

## FOR JESUS CHRIST IS PRECIOUS TO BELIEVERS

1 Peter ii. 7 - Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.

O Beloved of the Lord, how long will ye halt between these two opinions? If Christ be precious (as He is), then let the soul embrace Him; and if your idols be precious, then may your souls embrace them, and delight in them. But this we may say of precious Christ, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive and take up these endless and precious perfections that are in precious Christ. We shall never be able to comprehend that excellency, and transcendent comeliness and beauty that is in the face of Him: "He is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely." And O but He be precious. Certainly if this question were asked of them above, "What think ye of Christ?" the angels, and all the saints that are about the throne, would venture this answer to the question, Christ is excellent and exceeding precious, and rather a subject to admiration than to speech. And I shall say these six things, all of which, no doubt, do preach this doctrine, that Christ is precious.

And, first, do not all these excellent graces of the Spirit, preach this, that Christ is precious? Does not that noble

grace of faith preach this doctrine, that Christ is precious? For by it we must be partakers of communion and fellowship with Him. And does not that excellent grace of love preach that doctrine? For love is that grace that unites the soul of a Christian to Christ. And does not the grace of mortification and the grace of patience preach this, that Christ is precious?

Secondly. Ye may read His preciousness from these senses of the enjoyment of God that the saints in former times have had. Does not their enjoyment say that Christ is precious? And to be brought under the shadow of the Tree of Life, and to be dandled on His knees; for what are all enjoyments that a Christian meets with, but streams of sweetness that flow from that ocean and fountain of everlasting pleasure? And do not all these enjoyments preach this, that Christ is precious?

But, Thirdly. Do not these love-sicknesses that the saints of old have had under absence and distance from Christ preach this doctrine to you, that Christ is precious? (tho' we confess these diseases are rare in these days); then, O must He not be precious, whose absence for an hour is as an eternity, and whose presence for a thousand years is but as a little moment? O deserted Christians, did ye ever see Him whom your soul loveth? But I fear presence and communion with God is a mystery, and an unknown thing to the most of us.

Fourthly. Ye may read the preciousness of Christ from

that unspeakable sorrow and grief that the saints have had under their absence and distance from Christ, their souls refusing to be comforted, and putting on their mourning apparel, and eating their bread with ashes in the heaviness of their spirits. I would ask this question of you - Why is Christ so little precious to you? Is He less precious in Himself now than He was under the dark Mosaic dispensation of the gospel? No certainly; He is no less precious now than He was then.

And, fifthly, we may read Christ's preciousness from these blessed names that are given to Him in the scriptures; whose name is "the Desire of all nations"; whose name is that "Plant of Renown," and "the Light of that city above," and the "express Image of the Father's person"; He is that "bright and morning star," and that "flower of the tribe of Jesse." And do not all these blessed names of His preach this blessed doctrine, that Christ is precious?

Sixthly. There is this, lastly, that preaches Christ's preciousness, and it is this - -that the most unpleasant thing in Christ (if so we may say), is more joyful and precious than the choicest of all created comforts. This is clear, Heb. xi, 26, "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." And, O, if His reproaches be so excellent and precious, what must His blessings and favourable manifestations be! O Christians, were ye never constrained to desire the tongue of

an angel, that ye might be fit to express the praises of that Plant of Renown, even Jesus Christ? O Christians, were ye never constrained, under the sense of your enjoyment of God, to cry out, “It is good for me to be here: let me make tabernacles, and a place of abode?” O therefore account Christ precious.

But to come to the words: In them we have three things to be considered.

First, we have a Christian described from that which is his noble and cardinal excellency, believing; he is a believer.

Secondly, we have the precious advantage that flows to a Christian from the excellency of that noble and excellent grace of faith. And there are these two advantages:

(1) It makes Christ precious unto the soul.

(2) It will keep a soul under the impression of Christ’s preciousness: the believing soul will always account Christ exceeding precious.

