.'

But then, on the other side, there are many things besides faith,—if you will take salvation for the whole, and all that God doth in us and for us,—that though all is by grace, yet all is not conveyed to us by faith, for regeneration itself is not. A man doth not first believe, and then is born again; but a man must first be born again before he believeth, as you have it in 1 John v. 1, 'He that believeth is born of God.' It is true indeed that regeneration, whereof one principle is the principle of faith, is not of works, it is wholly of grace; for the new creature is created unto good works; but yet still it is not through faith, (mark it,) unless you would make, as some do, which to me is unnatural, that the first act of faith is without any principle at all in us; which is to make a man see without having an eye. Now it is true, I say, that all these are by grace, but they are not through faith. You must give grace leave to go further than faith: and yet notwithstanding here, when he saith, 'by grace ye are saved through faith,' he makes them adequate and commensurable one to the other.

Then again, that which narrows the words yet more is, that take all the sanctification and new obedience that is wrought in us after we are born again, although it may be said in some sense it is through faith, yet it is not through faith alone; but the salvation which he speaks of here, it is by grace through faith. 'We are justified freely by his grace through faith,' &c. Now oftentimes in Scripture 'saved' is taken strictly for justification; as, 'He shall save his people from their sins,' in Matt. i. 21, and 'saved from wrath to come,' in Rom. v. 9. And many like instances might be given, though here he states all under the first word, 'saved.'

But then methinks this should be too narrow for the Apostle's scope here, whereas we find that salvation may be taken more largely: and let us enlarge it as far as possibly we can, so we make these two meet together, 'by grace ye are saved through faith,' and *through faith only*.

I do lay, for the interpreting of these words, having shewn you wherein the stress lies, these three things, as premises to assail this difficulty:—

1. That only that of our salvation is here spoken of, which, as it is given by grace, so it is received by faith, as I said before; these are both adequate. Therefore we must not extend salvation here further, or think anything is included in it further than what is conveyed to us by faith, though all be of grace.

2. That methinks the whole of our salvation should be here meant,—how, I shall shew you by and by,—a whole and a complete salvation. 'Ye are saved by grace,' that is, ye are fully saved, or else the Apostle's scope would not be here satisfied, and made fully up, unless his expression should reach to this; he having spoken such great things in the words before of God's shewing riches of grace in the world to come, and making this as a proof of what he had said before.

3. That he speaks of salvation as applied in this life; it is not the possession of salvation in heaven, that must necessarily be left out: for he speaks, I say, of salvation as it is applied; and it is manifest, because, saith he, it is through faith.

Now then, to assail this difficulty in a word, that I may make this clear to you, for upon it depends the understanding of these words in the text; I conceive that salvation imports two things, or, if you will, salvation hath two parts:—

The one is, of such benefits as do consist merely in the actions of God upon us and towards us, which indeed and in truth are properly salvation, in comparison of the other, as making us sons and heirs, pronouncing us just, redeemed, reconciled, graciously accepting our persons in his Son, giving us a right to heaven and to life.

And the other is of the workings of God in us, which are unto this salvation, as calling, and sanctification, and obedience, &c.

I find *saved* is thus distinguished, when he speaks, as here he doth, of grace, and not of works. And that text which we have often occasion to recur to in the point of free grace, is an opener of this place; it is in 2 Tim. i. 9, 'Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus.' Here, if you mark it, 'saved us' is made distinct from calling; he hath both saved us and called us, and both by grace, and not of works. Now if you take in the whole work of calling, God doth not call us by faith, not by faith alone, for calling includes sanctification and regeneration; we are saints by calling as well as believers by calling; yet we see that he distinguisheth salvation

which is the work of God upon us, from calling which is the work of God in us.

Or if you will, you may take this distinction to clear it, which may help your understandings more in it; and that is, that that salvation which is applied here in this world, for we exclude heaven, is not through faith, not through faith alone; for in 2 Thess. ii. 13, we are chosen to salvation through faith and sanctification both: it is a medium through which he carries us.

Or if you will, we may also distinguish thus of salvation itself; that there are two sorts of degrees of the application of it, and both called salvation:—

1. One is an investing us with a right, a title, a tenure, an interest in all benefits of salvation, be they what they will; to give us a formal, sure, legal, authentic interest, according to the rules of the word, to all benefits of salvation, whether in this world or in the world to come.

2. Or in the second place, there is an actual possession, or, if you will, rather call it an accomplishment of all the parts of salvation and works of God in us, which God carrieth on in us by degrees, works holiness in us by degrees, whereof quickening is the beginning; works glory in us by degrees, first raising us and then filling us with glory in heaven, as I shewed out of the 6th verse.

Now these are evidently distinct, and yet they are both called salvation. There is salvation in hope,—that is, having the title of it, Rom. viii. 24. And there is σωτηρίας τύχῃσι, an obtaining of salvation, or salvation obtained; as you have it in 2 Tim. ii. 10. There are some benefits indeed which we have not only a right to, but we do as fully possess them as we shall do in the world to come; and that is being justified: we are as much righteous as ever we shall be in heaven, and have as full a possession of it; only at the latter day there shall be a fuller enjoyment of it, therefore sins are said to be pardoned in the world to come.

This distinction of salvation thus, in the right and title of it, and of salvation in the full accomplishment of it by degrees, time after time, is evident in Scripture. 1 John iii. 2, ‘Now are we the sons of God,’—now the whole right of sons is ours, and God himself can give us nothing which he hath not given us a right unto; and yet, saith he, ‘it doth not appear what we shall be.’ Look, what our right to sonship gives us a title to, that is yet to be manifest; what it will bring with it, we know not. ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like him.’ So take sanctification itself; you are not perfectly sanctified, you have not that part of salvation completed and accomplished as it shall be in heaven; you have as much right to all the sanctification that you shall ever have now, as you shall have in heaven. All that is prepared by grace in election from eternity, the whole title to it is given us at once, and God doth but parcel out by degrees that salvation which he giveth in the title of it at first. I will not stand to enlarge upon this.

Accordingly now you shall find that our divines do distinguish, and exceeding rightly. Say they, when we are said to be translated from death to life, and our state is altered from the state of nature to the state of grace, from damnation to salvation, there is a double change wrought in us.

One is a *relative change*, which consisteth merely in title. And—

The other is a *real change*, which consisteth in works in us.

