

# SERMONS UPON JOHN XVII.

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## SERMON XXXIII.

*And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*—JOHN XVII. 19.

THIS is the second argument ; he had urged their commission, now his own merit. Justice might interpose and say, They are unworthy ; but Christ saith, ' I sanctify myself for them.' He dealeth with the Father, not only by way of entreaty, but merit ; and applieth himself not only to the good-will of the Father, as his beloved one, but to his justice, as one that was ready to lay down his life as a satisfaction.

In the text are two things :—

1. A meritorious cause, ' And for their sakes I sanctify myself.' Where—

[1.] *Quis*, the person, who is represented under a double notion—as an efficient cause, ' I sanctify ;' and as the object-matter, ' Myself ;' the person sanctifying and sanctified, the author and the object, the efficient and the material cause of this sanctification.

[2.] *Quid*, the action, what he did, *ἁγιάζω*, ' I sanctify.'

[3.] *Pro quibus*, the persons for whom this was done, ' For their sakes ;' not for himself, he needed it not, but for their sakes, *ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν*.

2. The effect of Christ's sanctifying himself, ' That they might be sanctified through the truth.' Where—

[1.] The blessing intended, ' That they might be sanctified.' It is *bonum congruum*, for in all things Christ must *πρωτεύειν*, ' have the pre-eminence ;' it is *bonum morale*, not that they might be rich, happy, glorious, but sanctified ; it is *bonum specificativum*, such as maketh an evidence ; for none can make comfortable application of the benefits of redemption but the sanctified, who have grace and holiness infused in them, and do devote and consecrate themselves to serve God in holiness and righteousness all their days.

[2.] The means, manner, or end, *ἐν ἀληθείᾳ* ; it may be rendered *through* the truth, *in* truth, or *for* the truth ; all which readings admit of a commodious explication.

(1.) As the means, ' Through the truth,' as the rule and instrument ;

the word accompanied with the virtue of Christ's death is that which sanctifieth.

(2.) The manner, 'In truth,' or truly, in opposition to legal purifications by the use of the ceremonies of the law, which were but a shadow of true holiness: Heb. ix. 13, 14, 'For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?' And in opposition to counterfeit sanctification: Eph. iv. 24, 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;' such as is sincere, true, and real.

(3.) The end, 'For the truth,' that they may be consecrated, set apart, and fitted for that function of preaching the truth. The context seemeth to justify this. From the whole observe—

*Doct.* That Christ did set himself apart to be a sacrifice for us, that we might be sanctified by the means appointed thereunto.

I shall explain this point by opening the text.

*First*, I begin with the meritorious cause, 'And for their sakes I sanctify myself.' Where—(1.) The agent, *I*; (2.) The act, *sanctify*; (3.) The object, *myself*; (4.) The persons concerned, *for their sakes*.

*First*, The agent, 'I sanctify myself.' In other places it is ascribed to the Father and the Spirit. To the Father: John x. 36, 'Him hath the Father sanctified, and sent into the world.' To the Spirit: Acts x. 38, 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.' He did not only frame the human nature of Christ out of the substance of the Virgin, but adorned it with gifts and graces fit for his office and work. And here Christ saith, 'I sanctify myself.' All the persons in the divine nature concur to this work. The Father sanctifieth and sets him apart by his decree and designation; the Son sanctifieth himself, to show his willingness and condescension; the Spirit sanctifieth him by his operation, furnishing him with meet graces and endowments that were necessary for that singular person who should redeem the world. Christ's sanctifying himself falleth under our consideration, and doth show partly his original authority, as a person of the Godhead, coequal with the Father and the Spirit: 'Whatsoever the Father doeth, the Son doeth also,' John v. 19. Partly his voluntary submission; as the Father did consecrate the Son to the office of mediator, and the Spirit qualified him with all fulness of grace, so did Christ consecrate himself, as being a most willing agent in this work, and did really offer himself to become man, and to suffer all that misery, pain, and shame that was necessary for our expiation. The scripture often sets it forth to us: Eph. v. 2, 'Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.' He did not do this work by constraint, but of a ready mind. When it was first propounded to him in God's decree, Heb. x. 9, 'Then he said, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!' And before the time was come about when he should assume the human nature into the unity of his person, he feasted himself with the thoughts of that salvation which he should set afoot in the habitable parts of the earth:

Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' When the incarnation was passed, then he longed for the time of his passion: Luke xii. 50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' So willing was he to do and suffer that whereunto he was sent: Luke xxii. 15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I die;' that passover, because it was the last, the forerunner of his agonies. His heart was set upon that work. His behaviour in his death showed how willingly he did undergo it: John xiii. 1, 'Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end;' then was his bitter work, but that did not abate his love. The heathens counted it a lucky sacrifice that went to the altar without struggling and roaring; certainly Christ did meekly suffer what was imposed on him for the expiation of our sins: Isa. liii. 7, 'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.' A swine whineth and maketh a noise, but a sheep is dumb; this was the emblem chosen to represent Christ's meekness and patience. Salt cast into the fire danceth and leapeth with a kind of impatience, but oil riseth up in a gentle flame; so Christ suffered, not only with patience, but delight. He did not lay down his life by constraint, but died by consent: John x. 18, 'No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.' Now this endeareth our obligation to him, that he would consecrate himself to the work of the mediatory office, and to that end assume the human nature into the unity of his person, and so willingly condescend to all that sorrow and pain that he was to endure for our sakes, and offer himself up as a sacrifice for our sins; being for a while without the actual sense of his Father's love: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Mat. xxvii. 46.

But more distinctly let us consider the greatness of his sufferings, his willingness to endure them.

1. The greatness of his sufferings. His passions, take them in the very letter, were sore, but they were heightened by the delicacy of his temper; never any man suffered as he did, because never such a man. A blow on the head is soon felt because it is a principal member, and so more sensible than other parts of the body. A slave is not so sensible of blows and stripes as a nobleman of a tender and delicate constitution. Our Saviour Christ was of a more delicate constitution than any other; his body was immediately framed by the Spirit in the Virgin's womb. Lawrence on the gridiron, Stephen when stoned, could not be so sensible as Christ on the cross. None of the martyrs suffered what he did. Christ had a particular knowledge of all sins committed in the world, past, present, and to come, and a particular sorrow for them; which was the greater by how much the more he prized the honour of God. His love towards him was infinite, his hatred to sin infinite, his apprehension of his Father's displeasure clear; all which made his soul heavy to the death. Our sins were more burdensome to him than his own wounds. No man's understanding is so great as to apprehend what Christ felt; Christ himself can only give us an account of the greatness of his sufferings. David confessed

'that his sins were more than the hairs upon his head;' yet he saith, 'Cleanse me from secret sins;' implying many had escaped his notice and knowledge. How great was the burden of Christ, that was the Lamb bearing the sins of the whole world! Neither did Christ suffer pains only for sins, but to make a purchase of spiritual blessings; and yet the price exceeded the value of that which was bought.

2. His willingness to suffer for us. Christ was so set upon his passion that he called Peter Satan for contradicting it: Mat. xvi. 23, 'Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence to me.' When Jonah saw the storm he said, 'Cast me into the sea;' this storm was raised for his own sake; but when Christ saw the misery of mankind he said, Let it come on me. We raised the storm, Christ was cast in to allay it; as if a prince, passing by an execution, should take the malefactor's chains and suffer in his stead. Christ bore our sorrows; he would have this work in no other hands but his own. His earnestness to partake of the last passover showeth his willingness; he had such a desire to see his body on the cross, that Judas seemed too slow, not diligent enough. Christ saith, John xiii. 27, 'That thou doest, do quickly.' It is not an approbation of his sin, but a testimony of his love; every day seems long. If Christ had been to suffer so much for every man as he did for all mankind, he would have done it; there wanted but a precept, there wanted not love; his heart was much beyond his sufferings, as the windows of the temple were greater and more open within than without, 1 Kings vi. 4. If Paul, that had but a drop of grace, could 'wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kindred according to the flesh,' Rom. ix. 3, how much more willing was Christ! Surely then we should as readily consecrate ourselves to his service. Christ saith, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,' Heb. x. 9; and it becometh every christian to make an unbounded resignation of himself to God: Acts ix. 6, 'Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?'

Secondly, The act, *ἀγιάζω*, 'I sanctify.' Things are said in scripture to be sanctified when they are set apart, and fitted and prepared for some holy use.