The third thing in the words is, that divine reasonableness that faith keeps in its exercise. It is not blind; it looks to the former verse, that because He is a corner-stone, it counts Christ precious, which is imported in that word “therefore.” As for the first thing in the words, the description of a Christian, he is a believer. Having spoken

of faith before, we shall not now much insist on it; only we shall propose these three considerations to enforce your pursuit after this noble grace of faith.

First. Faith is that grace that gives a Christian a most broad and comprehensive sight of Christ. It draws aside the veil off the face of Christ, and presents His beauty to the soul. This is clear, Heb. xi, 27, "He endured, as seeing him who is invisible." It gives as clear a sight of the invisible God to the soul (in a manner) as if he did visibly behold Him. And there are these four principal parts of Christ's body that faith lets a Christian see.

(1) It will let the Christian see Christ's heart. Sense will say of Him, and to Him, thou hast the heart of an enemy; but faith will cry out, I know the thoughts of His heart to be good towards me, to give me an expected and blessed end.

(2) Faith (if so I may speak) looks to Christ's feet. It takes notice of the actings and motions of Christ; it will cry out, "His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold."

(3) Faith beholds the smilings of Christ's countenance. When sense can read nothing in His face but wrath and displeasure, then faith draws aside the vail from His countenance, and reads love.

(4) Faith lets a Christian see the hands of Christ. It beholds all His dispensations; it sees infinite love shining in all the actions of Christ. Faith is an intelligent grace. This is clear, Col. ii, 2, “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God.”

The second consideration to enforce your pursuit after this noble grace of faith is this: Faith is that grace by which a Christian keeps most communion and fellowship with God; Eph. iii, 17, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith,” as if He had said, “By the exercise of all other graces, Christ is to you as a sojourner, that turns in to you but to remain for a night; but, by the exercise of faith, Christ becomes an indweller in your house.” Faith will entertain communion with God in crosses, in promises, and in all duties. The believing Christian can keep fellowship with God under his most sad and bitter afflictions.

The third consideration is this, that faith is the mother of a Christian’s fruitfulness. This is clear, John xv., 5, “He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit”; that is, he that believeth in me, etc. It is likewise clear, 2 Pet. i., 5, “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to your virtue knowledge”; there He puts faith in the first place; faith is always fruitful, and never barren. I would say these two

words concerning it; first, I confess, though there be a great and marvellous barrenness amongst us, there is not great barrenness in gifts, but in fruitfulness. O what can be the reason of this our unfruitfulness? Surely it is because of the much abounding of that evil of misbelief.

Secondly, I would say, that a Christian may have much visible fruitfulness, when there is much unfruitfulness in his soul, and so may be a barren Christian. By visible fruitfulness, we mean or understand, the going about the exercise of outward duties, when within there is nothing but barrenness in the exercise of inward duties. And there are these four words that I would say to you concerning a natural conscience.

(1) A natural conscience will challenge more for the want of outward sanctification, than for the want of inward sanctification. It will challenge more for pollution in the outward man than for the pollution of the inward man.

(2) It will challenge more for the neglect of the outside of a duty, than for the neglect of secret prayer.

(3) A natural conscience will challenge more for the commission of sin, than for the omission of duty. If he swear, it will challenge him more for that than if he had neglected secret prayer ten times.

(4) A natural conscience will challenge a person more for

the want of sanctification, than for the want of justification.

Now for shutting up our discourse upon this, I would, first, say this to you, O Christians. Can ye read the scriptures and not be constrained to blush? I say, are ye not made to blush when we read of holy Enoch, and of Abraham, David, Paul, and of patient Job? When ye look unto their holy walk and conversation, are ye not made to blush, O Christians? What! think ye the way to heaven more easy then, when they lived, than it is now in our days, under the glorious manifestation of the gospel? No, certainly it was not. It is reported of the heathens, when reflecting upon the famous acts of their predecessors, it bereaved them of their night's rest; and ought not the famous acts of our predecessors bereave us of our sleep also? I must say, if Christ bring many of the Christians of this generation to heaven, surely there must be a stronger excrcisc of His power exercised towards us than it was before.