The relative change in us consisteth in all those things which depend upon

God's accounting, and reputed, and actual reckoning as such. As now, go take justification, in Rom. iv. 5. It is said there to be an accounting and reckoning for righteousness to us; therefore it is opposed to condemnation, in Rom. viii. 32. Reconciliation, or reckoning us friends, it lies in accounting us so: 2 Cor. v. 19, 'Reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,' but accounting them friends, for that is the position of it. So take adoption, it lies in reputed, in God's accounting us sons, in giving us the right and title to it: 1 John iii. 1, 'That we should be called the sons of God;' that is, reckoned such: as the child that is in the cradle hath the title, and interest, and right of a barony, or of a kingdom.

Now all these benefits, in which the main and indeed the whole of salvation lies in this life, are in a way of reputation, and consist in a right, in a title, before the possession; such a right as will bring all the possession after it. And therefore to see the wickedness of the Church of Rome, how one absurdity draws on another. They, to maintain that we are justified, not by being accounted righteous, but by being inherently righteous, say that our adoption doth not consist in a relation to God as a Father, but in the image of God wrought in us. Why, if that adoption did imply a real change in the person that is made a son, it must make a real change in the father, for father and son are relatives; and so when God becomes a Father to us, you must make a real change in him, for always for things that are *relata* there is the same reason, as we use to say. Therefore now being a son, what doth it lie in? It lies in a title, in an authority, in a charter, in a commission, as we say; as it is in John i. 12, 'He gave them power'—that is, he gave them a charter, a commission—'to be the sons of God:' as the king gives a man a charter or a commission to be a nobleman or to be a judge; gives him a title to be so. In 1 Cor. viii. 9, and in 1 Cor. vii. 37, the same word is used for a privilege or for a liberty.

Now take salvation thus, as it is endowing us with all the title and interest of whatsoever God means to bestow upon us, and this is wholly by grace, and wholly through faith. These three are adequate:—1. Such benefits as are by imputation or reckoning; 2. by grace, out of us; 3. received only by faith.

Here now is the solution of the text: here is whole salvation in the very lump, it is all given at once, given at first; the whole of it as it lay in the womb of God's decree and free grace, it is completely, according to the right and title of it, bestowed upon us at once, and it is received through faith. 'By grace ye are saved through faith,' saith he; that now solves all the difficulty. They are, I say, all bestowed upon us at once; all that are, or as they are, acts of God upon us; that great salvation, 'so great salvation,' as the Apostle calls it, is given all at once: and by grace ye are *thus* saved, completely and fully, and this as soon as you believe, *eodem die*, as Jerome speaks. Here is the greatest gift that ever was given; 'not of yourselves,' saith he, 'it is the gift of God.' The Apostle hath penned the words so that they will refer as well to salvation as to faith. It is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, the whole lump of salvation is. And by grace ye are *thus* saved; salvation in the lump of it, it is given to you by grace, and received by faith.

Now there is this difference between these two, that the one is given at once, and the other the Lord doth give by degrees, and go on to perfect it one after another: the one is an act of God upon us, towards us, and therefore is a mere act of free grace, immediately residing in God, and doth not

import infusing anything into us. In Rom. iii. 22, the Apostle, speaking of justification, (mark his phrase :) 'Righteousness,' saith he, 'unto all and upon all them that believe;' not in all, but unto all and upon all.

Now then, this same right to salvation, and to the whole of salvation, and all that ever you shall have, it is truly and properly called salvation. Why? You were once sinners: for you to be saved from your sins, saved from wrath, to have a kingdom added to it, and to have a right to all the blessings that ever the grace of God means to bestow, and to have all this reputed yours, this is to be saved truly and properly; it is to be saved in title, as the other is to be saved in execution. You know the word 'saved,' in our ordinary phrase, is taken in a double sense: we either say a physician saveth a man's life, or we say a king saveth a man's life if he pardons him, and especially if he advanceth him to any great place. Now when he saith God saveth us, his meaning is, he saveth us as a judge, as the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, by endowing us with the pardon of all sin, and righteousness, and adoption, and whatever else; which are all forensical actions, actions of a judge, without us. Therefore now when he saith, 'by grace ye are saved,' he means these acts, which indeed are properly salvation. As we use to say of institution and induction into a benefice, the man hath the whole given him by institution, but he hath not possession but by induction; so here, 'by grace ye are saved;' all that belongs to salvation comes immediately through the hands of free grace, and is communicated to you by faith.

And, my brethren, salvation taken thus, in this sense, agrees with the scope of the Apostle and the words of the text every way.

First, He saith, 'Ye are saved,' completely saved. This now can be no way meant but in respect of the whole title and tenure of salvation. He saith not, Ye *shall* be saved, but, Ye *are* saved, fully and completely saved.

And then again, if you mark the words, the Apostle doth sever this salvation in the title, conveyed to us by faith, from the workings of God upon us. For after he had affirmed, 'by grace ye are saved through faith,' he then shews how over and above all that is wrought in us in this life, it is by grace also. He severs therefore the whole of salvation, in the title and in the right of it, from those things which are the means of salvation, as taken from the possession, which are both faith, and the new creature, and good works, and the like. This, I say, is natural to the text, that besides giving salvation by grace at first, which faith only receiveth, it shews that grace doth all in all in us besides; it maketh that faith, and the new creature, and everything else in us.

And let me add this: you will not find a scripture where believing or where sanctification is called salvation itself; they are said indeed to be unto salvation, and they are means, but they are not called properly and strictly salvation. And accordingly as there is salvation in the title of it given to us in one lump, and the works of salvation wrought in us; so you shall find that the Scripture puts the same distinction between grace. There is either the grace that brings salvation, in the offer of it, as it is called in Titus ii. 11, that is big with it, that hath all salvation in the lump to bestow, and which it offers to invest us with when we are called; and there is grace also taken for that dispensatory grace, as I may so call it, which doth work grace in us, and gives us a possession, by a power in us which grace sets a-work. And this is called grace too, in 1 Cor. xv. 10, 'Not I, but the grace of God which was in me,' or, 'with me.' He means there the grace of God as working in him, or with him. Therefore let me tell you this, though it

is grace that saveth, and grace that sanctifieth, and it is grace that glorifieth, yet grace saveth not in the same manner that it sanctifieth and glorifieth. For how doth it sanctify? It is the same grace efficiently indeed, and immediately; the same grace that doth justify us doth adopt us, but how doth it sanctify us? It sanctifieth us by infusing grace into us; and there is, as the Apostle saith, the grace of God which is in me, and which is with me; which is in God working with what he puts into me, which is the grace of God with me, or in me. But when grace is said to save or to justify, there it is pure grace; that is, it is not by working anything in me, but by a mere act that resideth in God, yet entitling me and investing me to the whole of salvation. And this is said to be received through faith; all this whole salvation is so received. And as it cometh immediately and purely through the hands of free grace, and doth not consist, doth not mingle itself with any workings in me; so faith is that which doth immediately receive it, receive the whole of salvation, as I shall shew you anon.