1. As it signifies to separate, or set apart from a common to a holy use, as the sacrifices under the law were separated and chosen out of the flock or herd, the best and the fairest, such as were without spot and blemish, and then designed for this holy use of being an offering to God, so was Christ separated for this use, to be the great sin-offering, or sacrifice of atonement for the whole congregation: 1 Peter i. 19, 20, 'Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' When was Christ so sanctified? He did sanctify himself when he accepted the conditions of the covenant of redemption, Isa. liii. 10-12; and visibly at his baptism he did present himself among sinners as our surety, and offer himself to the Father to pay our ransom, which God accepted, for he declared himself well pleased with Christ, as standing in our room: Mat. iii. 17, 'Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Ordinary baptism is a dedication to God. So Christ's baptism was a dedication of himself to the recovering of the lost world to God. And then a little before his death in this prayer, 'I sanctify

myself ;' afterwards in his agonies, 'Not my will, but thine be done ;' at his death he offered up himself, Heb. ix. 14, 'Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.'

2. It signifieth his qualification and fitness ; he did fit the human nature with all habitual and actual holiness. In this sense Christ did sanctify himself ; as God, he fitted himself for this work.

[1.] There was the innocency and purity of his human nature, without any stain of corruption, and therefore he is called 'that holy thing,' Luke i. 35. This holiness was necessary in regard of himself, otherwise his human nature could not be assumed into the unity of his person, for God can have no communion with sin, no more than light and darkness can agree together. It was necessary in regard of his office, that he might satisfy for our sins : Heb. vii. 26, 'Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.' The priest of the gospel must be sinless, because of the excellency of the sacrifice, that the priest may not be worse than the sacrifice. While things were carried in type and figure, and a beast was offered in sacrifice, a sinful man sufficed ; but now the satisfaction was really to be made for us, and sin done away, and we were to be made really holy, our priest was to be holy, harmless, undefiled. It is for our comfort that Christ was sanctified ; his original sanctity is a remedy against our original sin and impurity. When we are troubled with our natural deformity, it is comfortable to think that God looketh upon us in Christ, who was holy by nature ; it is a comfortable hope that the corruption of our nature is covered in God's eyes, and shall be diminished more and more.

[2.] His actual holiness in his conversation. The business of the mediator was to commend obedience, and he hath done it by his own example, and the way that he took to recover us to God : Rom. v. 19, 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous ;' Phil. ii. 5, 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.' Some dislike such a particular application ; we have need of all Christ's properties, and we should make use of all. Why doth the scripture set it down, but to show that he is fit to remove sin original and actual ? As a covetous man looks on a piece of gold, or we on a thing that we delight in, we turn it on every side. The first Adam was by God's institution a common person, in him sinning the world sinned ; the second Adam was a public fountain of holiness, who is an infinite person as well as a public person.

Thirdly, The object, 'I sanctify *myself* ;' not an angel to do this for us, but himself. Under the law the priests offered bulls and goats, while they themselves remained untouched, but Christ offered himself. As God he was priest, as man the sacrifice. As there was love in the priest, so there is worth in the sacrifice. Christ was both priest and sacrifice ; it was himself that he offered as a recompense to angry justice. Otherwise we might say, Here is the person sanctifying, but where is the sacrifice ? As Isaac said to his father, Gen. xxii. 7, 'Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering ?' It is good to see in what nature Christ was the priest, and in what nature the sacrifice. In his divine nature the priest, for 'he offered himself

through the eternal Spirit to God,' Heb. ix. 14. In his human nature principally he was the sacrifice; for it is said, Heb. x. 10, 'We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' The godhead could not be offered, for who can offer himself, or any other thing to himself? And, besides, the thing sacrificed must be slain, for it is blood shed which was given to God upon his altar. In this respect it is said by Christ, John vi. 51, 'The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' And when he had instituted the eucharist in memory of this great sacrifice, he mentioneth his body broken and given, and his blood shed. Yet because the priest and the sacrifice is one, the value of this sacrifice ariseth from the divine nature. It is 'the blood of God,' Acts xx. 28, that is, of the person who was God.

Fourthly, The persons interested, 'For their sakes.'