There is this secondly that I would say, and it is this, that faith is the predominant grace of a Christian while he is here below, and love shall be the predominant grace when he shall be above. Faith and hope fight the battle, and love divides the spoil. Faith may be called Asher, that is, royal dainties; and it may be called Joseph, in respect of its mother, that is, fruitfulness.



There is this, thirdly, I would say, that there are three idols that are a great difficulty for a Christian to be mortified to:

(1) It is a difficulty for him to be mortified to the applause of the world.

(2) It is a difficulty for a Christian to be mortified to the pleasures of the world.

(3) It is a great difficulty to be mortified to the reproaches of the world. But applause is so far from being a blessing, that it is a woe, Luke vi, 26, “Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you!” Applause of the world is an unconstant thing. It will cry “Hosanna” today, and “Crucify Him” tomorrow.

Now, to speak to the second part of the words, the advantages that come to one from the exercise of faith. We told you that there were two advantages, and now we shall first speak to this, what it is to have Christ precious to our souls. And, we conceive, it comprehends these things:

(1) It imports this for a Christian to have an high account and estimation of Christ above all things in the world, and to cry out, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, or in the earth that I desire besides thee.”

(2) It imports this, for the soul to be much in the exercise

of love to Christ, and that is, to have Christ precious.

(3) To have Christ precious is to have communion and fellowship with Him.

But, secondly, we shall speak to this, how faith makes Christ precious to the soul. And the first way is, faith is the spy of the soul; it takes a sight of the comeliness and beauty of Christ, and it cries out, “Thou art all fair, my love, and altogether lovely”; and presently on the back of that, Christ is precious. The second way how faith makes the soul take up Christ to be precious, is this; faith is that grace that makes up our interest and communion with Christ. It is the believing Christian that has most communion and fellowship with Christ. There is this third way whereby faith makes Christ precious to the soul, and it is this; faith is that grace that believes the promises which God hath made to the soul, and that makes Christ precious to the soul. When a Christian shall read I John iii, 2, and faith believes it sweetly, ye shall be constrained to cry out, “O what a matchless one is Christ.” We shall be constrained to wonder at the love that He has had towards us. There is this fourth way how faith makes Christ precious to the soul. It presents to the Christian the crown of glory, and lets him see all the joys and excellencies of heaven. O believe it, a broad sight of that crown, even of that glorious and immortal crown, would exceedingly commend Christ to your souls. And there is, fifthly, this last way how faith describes and

makes Christ precious to the soul. It discovers and presents to you the absolute necessity of embracing Jesus Christ, and that makes Christ precious to the soul.

There is this, thirdly, that we would speak to, and it is this, to propose some evidences and marks whereby ye may know whether Christ be precious unto you.

There is this first evidence whereby ye may try it. These to whom Christ is precious will have a desire to His image, that is, they will have a desire after holiness. Psalm li, 10, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.’ O Christians, do you not desire to bear the image of the second Adam, as ye have borne the image of the first Adam?

There is this second evidence. These, to whom Christ is precious, will desire to make a continual and constant use of Christ for justification, that they may be purged, and have the precious lineaments of Christ drawn upon them; and they will make use of Him for wisdom, that they may be directed aright through this wilderness; and they will make use of Him for redemption, that they may be set free from their spiritual enemies. O Christians, durst ye ever say, that ever an idol did assault you, that ye did not embrace? Oh! I fear there are many that may assent unto this truth.

There is this third evidence of those to whom Christ is precious. They will have a desire after more fellowship

and communion with God; Song i, 2, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine.” And verse 4, “Draw me, we will run after thee.” Think ye absence from Christ, though never so short, an eternity? If so, it is an evidence that Christ is precious unto you.

There is this fourth evidence of those to whom Christ is precious. They are exceedingly burdened under Christ’s absence and withdrawing from them. The spouse vented her respect to Christ, Song iii, where she sought him whom her soul loved; she sought him, but she found him not; and she continued seeking until she found him. The spouse vented her respect to Christ in these three things:

(1) That she should have undervalued angels, as John xx, 13, “They say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.” She, as it were, turned her back on the angels, because there was none for her but Christ. The happiness of a Christian lies in these words, My Lord, Him have they taken away.