As now, take justification, being saved from wrath, and saved from sin, the Scripture is clear in it that you receive it by faith. 'Being justified,' saith he, 'by faith.'

And so adoption and sonship, being made heirs of life, which you may in some sense make a part of justification, and so the Scripture doth, yet notwithstanding we are said to receive it by faith, Gal. iv. 4, 5, and Gal. iii. 26.

Take both in, remission of sins, and being heirs of life, you receive them both through faith, and through faith alone. You have a place for it in Acts xxvi. 18, a speech of Christ, since he went to heaven, unto Paul. Saith he there, 'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.' He divides the whole of salvation into these two things—into forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified; he cuts off from these two faith and sanctification; he makes sanctification a qualification of that person God means to save; but he makes faith the thing that receiveth the right and title, and so receiveth salvation completely, both the one and the other, and this from the hands of free grace immediately. But I will not stand to enlarge these things, being clear and evident. And therefore, although I might shew you that faith hath a great hand in all parts of salvation, yet I could not shew you that it had a sole hand. I could shew you how it causeth repentance, how it is the spring of all good works, of all obedience, how it is that which goeth out unto Christ to fetch in holiness and strength, how it sanctifieth and purifieth the heart, how it brings in assurance of salvation, which is called salvation: all this might be shewn that faith doth; how you are kept by the power of God unto salvation, and that through faith. But none of these, or the most of these which I have named, are through faith alone; they are not, I say, communicated to us through faith alone. Faith alone doth not sanctify us, as the Papists would slander us, though faith alone justifieth us and saveth us. Now here the Apostle sheweth what faith alone doth, and therefore we must exactly keep to that whole lump of salvation which at first is bestowed upon us. And so now you have the meaning of these words, 'for ye are saved.'

By grace.—It implies the principal cause. By *grace* is meant the free favour in the heart of God out of us, as I shewed at large when I opened that scripture, 'by grace ye are saved,' ver. 5.

And therefore to add but a confirmation or two to it. In Tit. ii. 11, where he saith, 'The grace of God hath appeared to us;' in chap. iii. 4, he saith,

‘The kindness and love of God hath appeared.’ And in Ex. xxxiii. 19, that which is said there, ‘I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy:’ in Rom. ix. 15, it is, ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion;’ implying not a grace in us, but a grace that is in God.

The Papists anathematise those *qui statuunt gratiam quâ justificamur, esse tantum favorem Dei*. (Conc. Triden., Sess. vi., c. 11.) Now when we say, ‘by grace,’—that is, the favour of God out of us,—the question is not, Whether, first, grace in Scripture be taken sometimes for the gifts of grace to us? We grant it. Nor, secondly, is the question, Whether inherent holiness, &c., be joined with salvation, or to flow from grace? but, Whether we are saved thereby? And therefore it is the greatest height of the mystery of iniquity that ever was among the Papists, who do not hold that we are justified at all by the grace of God out of us; no, not so much as the forgiveness of sins, not that part of salvation. Although they seem to pretend to it, and talk of forgiveness of sins, yet in truth they do not hold forgiveness of sins to consist in a free favour, pardoning as one man pardons another; but they make remission of sins to be nothing else but the deletion, the blotting out of a man’s sins. And therefore Vasques, one of their greatest schoolmen, speaks out; for he saw it is that which must necessarily come upon them, according to their tenets. For what do they say? They tell you that there is but one cause of justification, and that is the infusion of holiness into us. Now mark it, if they held a forgiveness of sins by grace, then they must hold two parts or two causes of justification: one to lie in remission of sins by the free grace and favour of God, and the other in God’s making us righteous inherently in ourselves. And so our justification should have two heterogeneous, two uniform parts, which were not like one to the other; one part of their justification must lie in the grace of God, without them wholly and merely, and the other part must lie in inherent righteousness infused into them. Now, to avoid this absurdity, they do clearly and plainly say, and argue for it, that the true remission of sins lies in the blotting out of sin; and as darkness is done away by the coming in of light, so there is no other pardon of sin but holiness and righteousness infused, which doth expel it. And this, I say, their greatest school-man, Vasques, doth expressly and clearly say. I do not say, saith he, that sin is pardoned by a grace and favour out of ourselves, but it lies in this, (he says it expressly, without an addition of a new favour,) in having an inherent holiness infused into us. What a damnable and desperate doctrine is this! (besides the derogation that is in it to the grace of God,) for no man then can believe that his sin is pardoned until he see it expelled out of him. And therefore, my brethren, hate Popery, for this is the tenet of it.

‘By grace ye are saved,’ not only by having sin pardoned, but being accounted sons, and being accounted righteous. When you come to have the whole of salvation bestowed upon you, it is merely the grace that is in the heart of God about which faith deals immediately.

Now there is the grace of God in election, which is the original grace; and there is the grace of God which doth make application of all to us. It is for substance the same love, only I make this distinction, as the Scripture also doth. I say, there is first the grace of God in election, which doth bestow all that salvation upon us, and that in Christ; so you have it in 2 Tim. i. 9, ‘He hath saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.’ There was a

grace given us, and bestowed upon us in Christ, before the world began; this is the original grace. Now, saith he, when God comes to save you actually, he doth it according to that grace. Mark that phrase; it is used there, and it is likewise in Tit. iii. 5, 'According to his mercy he saveth us:' so in 1 Pet. i. 3, 'According to his abundant mercy he hath begotten us again;' that is, according to that original grace which from everlasting he bestowed upon us, that favour which he did cast upon us in his Son, that love continued now, the very same, according to the model, purpose, and design thereof, is salvation bestowed upon us. And of this grace he speaks here, a dispensatory grace, as I may so call it; that is, when elective love continued to us, doth upon the same terms out of which he first chose us bestow all that salvation upon us. The use of this distinction you shall see afterwards in the next discourse.

I will not stand to lay open to you the riches and greatness of this grace, for that I did before. I shewed how all of salvation depended upon it; I shewed you the riches of this grace; I have done it again and again.