1. Negatively, not for himself; he needed it not, he had no sin to expiate, nor happiness to purchase anew. The scripture never speaks of Christ's doing anything for his own sake, but still of his love to us. His incarnation was for us: Isa. ix. 6, 'To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.' His obedience was for us: Gal. iv. 4, 5, 'But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' His death was for us: Dan. ix. 26, 'The Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.' Our Lord died, not for himself, but for his people: Isa. liii. 4, 5, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.' He was made nothing for himself, but all things for us. Christ's merit for himself is an unworthy doctrine. Bellarmine saith, *Christus præter ea bona quæ suis laboribus peperit, meruit etiam sibi corporis gloriam, et nobilitatis exaltationem.* But if Christ were to merit for himself, his obedience was not voluntary, but due; and what could be merit which was not from his conception due to him? It is true Christ solaced his human soul with the consideration of consequent glory: Heb. xii. 2, 'For the glory which was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' But we cannot thence infer a merit. A prince disguised in a foreign country may solace himself with the honour and happiness he shall enjoy at home: Phil. ii. 9, 'Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him.' *Διὸ*, 'wherefore,' noteth a consequent in order of time: Christ was 'first to suffer, and then to enter into glory,' Luke xxiv. 26.

If you say, Christ, as man, was bound to be subject, as a reasonable creature, to God his maker; as the son of Abraham, he was comprehended in the covenant made with that people:—I answer—

[1.] If his human nature was bound to be subject, yet not his person, *actiones sunt suppositorum.* The human nature was taken into his person, and the divine nature could do more to free the human nature than the human nature could oblige the person to obedience. Christ pleadeth his freedom as God's son: Mat. xvii. 26, 'If of strangers, then are the children free.'

[2.] The human nature, as a creature, was to be subject to God, and guided by him, as being an inferior; but whether to a law of God is justly doubted; for the law is given to mere men for their weakness, for the instruction of good and the restraint of bad; and therefore his being subject to the law was voluntary, and not necessary; if it were necessary, there could be no merit in it: Luke xvii. 10, 'So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.'

[3.] Again, Christ voluntarily brought himself into this condition merely for our sakes; as a man that removeth his dwelling into another country for his friend's sake, while he is in that country, he is bound by the laws of it, but merely for his friend's sake; or, as a surety, free before, when he cometh into bonds, he must discharge the debt, but all is for his friend's sake; so Christ 'was made under the law' Gal. iv. 4. He that makes himself a servant to free his friend is bound to service; yet his making himself a servant is meritorious. In short, if Christ had done aught for himself, he had been his own redeemer, mediator, and saviour. Christ came into the world, sanctified his nature, lived and died for our sakes; it is for our benefit and behoof, to effect our salvation. His human nature needed nothing but what might accrue to him by the dignity of his person.

2. Positively, 'For their sakes.' The apostles are chiefly concerned in the context, who were sent into the world upon a peculiar message and errand; but all the elect are intended, partly because it is presently added, ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for all that shall believe in me through their word;' partly because it is a common benefit, and what doth not concern the apostles as apostles, but is common to them with others, must be extended to all; for their sakes he doth wholly consecrate himself, and set himself apart for his people's benefit, that he might be theirs; it was for their weal, not for his own, that he might be their mediator and sacrifice. Christ was wholly set apart for our use; as mediator, he had no other work and employment but to procure our salvation. How doth this engage us to make use of Christ, for otherwise his undertaking is in vain, if we do not improve him for those ends and purposes for which he doth set apart himself; even as the sun would shine in vain if we did shut up ourselves in a dark place, and did not enjoy the light and comfort of it, and the brazen serpent would in vain be lifted up upon the perch and pole, if none that were stung would look upon it. Oh! let not Christ be a Christ in vain: 2 Cor. vi. 1, 'We then, as workers together with him, beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain.' If he wholly gave up himself to be a fountain of grace, holiness, comfort, and glory in our nature, and did fit himself to justify and sanctify us, and we never look after the benefit, we make him to be a Christ in vain.

*Secondly*, We come now to the end, effect, and fruit of it, 'That they might be sanctified through the truth.'

First, The benefit, or blessing intended, 'That they also might be sanctified.' Where—

1. Observe, it is *bonum morale*, not that they might be rich, happy,

great, glorious in the world, but 'that they might be sanctified.' When Christ was on the cross, he neither wanted wisdom to choose, nor love to intend, nor merit to purchase the highest benefits, and those which were most necessary for us; but that which he had in his eye was our sanctification: Eph. v. 26, 'He loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it;' and Heb. xiii. 12, 'Jesus, that he might sanctify the people, suffered without the gate.' All his aim was to recover us to God, and dedicate us to God; for he came to repair the ruins of the fall, and save that which was lost: Luke xix. 10, 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' And we were first lost to God before we were lost to ourselves; as appeareth, Luke xv., by the parable of the lost sheep, which was lost to the owner; and the lost groat, which was lost to the possessor; and the lost son, which was lost to the father. Our misery is included; but the principal thing intended was, that God hath lost the honour of the creation.