(2) A Christian’s anxiety vents itself in this, there will be an unsatisfaction with all the graces, if he is without Christ. This is clear, Song iii, 1, 2, 3. There she had the grace of faith, love, diligence, patience and submission; yet notwithstanding, there is a Him absent that she wishes for.

(3) There is this in which a Christian's anxiety should vent itself, to have a low esteem of all things under Christ; according to that, Psalm lxxvii, 3, "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my sore ran in the night, and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted."

There is the fifth evidence of those to whom Christ is precious, they have a spiritual observance and Christian record of the motions of Christ under absence, so far as they can; and when He is present they take notice when they are admitted to taste of the apples of the tree of life, whereof if once ye shall eat, ye shall be as gods, as the devil (or serpent) said to Eve.

And there is this sixth evidence of those to whom Christ is precious. They will be less or more in some measure grieved for grieving and offending Him. I fear I may say this, to the confusion and shame of most of us, that sin was never our burden. O Christians, can Christ be precious to you and yet ye do not hesitate to offend Him?

There is this seventh evidence of those to whom Christ is precious. They will have a high estimation and account of union and fellowship with Christ. O what do the hearts of Christians most run upon? I fear it is not after Christ. There are some whose hearts are upon the world; there are others whose hearts are upon the pleasures of the world; there are some whose hearts are upon the applause of the world; and there are others whose hearts are on the covetousness of the things of the world. This is

clear, from Ezek. xxxiii, 31, “For with their mouths they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” O, therefore, strive to embrace Jesus Christ. The devil will let you give all your members to Jesus Christ, but he says, Give me thy heart.’ He will let you give your eyes, ears, hands, and feet to Christ, but says he, ‘Give me thy heart.’ I shall rank out these three sorts of persons to you that are not right in heart.

(1) There are some that have a divided heart. Certainly the devil has the hearts of such; James iv, 8. Read the last words, “Purify your hearts, ye double-minded.”

(2) There are some whose hearts are not divided, namely, atheists. Their hearts are wholly given to the devil. This is clear, Hosea iv, 17, “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone”; or, as the word is, he is “married to his idols.” Then surely Christ is not precious to one of these persons. O Christians, has not the world your first thoughts when ye rise in the morning, and your last thoughts when ye go to bed at night! So that I fear our idols have always more of our thoughts than Christ.

(3) There are some whose hearts are wrestling against their predominant lust (although I may say, there are not many such amongst us, who make and count it their main design and business to wrestle against the devil and his temptations), and yet not right, but falling under them.

I shall add this last evidence of one to whom Christ is

precious. They will have some delight in duties by which communion and fellowship with God may be attained; Song iii, 1, “By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not.” She seeks Him from a principle of delight, of faith, of necessity. O Christians, why go ye to prayer thus? I think most of us go to prayer only from this principle to satisfy a natural conscience. I would shut up our discourse at this time; only I say, this is an evidence of one that has real delight to duty, he has a low estimation and account of all things below Christ, and he has a high esteem only of Christ Himself.

Now, before I close, I would ask the atheists of this congregation these four things.

And first, atheists, is Christ precious to you? Yes, say ye. How is it then that ye hate the saints and people of God, if Christ be precious to you? For surely we may be persuaded of this, that you cannot love God, if ye have not love to His people; 1 John iv, 20, “If any man say he loves God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

Secondly, atheists, think ye Christ precious to you, when the exercise of religion is your greatest cross and affliction that you have in the world? Do ye not cry out in the morning, prayer is our greatest burden; and in the evening, it is our greatest cross? And surely there are these

two evils that follow such in their prayers; they speak to God as to one of their companions, but they lack that divine reverence that they ought to have in their approaches to God; and the other evil is this, they count that time that is exercised and spent in prayer an exceeding long time; they tire in God's company; and may not many of us apply to ourselves these two?

There is this thirdly, that I would say. Think ye that Christ is precious to you whose sins were never your burden? Ye may be persuaded of it, He is not precious to you!