Now when he saith, 'by grace,' you must take in the grace of all the three Persons, the favour of them all. He doth not say by the grace of God only; he doth not mention Jesus Christ in this; therefore, I say, take all in, the grace of the Father, which is called the grace of God, who is said to be the Saviour, in Isa. xliii. 3, 'I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour:' and the grace of Jesus Christ; it is his favour also that we are saved by. It was the grace of God that gave Jesus Christ, he died by the grace of God; so you have it in Heb. ii. 9. It was his love, or a grace in the heart of Jesus Christ, that caused him to become the author and purchaser of all salvation to us. 'You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' saith the Apostle in 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' And, Gal. i. 6, it is called the grace of Christ. And then it is the grace of the Holy Ghost likewise, for all three Persons concur in it; and because the Apostle doth fasten it neither upon the Father, nor upon the Son, nor upon the Holy Ghost, let us take them all in. Rev. i. 4, 'Grace be unto you from the seven Spirits,'—that is, from the Holy Ghost. For, to say that grace should be wished from any creature, or to take 'seven Spirits' for created gifts, or for angels, as some have done, and to join them to the other two Persons which he had spoken of before, is extremely absurd; therefore he means the Holy Ghost, who is therefore called the 'Spirit of grace,' in Heb. x. 29. Now it is grace alone—that is, the free favour of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost—that bestows all salvation upon us. Why? Because this whole of salvation consisteth in a reckoning us to be heirs and sons; now, whatsoever is thus by way of reckoning and account, it is by grace.

When he comes to bestow salvation upon us, is it not an infinite thing, my brethren, that that God who loved us from everlasting, when he comes to call us and work faith in us, should in a moment, in an instant, respecting nothing in us, possess us of all salvation? Respecting nothing in us, it is therefore grace. Rom. iii. 24, 'We are justified freely by his grace.' The word there, *freely*, is to shew that it is merely grace; it is without cause, it is grace dyed in grace, as I use to say, gracious grace: for so that phrase, 'freely by his grace,' will warrant such expressions; *prorsus gratis*, as Austin calleth it, that bestows all of salvation.

And as it doth do it without respecting anything in us, so he doth do it notwithstanding all that he seeth in us. A soul may say, O Lord, thou dost

freely give, not finding something why thou shouldest save, but all why thou shouldest damn, and yet bestowest the whole of salvation upon us. And what an infinite gift is this! that the poorest believer that is hath the whole of that salvation in that moment that he believeth, and he receiveth by it the whole of salvation! It may not only be said of him that he shall be saved, but that he is saved. It is made sure to all the seed of grace, as the Apostle's expression is in Rom. iv. But I will not stand to enlarge upon these things now.

You have had these two things expounded:—

1. What is meant by *saved*.

2. What by *grace*; and how the whole of salvation is given to us by the free grace of God towards us.

The next thing now that I should come to is, *to shew you how all this is conveyed to us by faith*; that the whole of it, I say, is conveyed to us by faith.

In the opening of this I shall—because it is the main—spend a little time upon it now, and in the next sermon. And, first, I shall open to you all these particulars which are natural and proper to the text—

1. That as the whole of salvation is given by grace, so it is wholly received by faith, and by faith only; and there is nothing in man that could have received this whole gift of salvation, or lay hold on it, or apprehend it, or have been capable of it, but only faith, not works, nor anything else.

2. I must shew you what this faith is, and that out of the text, that this faith which hath the grace of God and the grace of Christ for its object, and hath salvation for its aim, this faith and no other doth receive and doth possess us of the whole of salvation.

3. I must likewise shew you how this faith doth possess us of all this, that it is conveyed through this faith, and what kind of consideration this faith should have in our being saved by it, whether as a condition, or an instrument, or what.

I shall speak to all of these things briefly; and the first two are implied in the word *faith*, and the other in the word *through faith*; and so I shall clear it to you what is meant by this, through faith, and shew you how through faith it is conveyed to us, which indeed are some of the controversies and agitations of these times.

That which I shall do at this present is only this,—for I see I cannot finish it,—that as the whole of salvation doth come immediately out of the hand of God and his free grace, so there is no principle in man, or that can be supposed to have been in man, which could have received this whole of salvation, but only faith. As grace, I say, is the thing that gives all, so this principle in man, faith, is that which suits this grace wholly and fully, and nothing else could.

You read in Rom. iii. 24 of three causes, as I may so express them, but I will not call them all causes; I shall shew you what influence faith may be said to have into our salvation by and by. 'Ye are justified,' saith he, 'freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' You have these three—'by grace,' 'through the redemption that is in Christ,' and 'through faith in his blood.' Now by 'grace' there is meant all the favour in God's heart toward us, which did contrive and intend all sort of benefits to us, to the praise of itself. But yet this grace that was in the heart of God needed Jesus Christ as a Mediator (if you will have me so speak) in respect of compounding it with justice; therefore it is added there, 'through

the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' And grace pitched upon the fittest instrument, the fittest servant it could have, to execute all its will, and to derogate nothing from itself; that is, Jesus Christ. Look what salvation you do design, saith Christ, I will purchase, and notwithstanding my purchase you shall give all freely; for though it be given through the redemption that is in Christ, and so as in respect of Christ it is not free, yet as it is to us it is free: and, saith he, grace shall not be robbed by me one whit, but advanced; the revenue of it shall not be one whit impaired by me; no, the giving of me, and that I die by grace, (as the phrase is, Heb. ii.,) shall magnify grace so much the more, and make it double grace. So that now the grace that was in God hath a Saviour for us fitted to his own heart. Well, but now saith God,—that I may express it in this familiar manner,—I see how that the giving of Jesus Christ, and his redemption, will very well stand with my grace and advance it. But I must come and apply this salvation, the whole of salvation, out of mere pure grace, respecting nothing in the creature; and I must make the creature sensible of this, and what is it that I shall do it by that shall magnify both my grace and this Christ? If I can now but get an instrument, something in man's heart, that doth no more derogate from grace than Christ's redemption doth, then grace is advanced indeed. Now, my brethren, as Jesus Christ was so fit an instrument, and a servant to all free grace's ends and purposes, the truth is, so is faith every whit; it is suited to the very spirit and strain, it is according to free grace's own heart too, let me tell you so. As grace is the eminent thing in God, so faith in us, suited to it, doth serve all its ends. As grace gives all that is in God without us, so it is pure faith that receives it. As the whole of salvation bestowed, the right to it, is out of us, and consisteth in God's reckoning and accounting of it to us, so this faith is a mere going out of a man's self to grace for this salvation; it is conformed to all the contrivements of grace, to give glory to it. As it is not of a man's self, so faith doth not look to a man's self. Even, as I may so express it, as the marigold opens and shuts with the sun, and turns continually round, and holds a correspondency with it, so doth faith to grace.