2. It is *bonum congruum*: 'I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified.' The scripture delighteth in these congruities: Heb. v. 8, 9, 'He learned obedience by the things that he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.' As there is a suitableness between the seal and the impression, so between Christ and his people. In all things Christ must *πρωτεύειν*, he must have the pre-eminence. We have the blessings of the covenant, not only from him, but through him. Christ was elected: Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my elect in whom my soul delighteth;' so are we. Christ was justified: 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'God manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit;' so are we. Christ was sanctified, and we, in conformity to him, are sanctified also, as in the text. Christ rose again, ascended, and was glorified; so do we—he as the elder brother and first heir, and we in our order.

3. It is *bonum specificativum*. It showeth the parties, or that sort of men to whom Christ intended the benefit: Heb. x. 14, 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' them and no other: the godly themselves, while unconverted, and lying in their sins, have not the actual benefit of Christ's redemption.

But in what manner are we sanctified? Christ consecrated and sanctified himself as a sin-offering; but we are sanctified and consecrated as a thank-offering; Christ to do the work of a redeemer or mediator, we to do the work of the redeemed. We are set apart for the Lord, to glorify him in all holy conversation and godliness.

Secondly, The means of applying and conveying this benefit: 'Through the truth,' *ἐν ἀληθείᾳ*. It may be rendered 'through the truth,' 'in the truth,' or 'for the truth;' all which readings admit of a commodious explication.

1. In the truth, or truly, in opposition to legal purifications, which were but a shadow of true holiness: Heb. ix. 13, 14, 'For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' Or in opposition to counterfeit sanctification: Eph. iv. 24,



‘And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.’ Some only are sanctified externally, as they are in visible covenant with God: Heb. x. 29, ‘And hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.’ They live among his peculiar people; others are really renewed and changed by his Spirit, and turned from a sinful life to God, making conscience of every commanded duty, and aiming at his glory in all things.

2. For the truth, that they may be consecrated, set apart, and fitted for that function of preaching the gospel. This is agreeable to the context, which limits this part of the prayer to the apostles.

3. Through the truth, as we render it, and fitly, considering the 17th verse, ‘Sanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth;’ through the word, by which the virtue of Christ’s death is applied to us. There are certain means and helps by which Christ bringeth about this effect: Eph. v. 26, ‘That he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water, through the word.’ The word offereth this grace, the sacraments seal and confirm it to us. So John xv. 3, ‘Ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken to you.’ The word of command presseth it: Ps. cxix. 9, ‘Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.’ The word of promise encourageth us: 2 Cor. vii. 1, ‘Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all the filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’ And the doctrine of Christ’s blood holds out the virtue whereby it may be done: 1 John i. 7, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ And it exciteth faith, by which the heart is purified: Acts xv. 9, ‘Purifying their hearts by faith.’

*Use 1.* Information. It informeth us of divers important truths.

1. That in ourselves we are polluted and unclean, or else what needed there so much ado to get us sanctified? This is needful to be considered by us: Job xv. 14, ‘What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?’ That is, man by nature is neither clean nor righteous, destitute of purity by nature, and uprightness of conversation. They are ill acquainted with man who think otherwise; for if we consider his earliness in sinning, his easiness in sinning, his constancy in sinning, and the universality of sinners, we may soon see what his nature is; and the fountain being so corrupt, the streams or emanations from it are defiled also.

2. That nothing can cleanse us but the blood of Christ. Can man cleanse himself? Job xiv. 4, ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.’ Can that which is corrupt cleanse itself? or that which is enmity to holiness promote it? Or can the word do it without Christ? Good instructions may show a man his duty, but cannot change the bent of his heart. Christ needed not only to be sent as a prophet, ver. 18, but must sanctify himself as a priest and sacrifice, before this benefit could be procured for us, as in the text. There was no possible way to recover holiness, unless a price, and no less a price than the blood of the Son of God, had been paid to provoked justice for us. He must sanctify himself, give himself, before we can be sanctified and cleansed.