The fourth question I would ask is this. Think ye that Christ is precious to you who never knew what it was to distinguish betwixt absence and presence with God in prayer? O Christians, are there not many here who never knew what it was to distinguish the absence of Christ from His presence? Are there not some here who have an unchangeable communion with God which never alters, but still is the same? But surely such may question the reality of their communion. O atheists and traitors to the Son of God, study in this your day to make peace with Him! and ye that desire your eternal well-being, study to have Christ precious to you, otherwise He will be exceedingly terrible. O Christians, what will ye answer to this, has not Christ been offered to you, and have not many of you rejected Him and His offer? O know that matchless fulness and excellency that is in Jesus Christ. What can you desire that is not in Christ? And what can



you lack who are in Him, and have Him? He is altogether lovely; He is all desires; He is all-sufficient; He is all in all. O be persuaded to fall in love with Christ and His offer; with Him who is the Desire of nations, the Flower of the tribe of Jesse, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. O what can we say to persuade you to embrace Christ, to lay hold on His offer? Sure we are, when we shall be brought before the tribunal of God, to receive our sentence of perpetual condemnation, that then it shall be thought that our everlasting concernment was to have embraced Christ. We shall say no more; but know this of certainty, that above the clouds Christ is precious, and that there is not one there but who is crying Hallelujah to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. Amen.

## FOR JESUS CHRIST IS PRECIOUS TO BELIEVERS

1 Peter ii, 7 - Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious.

Such is the universal stupidity and hardness of heart that has overtaken the people of this generation, that if Christ should come from heaven, as being there glorified with majesty, and should invite us to partake of that promised land, there are that would stop their ears, as with their finger, lest they should be overcome and led captive there, and lest they should be charmed with the enchanting voice of that blessed charmer. We shall say to these that sell Christ at so low a rate, that word, Lev. xiii, 46, "All the days wherein the plague shall he in them, they shall be defiled; they are unclean; they shall dwell alone, without the camp shall their habitation be." When we consider the contrary practice that is betwixt the higher house and the lower house, how may we blush and be ashamed! The practice of the higher house is still to be singing, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts"; our practice in this lower house is to undervalue Him. The reproaching of Him should he our complaint. If prayer could be exercised in heaven, the first prayer that we would put up when our feet were within the New Jerusalem would be, O precious Christ, pardon our undervaluings of Thee while we were below.

Have ye never been constrained to say, Who can show forth His Praise? David summoned all the angels in heaven, the souls of men, sun, moon, stars, beasts, birds, etc., to shew forth his praise. Did ye never know what it was to be convinced of the remissness of that duty, and the coldness of your love? The love of Christ involves an everlasting obligation on angels to praise Him. The grace of love in a Christian is under a twofold sweet mistake; it conceives every hour's absence from Christ to be an eternity, and an eternal presence to be but an hour. "How long wilt thou Forget me, O Lord, for ever?" says David. And if we may allude unto these words, Psalm xc, 4, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday." You have in the words a Christian described. He has a dignity that is of more value than if he did derive his pedigree from a thousand kings, without an interrupted line. The word 'therefore' in the text relates to the preceeding verse.

There be two sweet proofs and advantages of faith that make Christ precious to the believer; it is not said unto you He was precious. It is said He is precious. There is a relative preciousness of Christ; it is to the believer He is precious; yet although ye be not a believer, it is bad divinity to conclude that ye are not within the compass of the decree of election. Christ's preciousness to the believer is the foundation of our faith.