The Papists say, wickedly and wretchedly, that love is the form and soul of faith. The truth is, the free grace of God is as the form of faith, if we may so speak; and what is faith in a man? It is just like the first matter God created, in Gen. i. It hath no form, no shape in itself at all, but capable to take in and to receive all the free grace that is in God, and all that salvation which he hath proposed to bestow, and to give unto free grace the glory and honour of it, that nothing but grace shall shine and be as the soul of it. It will take no form and impression but what free grace stamps upon it, and it will return its own impression to himself again in glory. Free grace can say nothing to magnify itself, but that faith in the heart of a believer, acted by the Spirit, can take it in, and give him the glory of it his own way. The truth is,—that I may in a way of similitude make a parallel in this case,—as the human nature of Christ, being united to the Son of God, had that instinct, and that law in his heart, as it is called in Ps. xl., that he did not act as a person by himself, he had not a will of his own, but was resolved wholly in the Godhead, being united to it; so faith doth not take upon it as a grace, and as a work, or any of these things; it loseth itself, it resolves itself, and merely takes the forms and impressions that the free favour of God moulds it into. And the property of it is thus to advance the grace of God, and that is the reason—I shall give you a scripture for it by and by, than which to me nothing is stronger—that grace in bestowing the whole of

salvation will brook faith well enough. It will go and save through faith; it riseth up against works as all rebels. Salvation, saith he, is of grace, through faith, not of works. And free grace will trust faith with all its glory in bestowing of salvation, when it will not endure works to come in sight, not in point of giving salvation and the right of it.

In Rom. iv. 4, 5, and compared with ver. 16, saith the Apostle, 'Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.' Why, might not a man say, I wrought it? But works, you see, will not stand with grace, and grace will not stand with works; but if God means to bestow salvation out of grace, by way of reputation, and accounting us righteous, and sons, and heirs, &c., faith will quickly serve the turn of free grace; therefore it follows, 'But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly.' But there is a more full expression in the 16th verse, which is more clear than this, and truly to me it is a strange one, and I wondered at it when I considered it. 'It is of faith,' saith he, 'that it might be by grace,' speaking of the whole inheritance of salvation; for as he calls it 'saved' here, he calls it an inheritance in the 13th and 14th verses. I take the meaning of the words to be this, that when God was to apply salvation, and to give the right of it, and that purely and merely out of grace, he did as it were consult with himself, what in man he should take that still it might be grace, and nothing of it might be impaired, and so he pitched upon faith; for that is clearly the Apostle's scope; he ordained faith, saith he, that it might still be of grace. That look, as it was merely grace when it was in God's own heart to give, so when he works faith in a man, and causeth him to believe, it is as much grace as it was before, and nothing is derogated from grace at all. It is therefore of faith, saith he; therefore God chose and singled out faith, that still it might be by grace, that grace might stand unimpaired, and be as fully by grace as if there were no faith, as if grace had saved a man without working anything in him. Though God doth work faith, which is an act of his, and an act of the soul too, yet it is as much by grace, saith he, as ever.

My brethren, although we hold all the tenure and actual right to all of salvation 'through faith,' (for so the Scripture speaks, it is 'of faith,' and 'through faith,' &c.) yet still it alters not the tenure one whit; it is only and merely by grace still, it holds as much upon the original grace as before. And faith is taught to cause the heart to do so, even as if God had wrought no faith, nor nothing else as an instrument, but had saved him without any act of his at all. Thus you see that faith suits with grace, and it suits with grace in bestowing salvation.

I should now enlarge upon this, giving you the reason why by faith. And then, secondly, by what faith: the faith that is pitched upon grace, this faith. And then, how through faith, and how that nothing is derogated from grace by it.

As the whole of salvation is a mere free gift of grace, so is faith a mere receiver, and faith only could receive. For if there be anything given by grace, and grace be acknowledged the giver, you must have something that must receive, and in receiving must give all back again to grace, and that is nothing else but faith;—for now I am shewing you the reason why grace pitched upon faith when it would bestow the whole of salvation upon us;—I say, as faith suiteth with grace only, so it is faith only that can receive; it is that grace alone that can receive the whole of salvation from God. And therefore you shall observe in the Scripture, how that still receiving is put upon faith, as giving upon grace. 'They received abundance of grace, and

the gift of righteousness.' The gift of righteousness, the whole of salvation is of grace ; now what in the Scripture is it that is said to receive it ? Not your love, nor your works, nor your holiness ; no, they have nothing to do with it in the point of salvation, but that principle of faith doth it. You shall find it through the whole Scripture. 'As many as received him,'—and that is interpreted to be those that believed on him,—'to them he gave power to be the sons of God.' Sonship is said to be received by faith, Gal. iv. 5. Remission of sins, which is a part of salvation out of mere grace, is said to be received by faith, Acts xxvi. 18. The inheritance of heaven and life, the whole estate of it, is a free gift of God, purely and merely ; it is said to be received by faith, in the same place. The righteousness of Christ is called the gift of righteousness, in Rom. v. 17. Faith is said to be that which apprehends it ; it is called an apprehension or laying hold of righteousness.

I say, run throughout the whole New Testament, you shall find mention of this act of receiving, and it is only ascribed unto faith.

And how doth it receive ? It merely receiveth, it doth not give to God anything, it doth not return, as love doth. It was a speech of the ancients, that faith only is the apprehending and receiving principle, takes all in ; but charity is that which gives out, and returns something to God. Now God did not like that ; he would not go and say grace should save us by that which should return something to him, but by that which should be only a receiver. If he had said he had saved us through love, or saved us through holiness, and given us the whole of salvation through these, or any part of them, or the right unto it, what would love have said ? I have given you love again for your love. God doth not like that ; for who hath given unto him, and it shall not be recompensed unto him again ? But God takes that which is but a mere receiver, that returns nothing again ; and that is faith.