3. That they do not aright improve the death of Christ that seek comfort by it, and not holiness. He died not only for our justification, but sanctification also. There are two reasons why the death of Christ hath so little effect upon us; either he is a forgotten Christ, or a mistaken Christ. A forgotten Christ: men do not consider the ends for which he came: 1 John iii. 5, 'Ye know that he was manifested, to take away our sins;' and ver. 8, 'To this purpose was the Son of God manifested, to destroy the works of the devil;' to give his Spirit to sinful miserable man. Now things that we mind not do not work upon us. The work of redemption Christ hath performed without our minding or asking; he took our nature, fulfilled the law, satisfied the lawgiver, merited grace without our asking or thinking; but in applying this grace, he requireth our consideration: Heb. iii. 1, 'Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession.' Our faith: 'Believest thou that I am able to do this for thee?' Our acceptance: John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' But the other evil is greater, a mistaken Christ; when we use him to increase our carnal security and boldness in sinning, and are possessed with an ill thought, that God is more reconcilable to sin than he was before, and by reason of Christ's coming there were less evil and malignity in sin, for then you make Christ a minister and encourager of sin: Gal. ii. 17, 'For if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore the minister of sin? God forbid!' You set up Christ against Christ, his merit against his doctrine and Spirit; yea, rather you set up the devil against Christ, and varnish his cause with Christ's name, and so it is but an idol-Chris<sup>t</sup> you dote upon. The true Christ 'came by water and blood,' 1 John v. 6; 'Bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness,' 1 Peter ii. 24. And will you set his death against the ends of his death? and run from and rebel against God because Christ came to redeem and recover you to God? Certainly those weak christians that only make use of Christ to seek comfort, seek him out of self-love; but those that seek holiness from the Redeemer have a more spiritual affection to him. The guilt of sin is against our interest, but the power of sin is against God's glory. He came to sanctify us by his holiness, not only to free our consciences from bondage, but our hearts, that we may serve God with more liberty and delight. This was the great aim of his death: Titus ii. 14, 'He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Thus did Christ, that the plaster might be as broad as the sore; we lost in Adam the purity of our natures, as well as the favour of God, and therefore he is made sanctification to us, as well as righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30.

4. With what confidence we may use the means of grace, because they are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Christ hath purchased grace, such a treasure of grace as cannot be wasted; and this is dispensed to us by the word and sacraments. The apostle doth not say barely, he died 'to cleanse us,' but 'to cleanse us by the washing of water through the word;' and here, 'that we might be sanctified

through the truth.' Christ hath established the merits, but the actual influence is from the Spirit: Titus iii. 5, 6, 'According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ.' And the means are the word and sacraments, whereby the Spirit dispenseth the grace in Christ's name; ordinarily the gospel, which is 'the ministration of the Spirit,' 2 Cor. iii. 8. If we come to the Father, we need his grant: Rev. xix. 8, 'And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' All cometh originally from his merciful grant; but God would not look towards us, but for Christ's sake. If we look to the Father, he sendeth us to the Son, 'whose blood cleanseth us from all our sins,' 1 John i. 7. If we look to the Son, he referreth us to the Spirit; therefore we read of 'the sanctification of the Spirit,' 2 Thes. ii. 13. If we wait for the Spirit's efficacy, he sendeth us to Moses and the prophets, where we shall hear of him. Therefore we may with encouragement pray, read, hear, meditate, that all these duties may be sanctified to us.

5. If holiness be the fruit of Christ's death, it maketh his love to be more gratuitous and free. For all the worth that we can conceive to be in ourselves, to commend us to God, is in our holiness. Now this is merely the fruit of grace, and the merit of Christ, and the gift of his Spirit in us. We wallow in our own filthiness, till he, of his grace, for Christ's sake, doth sanctify us by his Spirit. Both the love of God and the merit of Christ is antecedent to our holiness: 'He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God, and to the Father,' Rev. i. 5, 6. And the Spirit's work is not lessened, as if it were no great matter: 2 Peter i. 3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that appertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.'

6. We learn hence the preciousness of holiness; it is a thing dearly bought, and the great blessing which Christ intended for us. We do not value the blessings of the covenant so much as we should. Christ was devising what he should do for his church to make it honourable and glorious, and this way he took to make it holy.