I shall not dwell long on this excellent and royal dignity of a Christian, only there is that one excellency, faith

keeps a soul in most constant communion with Christ; Eph. iii, i7, ‘That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.’ By the exercise of the grace of faith Christ becomes our husband, our householder, and indweller with us. It is a most sweet and desirable thing to have Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, and our souls dwelling with Christ by love; that is a sweet connection. Faith renders Christ more precious to a Christian than sense. This may be shown from faith’s estimation of Christ; it is built on his person. Sense looks to Christ’s feet and hands, and his outward parts, but faith looks to His person. Faith looks to what Christ was before the world began, or a cornerstone thereof was laid; sense alone looks to what Christ is at the present time. The grace of faith looks to the love that is in Christ’s heart: sense alone looks to the smiles of His face. The estimation of faith is more constant than the estimation of sense; when Christ withdraws, sense loses its opinion. When faith would have wisdom, it consults with Christ, whose name is Wonderful. Counsellor. Faith is as a sinew, that being cut, all our strength goes from us. Faith is an heroic grace; the crown of martyrdom is set upon the head of faith. A Christian that is under the excellency of this grace, is a most humble Christian.

By what law was boasting excluded? By the law of faith. Paul presseth this doctrine upon a Christian. Faith discovers to a Christian the excellency of God, and makes

him take up his dwelling in the dust. Faith makes a Christian to have two contrary motions, one to ascend, another to descend, so to speak; it keeps all the graces of the Spirit in motion. Faith is the messenger of the soul, and discovers what Christ is; who being discovered, faith cries out, "It is good for me to be here," and then love cries out, "Let us make a tabernacle." Faith likewise mortifies corruption. Faith has a sweet influence on the work of mortification in a Christian. When Christ is discovered to a soul, it will cast away its idols as a menstrous cloth, and will cry out, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" The soul is more where it loseth than where it liveth. Being justified by faith, we glory in tribulation. Faith holds out the crown on the right hand to a Christian. having this motto written on it, "He that persevereth to the end shall he saved." Moses was never at patience till he was at the top of the mount, where he did see the promised land. Faith makes out the promises to a Christian. Faith is a life-sanctifying grace. When faith goes abroad in the world, good works are the handmaids that accompany the queen. Faith has Rachel's eye and Leah's womb. Faith has a sweet influence on our fruitfulness to Christ; John xv, 5, "He that abides in me shall bring forth much fruit." See also 1 Pet. ii, 5. Faith is that spouse-like grace that marries Christ; and good works are the children which faith beareth. Faith is that superior grace, which, at the motion thereof, all the rest go. Faith is an intelligent grace; it is called the "mystery of godliness," Col. ii, 2. Faith raiseth the soul to the highest pitch of

reason. Faith is an heart-pacifying grace; peace is the daughter of faith, Faith is the dove that brings the olive branch of peace in its mouth. Faith is an empty hand that receives the precious alms out of Christ's merits, and it is the instrument, or the channel, through which the blessed streams of life flow to us from Him. Faith is an heavenly plant, which will not grow in an impure heart. Faith is an heart-purifying grace, Acts xv, 9. it is a virgin grace of a pure and heavenly soil.

Now, for the use of the point - is it so that faith is such an excellent grace? O be pursuing after it. There is more guilt in the sin of unbelief, than in the sin of murder; Matt. xi, 24, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom," etc. Luke x, 13. There is no sin made mention of there, but the sin of unbelief. If once ye had that divine plant Faith ingrafted in your souls, it would have a kind of onnipotency. Unbelief passeth under the veil of humility, and so we embrace it, rather than decline it as a sin. Now, the effects of the grace of faith make Christ precious to a soul. It discovers to a sinner the extract [copy] of his pardon, and that he hath been loved from all eternity; "She loved much, because much was forgiven her." A Christian that believes shall see Christ as He is. Faith lets a Christian see the accomplishment of the promises. Faith is a sister grace; hope is patient, love is impatient. Faith and hope are two sisters, but they differ thus; hope looks at the excellency of the promise, faith at the certainty of it. Faith can suspend fruition, but love cannot. When

Christ and a Christian are trusted together, faith and love grow apace. The best way to improve your necessity, is to believe, although your faith be but in the swaddling-clothes or bands; be content to wait a while, till you have gotten such a vigorous faith as will carry you with full sails to heaven. We have the reversion (future possession) in heaven, when the lease of life is run out. A weak faith may be fruitful; the thief upon the cross had but a weak faith, yet how many precious clusters grew upon that vine? Luke xxiii, 43. Here was a young plant, but very fruitful. Faith is a grace that puts a commentary upon all the actings of Christ. When Christ seems to frown, faith will cry out, I know the thoughts of His heart are not war, but grace to me. Faith can prophesy at midnight. Let a Christian yield to the premises of unbelief, but deny its conclusions. This is bad logic, but it is Christian divinity.