Therefore though you would say, Is not faith an act ?—

It is true, it is, in a grammatical signification, an act ; but in the sense, in the true, real import of it, it is merely passive. Faith doth not give anything to God, as charity and love doth, but it only suffers God to be good to it ; it takes in that salvation which grace would bestow upon it. My brethren, the hands of all other graces are working hands, but the hands of faith are merely receiving hands ; now saith the Apostle, 'Not to him that worketh, but believeth.' So that this faith, as it believeth to salvation, it is not reckoned a worker, nor doth it look upon itself as such, but a mere receiver, a mere emptiness, a mere first matter and chaos, the form whereof is grace, if I may so allude. No grace could have been chosen in the heart of man suitable thus to the grace that giveth, and to the gift itself, as this grace of faith is.

And there is nothing in man that answers the promise. For this grace hath put itself out into promises ; as the original lies in the heart of God, so he hath made a copy out of himself in the promises, and nothing answers this but faith.

And, indeed, nothing could have given the entire glory unto grace but only faith. It is just as a mere looking-glass, when the sun shines it is a glorious thing. Oh, how glorious is that looking-glass when it shineth ! But what is the glory ? It is nothing else but the very sun's shining on it : so is faith, and the soul believing the free grace of God in Christ, receiveth salvation from him.

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 *nihil 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 nihil 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 but 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 elicited*, 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.'

SERMON XXIII.

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.

I SHALL proceed still, as I propounded in the opening the nature of that faith which saves and justifies us, and never ceases till it hath put us into the hands of Christ. I handled something of it in the last discourse. I shewed you what a glorious grace this is, and how it will of all graces else be found to the praise, honour, and glory of Christ, 1 Peter i. 7.

I shall now demonstrate the greatness of it in respect of its workings, and shall also discover the vast disproportion that is between ourselves and our hearts in which it is wrought, and this grace itself; how hardly it is attained, and that it is fetched out of the rock by an almighty power. To that end I have chosen this text, and it is the particular head, 'that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' which I will by way of commonplace explain to you.

Only in general, take the scope of the Apostle before in this chapter. His scope is to magnify the free grace of God as the sole author of our salvation, which he magnifies in two respects:—

1. By shewing that misery which man lay in, when God first set his heart upon him: dead in sins and trespasses, deserving a thousand deaths, children of wrath, as you have in ver. 1, 2, and yet that God had provided a salvation, and a great salvation, for such a forlorn creature.

2. He magnifies it in respect of the way of bringing us to salvation, and imports thus much to us, that since free grace was the contriver of our salvation, its great end was to magnify itself, and being to make its own laws, it would be sure to order man's salvation so, that though of necessity something was to be wrought in man, or else he could not be saved, yet it would pitch on something that should have an ingredience into salvation, and yet so that as little as could be should be attributed to man, and all should be ascribed to grace.

There are two things required of us, faith and works. He puts a difference between these two, in that faith is taken up into commission with grace, 'by grace you are saved through faith;' which works are not, 'not of works:' the works are required as well as faith, yet God saith he will not own you in commission with his grace; 'not of works.' The reason is, this faith, as I shewed you, is that grace which so glorifies God, that he was not jealous to put it into commission with himself. Now when God required but as little as could be, yet he must require that we should know his grace and lay hold on it, since otherwise free grace will be lost, but yet in this laying hold on it faith will give all to free grace. But you will object, May not a man step in, and say, I have faith, and I have contributed something by faith to my salvation? No, saith the Apostle, it is 'not of yourselves,' but it is 'the gift of God;' and this is enough for the opening of the words.

I shall now manifest this to you, that saving faith is not of yourselves; there is nothing in you that contributes to faith. My end in it is this: to open the nature of faith to you, that you may see that all in yourselves, and all you can do, can no way help you anything unto the attainment of it. By what the Apostle denies, that they have anything of it in themselves, you will see the false ways men take, and you will see in the negative clearly what the way of believing is, and what the nature of faith is; you will likewise see what the inability of man is to attain it. It will empty you of yourselves, and you will be convinced not only that you are not able to believe on free grace, but you will be forced to come to God, who will enable you to believe on him and on his free grace; and when you also see how you are lost, and that though God only requires sincere faith, yet you are not able to do anything towards it, you will see what you are, and of what weak abilities, and you will be thankful to God for what little faith you have, as being his gift, not from yourselves, and you will go on to perfect faith in a way of dependency on him; those therefore that think faith is so easy to be had may be convinced they have no faith.

When I shall pursue the proving these words to you, *it is not of yourselves*, I shall not go about to shew you the greatness of conversion in general, that it is not of yourselves; but I shall keep close to the point of believing. And therein I shall not speak so much to the workings of the habit of faith, as bring you to the acts of faith, as clearly renouncing a man's self, &c.

I shall perform these particulars by shewing you that all that is in man, or from man, can no way help a man to this faith; yea, all that is in man, and from man, is against it; therefore certainly it is 'not of ourselves,' but it is 'the gift of God.' These two heads shall be the particulars I aim at: that only in the general I will premise this, which I will but touch on; that is, that if we take our nature in innocence in Adam, to believe such things as we believe would have been above such a nature. I will not stand to dispute whether Adam, yea or no, had that habit or principle which we have; only this is that I say, that if he had that same principle of faith we have, yet to believe those things which, when we believe to salvation, we do believe, it was infinitely above what his faith was put to believe. If that the wheels be the same, yet if there be a new spring put in, that turns all the wheels another way. So whereas Adam sought salvation by doing, and continuance in well-doing, and the faith he had set all the wheels going that way; here to us under the gospel comes a new spring that turns all the wheels another way, and is as a new instinct and genius to carry the heart to Christ to be saved, different from what the genius and instinct of Adam's faith carried him to. The law of faith is different from the law of works.

Adam believed that God made him, and that he made the world, for he did not see it was made. I will not dispute whether his faith may be resolved to sense, or sanctified reason, yea or no. But this, I say, was an easy thing for him to believe, that all that was made was by him that said, Let us make the world. But if he had this same principle of faith, yet I believe it was so low that he could not try it further without new principles. Indeed, for him to believe that 'the soul that sins shall die,' and that he should die that day he did eat; it was easy for him to believe this, because he found that by doing the will of God he lived; therefore he might believe the contrary, that if he transgressed he should die. But what if God had said to him that God himself should die, and that he should be 'made sin who knew no sin?' If such a thing as this should have been propounded to his faith, and the devil should have come and contradicted it, it would have put

his faith to it. For Adam to believe that while he pleased God in all things, he should continue in his favour, it was easy for him to believe it; because he had a principle in his conscience which told that he should have peace if he did it. There was the justice of God, whereof he had the image in his own bosom, that might assure him. But to believe that God will justify the ungodly, and to apprehend myself ungodly, and yet to believe that he will justify me; to believe that God will account an ungodly person as godly and righteous as all the angels in heaven, this would have posed his faith. Further, when that ungodly person justified shall continue holy, and yet not have a dram of power in himself, but he must go and fetch it from another,—‘Without me you can do nothing,’—all these would have been paradoxes, and those too great even for Adam to believe. Therefore well may it be said, ‘Faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.’