[1.] It is the beauty of God; for God himself is 'glorious in holiness,' Exod. xv. 11, and 'we are created after his image, in righteousness and true holiness,' Eph. iv. 24. The perfection of the divine nature lieth chiefly in his immaculate holiness and purity.

[2.] It is that which maketh us amiable in the sight of God, for he delighteth not in us as justified so much as sanctified: Ps. xi. 7, 'For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright.' When, upon the account of Christ's merits and satisfaction, he hath created a clean heart in us, and renewed a right spirit, then he delighteth in us. It is his image makes us amiable, and therefore we should make it our great desire and care to be as holy as may be.

[3.] Much of our everlasting blessedness lieth in it: Eph. v. 27, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.'

[4.] It is a great part of our salvation by Christ: Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins;' Acts iii. 26, 'Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.'

[5.] It is a means to the rest. Communion with God and Christ here: 1 John i. 6, 7, 'If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' And everlasting fruition of God hereafter: Acts xxvi. 18, 'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me;' Heb. xii. 14, 'Without holiness no man shall see God.'

7. It showeth us who are partakers of the benefits and fruits of Christ's death: Heb. ii. 11, 'For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; wherefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren;' Heb. x. 14, 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' perfected, but by degrees. The elect themselves, whilst they are unconverted and remain in their sins, have not the actual benefit of Christ's redemption. Our dying Lord had an actual intention in due time to sanctify, and accordingly doth regenerate, justify, sanctify all those who shall have benefit by his death. But who are the sanctified? It is to be considered positively and relatively. Positively, it is to be renewed to God's image: Titus iii. 5, 'He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;' 2 Peter i. 4, 'That by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature.' This is the great work of the sanctifying Spirit, to make us like God, and to work in us those graces whereby we may be qualified and inclined to live to him. Relatively, to be sanctified is to be separated from a common to a holy relation and use. This is seen in three things—inclination, dedication, and use.

[1.] Inclination towards God. This is the immediate fruit of grace, called conversion, or turning to God; the new nature tendeth and bendeth to him.

[2.] Dedication: 2 Cor. viii. 5, 'They first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God;' Rom. vi. 13, 'Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' This is in entering into covenant with God.

[3.] Use is nothing but the exercise of this disposition and inclination, called 'living to God,' or performance of this dedication: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, 'What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price? therefore glorify God in your bodies and souls, which are the Lord's;' Zech. xiv. 20, 'In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.' By the latter there is a difference between us and others: 1 John v. 19, 'And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.' And between us and ourselves: 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' This must be more explicit every day.

*Use 2.* Direction in the Lord's supper. Here we come to remember Christ's sacrifice, and to interest ourselves in the fruits of it.

1. To remember Christ's sacrifice. As the elements are set apart for a holy use, so was Christ sanctified. All sacraments represent Christ dead. Baptism: 'We are baptized into his death,' Rom. vi. 3. In the Lord's supper 'We show forth his death till he come,' 1 Cor. xi. 26; his body was broken, his blood shed. Christ would institute a representation of his humiliation rather than of his glory, to represent his love to us; it was for our sakes rather than his own honour; to represent what concerned us.

2. To interest ourselves in the fruits of it. Look after the fruits of it.

[1.] Bewailing your unholiness, both in heart and life, that you were so long trained up in the knowledge of Christ's truth, and did so little love God, and live to him; that God hath opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, and you are no more cleansed to this very day; and have gotten so little of the sanctifying Spirit, as if you were strangers in Israel.

[2.] Hunger and thirst for this grace, his renewing, as well as reconciling grace: Mat. v. 6, 'Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' Desire it earnestly.

[3.] Lift up your hearts with confidence and hope, when the sacrifice of Christ is represented to you, because God hath accepted this sacrifice, and is well pleased with it: Isa. liii. 4, 5, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. For he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes are we healed.' We have no reason to despair of the cure, that Holy Spirit who sanctified our head, who had no sin, by preventing sin in his conception, and anointed him to his office, is able to enlighten, convert, sanctify us also.

[4.] Praise him for so much grace as you have received, that he hath inclined your hearts to his blessed self: 1 Peter i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;' at least that he made you serious.

[5.] Dedicate yourselves to God, to walk before him in all new obedience: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.'

### SERMON XXXIV.

*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.—JOHN XVII. 20.*

HERE Christ enlargeth the object of his prayers, which is propounded—(1.) Negatively; (2.) Positively.