Sirs, did ye never know what it was to use this medium for pardon, “Lord, pardon our iniquities, because they are great?” Christ strengthens love by the discoveries of Himself. Faith discovers the period of our afflictions. Love is written in illegible characters upon the cross; but if ye consult with faith, you may read it. Faith and love, they are pleasant in their lives, and in their death they are not divided. Faith and love are the jewels wherewith Christ’s bride is adorned. Love never ceaseth, 1 Cor. xiii, 8. In our sense, love is more excellent than faith. The spouse when she goes to heaven, shall put off her jewel

of faith, but shall never put off her jewel of love. In heaven the smoke of desire shall he ever bathing itself in the pure and pleasant fountain of glory. That which makes the higher house have such a smell is, the floor and windows are all strewed over with the leaves of the Rose of Sharon. What joy shall there be when Christ shall take us to His banqueting-house, and kiss us with the kisses of His mouth!

When we shall come to heaven, we shall not know which of our senses shall be most taken up.

Firstly: The eye. What joy to see there the orient brightness in the face of Christ; there you may see the lily and the rose mixed, white and ruddy, Cant. v. 10.

Secondly: The ear shall be filled with melody; what joy to the spouse to hear Christ's voice, to hear Him say, "My love, my dove, my undefiled!"

Thirdly: The smell shall be filled with sweet savour; what joy to smell that fragraney and perfume that comes from Christ! All His garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; the sweet breath of His spirit blowing on thee, and giving forth His scent as the wine of Lebanon.

Fourthly: The taste shall be filled; O what joy is there to be drinking in the fountain of Christ, that is the water of life!



Fifthly: The touch shall be filled; the saints shall be ever in the embraces of Christ! "Behold my hands and my feet - handle me, and see," etc. Luke xxiv, 39. That will be our work in heaven, when we shall arrive betwixt these sweet arms that were once stretched out upon the cross; there shall be no such inhibition as that to Mary, "Touch me not." If Christ's sufferings are so full of joy, what are His embraces? What joy will there be at the saints' coronation, when they shall be eternally united to Christ Jesus! When we are in the glorious inheritance, what joy, what glory there in the chambers of His presence! If the streets of this inheritance are of pure gold, what are the furniture and hangings? What is the cabinet of jewels? What are all the rarities of the world, the cost of pearls, yea, what are all things to this place! What a rich place must this needs be, where God will lay out all this cost? This is a purchase worth the getting. What spring will that be, which will never dry up? I think I see the morning-star appear; it is break of day already; who would, for the indulging of a lust, forfeit so glorious an inheritance? Lay the whole world in the scales with it, it is lighter than vanity. There is the vine flourishing, there are the pomegranates budding, Cant. vi, 11.

While we are sitting at the table, Christ's spikenard will send forth his smell, Cant. i, 12, There is the bed of love, there are the curtains of Solomon; there is the mountain of spices, and streams from Lebanon; there are the cherubims, not to keep out, but to welcome into paradise;

there shall the saints be adorned as a bride with pearls of glory; there God will give us abundance of all that we can ask or think, Eph. iii, 20. Such is the excellency of that celestial paradise, that if the angels would take up their responsals to delineate it, they would stain and eclipse the glory of it. When thou wast sailing to hell, for we have both wind and tide to carry us thither, hath the north wind and south wind awakened thee? Have the gales of the Spirit blown upon thee, and turned thy course? Art thou sailing to a new port? Then I am speaking to thee all this while, this glorious inheritance shall be given to thee; but if thou art an old sinner, be assured Christ will never put the new wine of glory into old bottles. We shall add no more. Now, unto the King, eternal, immortal, and invisible, be everlasting praise. Amen.