But, besides, a second consideration may be this: that in the beginning, if Adam had power to do all these things, yet now it is above ourselves, for we all have lost it, and have so lost it, that of all things else we are weakest in the point of believing. Beside the general reason which is common to all grace, there is a special reason why that, in losing that which he had, we are utterly disenabled for ever, of ourselves, as to any power of believing. For consider where was it that the temptation entered in? It was certainly in a way of unbelief. The devil first destroyed Adam’s faith, and through that breach wounded him to death: ‘Hath God said, Thou shalt not eat,’ &c. If a man be killed with a shot in his eye, though that shot piercing the eye, it kills the whole man; it must be almighty power to raise that man to life; yet there is a further power required to raise that eye than to raise the man: so it is with us, Rom. xi. 32. We are said there to be ‘shut up in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all.’ God hath concluded, or hath shut them up altogether,—that I may fit it to that thing I have in hand,—namely, that we are disenabled to faith of all things else.

He compares unbelief to a special prison; suppose this man had life that he could help himself, yet if he be shut up, he is utterly disenabled. It imports, in the first place, that God hath in a special manner shut up all in unbelief; other sins are the sins for which God imprisons us, but that we may be surely imprisoned, he makes unbelief the gaol; we are shut up with a door of unbelief on us, and therefore he makes the greatness of the mercy of God to lie in giving faith. God hath shut up all in unbelief, that so he may have mercy: he hath shut them up in unbelief over and above all other sins. Gal. iii. 22, he saith there, that the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all; there are outward prisons of all men’s other sins, but here he makes unbelief the inner prison; so God shews a further mercy in giving faith than any other grace. So that I may express it thus to you: the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promises by Christ might come. The promises may come, and knock at the prison doors, and say, We have come to all other sins, and may come and say to a poor sinner, Believe, and tell him thus, If you will come and but believe, do but come out of your dungeon you are in, and you shall be set at freedom and be saved. Now saith the poor soul, if all other prisons be open, though there be free access to God from all other my sins, yet, saith the poor soul, I cannot come out of this prison; I am shut up, I cannot believe. The promise of faith in Christ is given to them that believe, and as the promise is given to them that believe, so the text saith here, faith is the gift of God; all the promises may knock at the prison door, but in vain, unless God open the door, as there the expression is, in Acts xiv. 27. We are in a special

manner shut up in this estate of unbelief; it is not therefore of ourselves to believe.

Now the course I shall take to demonstrate it shall be this, to go through some of the particulars. I might manifest this to you by going through all the pieces in you; take your understanding, will, and affections, you shall find all these cannot help your faith in the truth; all that is in us is against this, all that is in us will still under-work all its workings, unless the power of God come with it. There is nothing in the heart that is conducing to it; and all that is in a man, or comes from him, of duties, endeavours, &c., cannot attain to true faith. Faith is not of ourselves. I might, I say, go through all the faculties of a man's soul, and discover how little they can contribute to faith; but at present I shall only instance in his understanding.

First, we will begin with our understandings. All the parts of wit and wisdom that all the men of the world have had, or shall have, if they were all in one man's heart or head, they could not help him to look up to a Saviour. 1 Cor. ii. 5, 'That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;' and in 1 Cor. i. 18, he there prosecutes it to the end; he saith, God hath a design by setting up faith in the hearts of men, to save them thereby, and to confound all the wisdom of the world; saith he, 'The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us that are saved it is the power of God.' 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' He shews that as God had in man's redemption, as appears in that in Genesis, an eye to confound the devil; and so chooseth out that which is the most excellent thing, faith. Saith he, I will do it by the most foolish means, as by that man that is crucified, and by the foolish means of faith and preaching, which all the wisest men shall not attain to; he doth not say he will confound the wise men, but the wisdom of men. Some wise men are saved, but he saith he will confound wisdom, for they must lay their wisdom aside when they come to believe; he useth two or three words: he saith in the 19th verse, he will make no use of wisdom; then he saith he hath made it foolishness, he hath put a scorn upon it; as in the 20th verse he shews that the wisdom of men is the foolishest thing in the world.

Then, my brethren, if you would know the reason why God does so, and know the reason why that wisdom in man cannot thus attain to faith; the reason why he doth it is, that he may confound that which is in man, the chiefest excellencies, and that it may be in his power to save whom he will, and that it may be in his power only to raise men up to what degrees of grace he himself shall please. This he doth while he makes not use of wisdom, because foolish men he can make believe as much as the wisest men; nay, he usually raises faith up to a greater degree in the foolishest men than the wisest in the world, than what by their learning they can attain to.

Let me not only tell you that wisdom falls short of it, and is not able to do it, but natural wisdom is in itself a hindrance to it, and all the wisdom and reason in a man is against the way of faith. Saith wisdom, I think by my brains and wit to attain this, which a foolish soul shall not do. Pride is opposite to faith, and knowledge puffs up pride. No man is more opposite to faith than he whose heart is lifted up in him. 'The just shall live by faith,' Hab. ii. 4. He whose heart is lifted up in him is not right: therefore nothing so opposite to faith as pride and wisdom. And knowledge, since it puffs up, when the wisest men in the world and great men in the world come to believe, faith lays them as low as the poorest man in the

world ; such a soul will say, I would not care if I were a fool, the poorest beggar in the world, so I had a dram of faith.

Then reason, which is also joined with wisdom, being the form of a man, as he is a man, it is it that constitutes the man, and so it is the highest thing till faith comes, and then faith opposeth it, subdues it, as reason subdues sense ; and then reason riseth up against faith, when it comes to be put from its kingly power and dignity, which it hath had all its days. When a stranger comes and tells reason of a strange thing in another world which reason never took in before, and on the news of this he must lay down his reason at the feet of this same testimony, and take the law at his mouth ; reason, which hath been the supreme principle in man's heart, will never do this. Saith faith, I will have all these reasonings and principles put from you. Reason stands on them, Rom. iv. 19 : saith reason, Consider your dead body ; Abraham being not weak in faith, considered not his dead body. Reason would have put in many objections, but he considered not his dead body, but gave himself up to faith.

In the third place, the stronger reason any man hath, when he comes to believe he will find the harder pull of it. Men of parts, the larger their knowledge is, they are against believing the more. Why ? Because they will find out arguments against themselves ; and all a man's reason and parts will but serve to make his indictment more against himself, and the more shrewdly a man will argue, and especially being a man of strong reason, he will reason against himself, to the amazement of all men, and as before faith, you will never believe till you see your lost condition. What makes men say that conscience tells them so, but they will not acknowledge themselves to be in such a state, but because carnal reason useth all the strength it hath to build up high towers, and plods how to get plausible shifts and pretences how to flatter a man's soul ? And a natural man thinks he is in a good condition, therefore all the reason a man hath is mainly exercised in this dispute of his conscience, and reasoning in his heart, about the goodness of his estate. But when a man comes to be humbled and believes, all these reasonings turn on the other side, and use as much strength to object why he should not have mercies, and that he must do thus and thus before he comes to believe. Never any comes to believe, if he will go the way of reasoning, while he considers his dead soul ; as Abraham, if he had considered his dead body, would not have believed. Self-flattery in a man is the general reason that leads him on in a way contrary to faith, for he thinks he is in a good estate ; for he must lose such opinion of himself before he can believe ; then when self-flattery is killed, and faith comes to lead up all her forces, then comes unbelief and fires conscience, and turns all the word another way ; that there is more ado to raise a man up to bottom his heart, and to rest in Christ, than to humble a man and to let him see his natural condition. You see that wisdom and reason, all of it, conduceth not to faith, but is all against it.

You have another principle in you ; there is a great deal of hope from that which is a good principle, and that is your conscience ; it is indeed the best thing in a man. But take natural conscience, though never so much enlightened, let it remain still in that estate which by nature a man was in, and it conduceth nothing to believing ; nay, it is the greatest enemy to faith that a man hath. Conscience, I confess, is a good principle, it hath goodness in it ; though it is defiled, yet there is a moral goodness in it ; it tells him of his sinfulness, but it will not help him a whit to believe. Come to conscience, it will set you on doing the clean contrary, and put you out of the way, and it will not direct you one foot of the way of faith. What the law

says, it hath an ear to that, but it is deaf to what the gospel saith ; as for Moses we know him, but this man we know not. Nay, which is more, your conscience, enlightened, will help to discover all sorts of sin, but conscience alone will never discover unbelief to you in the bottom of it ; of other sins conscience, enlightened, will tell a man roundly, but not of unbelief, John xvi. 8. It is the Spirit that convinceth of sin. Two sins there are which, the truth is, are out of the jurisdiction of conscience to set home on the heart. Ordinarily, one is the guilt of Adam's first sin. Here a man's conscience alone cannot help him ; it is through spiritual discerning he must see the corruption of nature. The other is the vanity of thoughts. What comes in the compass of the law, that the heart and conscience will tell a man of. But come to a man that is troubled in conscience, he will make no conscience of believing, as if there were no command for it. They think they do well to argue against themselves, and refuse the promises ; it is ordinary for them to do so. Men will cavil at the promises, but to look on faith as the great comfort, and to have a heart discerning, and to have unbelief set home on a man's soul, and to say that I must of necessity believe, conscience will not do ; it is the work of the Spirit on our hearts that must do it.

This is a great truth ; nothing will help you so to know the nature of faith as this thing. I am to speak of conscience not subordinate to faith, as in man it is not : it is the greatest enemy to faith as can be, it is the greatest hindrance of believing, in respect of the guilt of sin. What is a great hindrance to you in the way of believing ? It is the greatness of your sins, your hearts misgive you. I shall not shew you how to take it away, for that is another thing. But this is all, I intend to shew you the guilt of sin as on the conscience ; which conscience is it that raiseth it up, and conjures it up. It is conscience is the subject of it. It is called an evil conscience that represents to a man that sin is good, yet it is called evil also because that the state of man is evil. What keeps men from believing ? The greatness of their sins. When conscience is awake,—what presents their sin still to them is conscience,—all your discouragement is from your conscience unsprinkled with the blood of Christ. Conscience hath not learned the lesson from faith ; it hath not dipped itself in the blood of Christ. If it had, it would be quiet and not be suggesting sin, so as to discourage a poor soul when he looks on sin so sinful, and when he looks on sin so as to discourage him. When conscience doth this, he bids Christ depart from him ; for he is sinful, Heb. x. 22, ix. 14. A man must have his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. What is it that sprinkles it ? It is faith that doth it by taking the blood of Christ. The Holy Ghost in the soul by faith sprinkles the conscience, and that quiets it ; Heb. ix. 14, that he may 'purge your conscience from dead works.' Now then there is nothing that will satisfy your conscience in respect of the guilt of sin, but only the blood, death, and resurrection of Christ. While conscience shall be suffered to speak louder than faith, it will cry the blood of Christ down, as in Isa. lix. 9, 12. Say they, 'Salvation is far off ; as for our iniquities, we know them.' Slight thoughts of sin further presumptions, but sin discovered of itself hinders faith ; you all feel it. But there is a second way, wherein conscience, if it be not subordinate to faith, hinders faith both secretly and closely, and draws all your hearts its way ; that I say, of all that is in man, there is not a greater enemy to faith.

This I will say in the general to you : there are two covenants, the covenant of grace, and the covenant of works, and these two are incompatible one with another. Take the law as it is a covenant, it is incompatible with

the covenant of grace. These two are two vicegerents in man's heart ; the law hath natural conscience in men's hearts to keep its courts, and the gospel hath faith in the heart to keep Christ's court. Now all men in the world, let them be never so much enlightened, and have not saving grace, they are under the law ; therefore conscience is the supreme principle in them : all men that are godly are under grace, Rom. vii. 1, vi. 14 ; therefore they are under faith. Now here lies the great mystery of it : that still conscience would be the supreme principle, it would act according to the tenor of the law in a man's spirit, it would keep a man under the law ; for it is true to its master which naturally it is appointed to serve, and doth oppose the dignity of faith, and therefore only God can so subdue conscience unto faith, as the law ought to be subdued to the gospel.